MOPAN 2025

MOPAN ASSESSMENT REPORT
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Part II. Technical and Statistical Annex

Revised Version, February 2025*

MOPAN
Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network

*Corrections were made to Elements 1.4.5, 5.4.4. and 5.4.5 and to the corresponding averages at microindicator level.

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Explanatory note

MOPAN is the only collective action mechanism that meets member countries' information needs regarding the performance of multilateral organisations. MOPAN provides comprehensive, independent, and credible performance information through its institutional assessment report to inform members' engagement and accountability mechanisms.

MOPAN's assessment reports tell the story of the multilateral organisation and its performance. The reports support members' decision making regarding multilateral organisations and the wider multilateral system by detailing the assessment's major findings and conclusions, along with the organisation's performance journeys, strengths, and areas for improvement.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

BOS	Business Operations Strategy
CPD	Country Programme Document
CPE	Country Programme Evaluation
CSOs	Civil Society Organisation
CPM	Career and Performance Management
DED-M	Deputy Executive Director (Management)
DED-P	Deputy Executive Director (Programme)
DHR	Division of Human Resources (DHR)
EAP	Employee Assistance Program
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
EES	Environmental Efficiency Strategy
ERP	Enterprise resource planning
ESARO	East and Southern Africa Regional Office
FGD	Focus group discussions
FP	Family Planning
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FTA	Fixed-Term appointment (FTA)
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
GHR	Gender and Human Rights
GTC	General Terms of Conditions
HDP	Humanitarian-development-peace
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
HDP	Humanitarian-development-peace
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus

HQ	Headquarters
HRD	Humanitarian Response Division
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IC	Individual Contractor
ICPD PoA	International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IFIs	International Finance Institutions
IL	Institutional Leads
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IP	Implementing Partner
IRRF	Integrated Results and Resources Framework
ITSO	Information Technology Solutions Office
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
MH	Maternal Health
MI	Micro-Indicator
MOPAN	Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network
MTR	Mid-term Review
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OAIS	Office of Audit and Investigation Services
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
OHRCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSCEA	UN Office of the Special Coordinator for Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
PSEAH	Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, and Sexual Harassment
PSD	Policy and Strategy Division
QCPR	Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review
RBM	Results-Based Management
RPE	Regional Program Evaluation
SCMU	Supply Chain Management Unit
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal

SEA/SH	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/ Sexual Harassment
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SIF	Strategic Investment Facility
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNCDF	UN Capital Development Fund
UNCT	United Nations country team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDS	United Nations Development System
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNSDG	United Nations Sustainable Development Group
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
TA	Temporary appointment
ToRs	Terms of References
WHO	World Health Organization

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Annex A: Performance analysis

Methodology for scoring and rating

The approach to scoring and rating under MOPAN 3.1. is described in the 2020 Methodology Manual, which can be found on MOPAN's website.

Each of the 12 key performance indicators (KPIs) contains several micro-indicators (Mis), which vary in number. The KPI rating is calculated by taking the average of the ratings of its constituent MIs. (Figure 1)

Scoring of KPIs 1-8

The scoring of KPIs 1-8 is based on an aggregated scoring of the MIs. Each MI contains several elements, which vary in number. Taking the average of the constituent scores per element, a score is then calculated per MI. The same logic is pursued at aggregation to the KPI level, to ensure a consistent approach. Taking the average of the constituent scores per MI, an aggregated score is then calculated per KPI.

Scoring of KPIs 9-12

The scoring of KPIs 9-12 is based upon a meta-analysis of evaluations and performance information, rated at the MI level and aggregated to the KPI level.

For KPI 9, results against the mandate and contribution to cross-cutting results are given equal weight. KPIs 9-12 assess results achieved as assessed in evaluations and annual performance reporting from the organisations.

Rating scales

Whenever scores are aggregated, rating scales translate them into ratings summarising the assessment across KPIs and MIs. Figure 2 shows the rating scale used under MOPAN 3.1.

Figure 1. MOPAN 3.1 Performance scoring and rating scale

MOPAN Performance scoring and rating scale
- Highly satisfactory (3.51-4.00)   Satisfactory (2.51-3.50)
- Unsatisfactory (1.51-2.50)   Highly Unsatisfactory (0.00-1.50)   No evidence / Not applicable
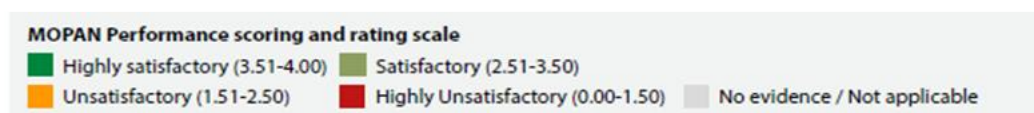
A score of "N/E" means "no evidence" and indicates that the assessment team could not find any evidence but was not confident of whether or not any evidence was to be found. The team assumes that "no evidence" does not necessarily mean that the element is not present (which would result in a zero score). Elements rated N/E are excluded from any calculation of the average. A significant number of N/E scores in a report indicates an assessment limitation. A note indicating "N/A" means that an element is considered to be "not applicable". This usually owes to the organisation's specific nature.

Figure 2. United Nations Population Fund scoring overview

Strategic management

KPI 1: Organisational architecture and financial framework
- 1.1 Long-term vision
- 1.2 Organisational architecture
- 1.3 Supports normative frameworks
- 1.4 Financial framework

KPI 2: Cross-cutting issues
- 2.1 Gender equality
- 2.2 Environment / Climate Change
- 2.3 Human rights
- 2.4 Innovation and digitalisation

Operational management

KPI 3: Operating framework
- 3.1 Resources aligned to functions
- 3.2 Resource mobilisation
- 3.3 Decentralised decision making
- 3.4 Performance-based human resources

KPI 4: Cost- and value-conscious systems
- 4.1 Transparent decision making
- 4.2 Disbursement as planned
- 4.3 Results-based budgeting
- 4.4 Audit
- 4.5 Control mechanisms
- 4.6 Anti-fraud procedures
- 4.7 SEA prevention / response
- 4.8 SH prevention / response

Relationship management

KPI 5: Relevance and agility
- 5.1 Alignment to country
- 5.2 Context analysis
- 5.3 Capacity analysis
- 5.4 Risk management
- 5.5 Integration of cross-cutting issues
- 5.6 Sustainability
- 5.7 Implementation speed

KPI 6: Coherent partnerships
- 6.1 Agility
- 6.2 Comparative advantage
- 6.3 Use Country systems
- 6.4 Synergies
- 6.5 Co-ordination
- 6.6 Information sharing
- 6.7 Accountability to beneficiaries
- 6.8 Joint assessments
- 6.9 Knowledge

Performance management

KPI 7: Results management
- 7.1 RBM applied
- 7.2 RBM in strategies
- 7.3 Evidence-based targets
- 7.4 Effective monitoring systems
- 7.5 Performance data applied

KPI 8: Evidence-based planning and programming
- 8.1 Independent evaluation function
- 8.2 Evaluation coverage
- 8.3 Evaluation quality
- 8.4 Evidence-based design
- 8.5 Poor performance tracked
- 8.6 Follow-up systems
- 8.7 Uptake of lessons

Results

KPI 9: Achievement of results
- 9.1 Results achieved
- 9.2 Gender equality
- 9.3 Environment / climate change
- 9.4 Human rights
- 9.5 Innovation and digitalisation

KPI 10: Relevance
- 10.1 Responsive to needs

KPI 11: Efficient delivery
- 11.1 Cost efficiency
- 11.2 Timeliness

KPI 12: Sustainability
- 12.1 Sustainable benefits

Legend:
- High confidence
- Medium confidence
- Little to no confidence
- Highly satisfactory (3.51-4.00)
- Satisfactory (2.51-3.50)
- Unsatisfactory (1.51-2.50)
- Highly unsatisfactory (0.00-1.50)
- No evidence/Not applicable

Key performance indicator
Evidence confidence
Micro-indicator
Element 1, Element 2, Element 3, Element 4, Element 5, Element 6, Element 7, Element 8, Element 9

Performance analysis

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

KPI 1: Organisational architecture and financial framework enable mandate implementation and achievement of expected results	KPI score
Satisfactory	**3.19**

KPI 1 assesses how UNFPA's organisational architecture and financial framework allow UNFPA to carry out its mandate and achieve expected results. The assessment is structured along four MIs pertaining to UNFPA's strategic plan, organisational architecture and operating model, strategic alignment with global commitments, and financial framework.

UNFPA's strategic plan, which the Executive Board regularly reviews and which is publicly accessible, outlines a clear long-term vision and approach. UNFPA's financial framework, approved by the Executive Board and based on a bottom-up approach to budgeting and funding allocation, supports mandate implementation. However, it does not sufficiently articulate the Fund's comparative advantages vis-à-vis other UN agencies. Furthermore, its concentrated focus on three "transformative results" may be hindering collaboration to strengthen other vital SRHR services and countries' efforts to achieve demographic resilience.

UNFPA's Strategic Plan 2022-25 (and the previous Strategic Plan 2018-21) has a clear long-term vision: by 2030, end preventable maternal deaths, unmet need for family planning, gender-based violence (GBV) and harmful practices (especially child marriage and female genital mutilation)—the so-called transformative results. While the Strategic Plan 2018-21 served to set the vision and chart the pathway towards achieving the transformative results, the Strategic Plans 2022-25 and 2026-29 intend to accelerate progress and tackle unfinished business, respectively. Moreover, the UNFPA Strategic Plan Integrated Results and Resources Framework (IRRF) is logically structured around the transformative results at the outcome level. The Strategic Plan outlines that UNFPA will achieve these outcomes through six interconnected outputs, focused on policy and accountability, quality of care and services, gender and social norms, population change and data, humanitarian action, and adolescents and youth. All outputs are considered to have a multidimensional, 'many-to-many' relationship with the outcomes. For the first time, a UNFPA Strategic Plan contains a dedicated output on humanitarian action, reflecting its growing importance in safeguarding achievements during crises and attaining transformative results. However, some interviewees voiced concerns that UNFPA is prioritising the transformative results over essential sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services. They were also concerned that it was not sufficiently clear how the mandate should be interpreted to assist countries in understanding, anticipating and responding to demographic change, especially given the global trend towards shrinking and ageing populations (due to low fertility and outmigration), and that clearer benchmarks would be needed for a better balance. They also found that the strategic plan did not adequately articulate the fund's comparative advantages with respect to its sister UN agencies.

UNFPA has consistently adapted its organisational structure and operating model to meet internal management and external programme needs, aligning with the Fund's long-term vision. While the intent behind changes to the core resources allocation system is positive, there is a concern that UNFPA offices

in countries closer to achieving the transformative results lack a critical mass of funding.

UNFPA headquarters in New York comprises 14 divisions, offices, services and units. Several headquarters functions are also based in Geneva and Copenhagen. Additionally, UNFPA operates six regional offices, eight representational offices, and two subregional offices in the Caribbean and Pacific regions. 121 country offices manage and implement UNFPA country programmes. Since the last MOPAN assessment in 2018, UNFPA has implemented a range of critical organisational reforms at the global level, including the restructuring of the UNFPA Division for Human Resources, the reinforcement of the Humanitarian Response Division (formally Humanitarian Office) in Geneva, the launch of the Supply Chain Management Unit (SCMU) in Copenhagen, the creation of an Innovation Unit, and additional staff allocations for UNFPA's independent oversight offices. While undertaking the present MOPAN assessment, UNFPA is implementing reforms - the "HQ Optimisation" initiative - to further align its organisational architecture with its high-level priorities and objectives. This initiative, which includes integrating the Policy and Strategy Division and the Technical Division into one Programme Division based in Nairobi and the relocation of the Evaluation Office to Nairobi, has been met with support but has also given reason for concerns on the part of the staff and Member States.

UNFPA's operating model – "Business Model" (Strategic Plan 2022-25 Annex 3), has also been adapted to support the acceleration of progress towards the transformative results. Several changes have been made to UNFPA's operating model including the aim to construct more tailored solutions for each local context: UNFPA country offices now have complete autonomy to decide which of the five modes of engagement to employ – i.e., advocacy and policy dialogue, capacity development, knowledge management, coordination, partnership and South-South Cooperation, service delivery. Furthermore, UNFPA classified programme countries into three tiers based on whether they have reached or exceeded thresholds related to the transformative results (the earlier colour quadrants were discontinued). Using the tiers and other criteria, UNFPA's core resource allocation system (RAS) was modified to prioritise funding for 54 Tier 1 programme countries furthest from achieving the transformative results. However, according to interviewees, as a result, numerous country offices in Tier 2 and Tier 3 countries are struggling to implement programmes and leverage much-needed funding and financing with little more than the minimum floor from USD 300,000 to USD 500,000 a year. The Business Model also introduced six accelerators and 12 strategic shifts for country offices to accelerate progress towards outputs and outcomes. While welcome, they were introduced without sufficient conceptualisation and have not been operationalised to their full potential.

The UNFPA Strategic Plan aligns well with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the ICPD, and relevant human rights conventions. However, it lacks references and does not report to the Executive Board on critical humanitarian frameworks, to which the Fund is a signatory.

The UNFPA 2022-25 Strategic Plan, with its transformative results, closely aligns with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially SDGs 3 (good health and wellbeing) and 5 (gender equality), as well as the core principles of human rights, gender equality, partnerships and leaving no one behind. Regarding other normative frameworks, the Strategic Plan consistently refers to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). It refers to international mechanisms or conventions such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and Universal Periodic Reviews. UNFPA has also affirmed its alignment with the 2020 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) of operational activities for the development of the UN system. Interviews especially highlighted the centrality of the ICPD Programme of Action and UNFPA's role in advancing its implementation, celebrating success and upholding agreed-upon standards and results in light of political pushback. On the humanitarian side, however, the Strategic Plan fails to highlight UNFPA's alignment with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-30, the Grand Bargain and the OECD-DAC recommendation on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus to which UNFPA is a signatory. Furthermore, apart from detailed reporting to the Executive Board on the implementation of the QCPR recommendations, UNFPA does not report its results against other global commitments to the Executive Board.

UNFPA's financial framework, approved by the Executive Board and based on a bottom-up approach to budgeting and funding allocation, supports mandate implementation. Strategic Dialogues with the Executive Board, new global thematic funds, and increased access to pooled and inter-organisational funding demonstrate UNFPA's preference for core and lightly earmarked non-core funding.

The UNFPA Strategic Plan includes an estimate of additional resources needed to achieve the transformative results by 2030 (as of 2019), thus extending beyond the plan's period. This figure comprises USD 59.9 billion to end the unmet need for family planning, USD 103.6 billion to end preventable maternal deaths, and USD 58.7 billion to end GBV and harmful practices. There is an apparent attempt by the Fund to set clear priorities considering limited funding, except that planning does not differentiate between GBV on the one hand and harmful practices on the other. Financial and budgetary planning at UNFPA is conducted in a consultative, bottom-up manner every four years in tandem with strategic planning. It is approved by the Executive Board as an Integrated Budget, which this assessment finds adequate to ensure transparency within and outside the Fund. Projections for core and non-core resources are formulated based on donor indications, an analysis of contribution trends, an assessment of the funding landscape and a needs-based costing analysis. The Executive Board is not involved in annual resource allocation and distribution decisions but retrospectively reviews annual Statistical and Financial Reports and Board of Auditors reports.

In support of its long-term vision, UNFPA (as also evidenced by its Resource Mobilisation Strategy 2022-25) is very clear regarding its preference for core and lightly earmarked non-core funding. To this extent, the Fund has operationalised the UN Funding Compact by carrying out annual Structured Funding Dialogues with the Executive Board. The aim of Structured Funding Dialogues is to improve the quantity and quality of funding to achieve UNFPA's corporate objectives. However, in 2022, the formative evaluation of UNFPA's engagement in UNDS reform found that financial and political landscapes significantly influence donor funding patterns more than agency performance, despite the Funding Compact. Furthermore, UNFPA has established/continued to encourage Member States to allocate voluntary non-core funding through four entity-specific thematic funds for lightly earmarked funding: the Supplies Partnership (since 2008), the Maternal and Newborn Health Thematic Fund (since 2008), the Humanitarian Thematic Fund (since 2019), and the Population Data Thematic Fund (since 2020). It has collaborated with UN sister agencies to attract funding through the UN pooled funding modality, exceeding, often considerably, the Funding Compart target of 10%. According to the UNFPA Statistical and Financial Review for the year 2023, combined contributions received by UNFPA through pooled funds and inter-organisational transfers declined slightly from USD 218.7 million in 2022 to USD 208.2 million in 2023, which nevertheless corresponds to UNFPA's top donor to non-core resources for the fifth year in a row.

MI 1.1: Strategic plan and intended results based on a clear long-term vision and analysis of comparative advantage in the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.25**
Element 1: A publicly available strategic plan (or equivalent) contains a long-term vision	4
Element 2: The vision is based on a clear analysis and articulation of UNFPA's comparative advantages in the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda	3
Element 3: The strategic plan operationalise the vision, including by defining intended results	3
Element 4: The strategic plan is reviewed regularly by the Executive Board to ensure continued relevance and attention to risks	3
MI 1.1 Analysis	**Evidence documents**
Element 1.1.1: The UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25, clearly sets out UNFPA's strategic vision - i.e., to end preventable maternal deaths, the unmet need for family planning and gender-based violence (GBV) and harmful practices by 2030. UNFPA's Strategic Plans 2018-21 and 2022-25 have a clear long-term vision in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and are public documents. The Strategic Plan is available to the public as an interactive dedicated webpage (in English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian and Chinese) on the UNFPA website (https://www.unfpa.org/strategic-plan-2022). With its Strategic Plan 2018-21, UNFPA introduced the three "transformative results" - i.e., by 2030 (i) end unmet need for family planning, (ii) end preventable maternal deaths, and (iii) end	80, 204, 205, 206, 30, 64 146, 80.

GBV and all harmful practices, including female genital mutilation (FGM) and child, early and forced marriage, aligned with SDGs 3 (good health and wellbeing) and 5 (gender equality). The UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25 is the second of three consecutive Strategic Plans leading to 2030 and the achievement of the transformative results. While the Strategic Plan 2018-21 served to set the vision and chart the pathway, the Strategic Plans 2022-25 and 2026-29 are intended to accelerate progress and to tackle unfinished business respectively. The UNFPA transformative results, aiming to achieve zero cases in the three target areas by 2030, are even more ambitious than the SDGs in maternal health and family planning (https://www.unfpa.org/data/transformative-results).

The Strategic Plan includes an estimate of additional resources needed to achieve the transformative results by 2030 (as of 2019), thus extending beyond the period of the plan itself. This figure comprises USD 59.9 billion for ending the unmet need for family planning; USD 103.6 billion for ending preventable maternal deaths; and USD 58.7 billion for ending GBV and harmful practices, including child marriage and FGM (no breakdown was provided for additionally required resources to address GBV on the one hand and harmful practices on the other).

The 2022-25 Strategic Plan also closely aligns with core principles of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development - i.e., human rights, gender equality, partnerships and "leaving no one behind" (LNOB). To reflect its increasing significance in light of protecting accomplishments in crises and achieving the transformative results, it reframed humanitarian action from a principle to a specific output area (Output 5) and a mainstreamed concept.

83% of partner survey respondents strongly agree (35%) or agree (48%) that UNFPA's strategic plan demonstrates clarity of vision (Q1_1). High percentages can be found among all five partner categories including 100% of participating governing partners and 85% of participating implementing partners.

Figure 3: The strategies and policies of UNFPA demonstrate clarity of vision
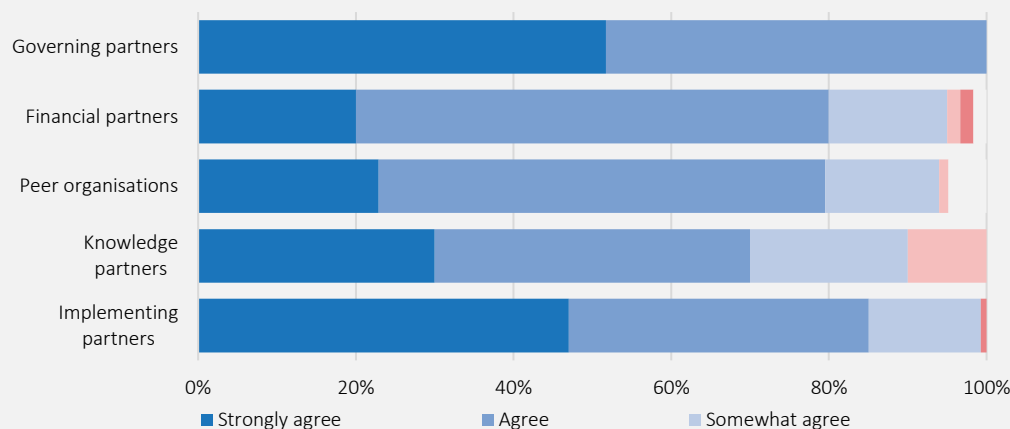
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

Interviewees and few partner survey respondents generally support the Strategic Plan priorities and its long-term vision focused on the transformative results. However, some shared concerns that UNFPA is prioritising the transformative results over other essential SRHR services (expressly also in support of sexual health and rights) and the Fund's mandate to assist countries in understanding, anticipating and responding to demographic change and adapting policies, founded on data and avoiding negative consequences for women's rights and choices (e.g., shrinking and ageing populations due to low fertility and outmigration in Asia and Eastern Europe). Others voiced concern over growing conservatism and political pushback on women's rights worldwide, both donor and programme countries, which threaten UNFPA's long-term

vision.

According to the mid-term review of the Strategic Plan, UNFPA will continue to focus on accelerating the achievement of the transformative results during 2026-29. To achieve this, inter alia, UNFPA country office capacities should be strengthened for generating and using high-quality population data, addressing challenges arising from population dynamics and positioning the transformative results in middle-income countries and in countries with low fertility and ageing.

Element 1.1.2: While emphasising joint accountability for results with UNDP, UNICEF and UN Women, the UNFPA Strategic Plan does not adequately reflect an analysis and articulation of the Fund's comparative advantages in the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. Nevertheless, the partner survey responses reflect a good understanding of the Fund's added value.

According to UNFPA, the expected outputs and outcomes of the Strategic Plan 2022-25 and the theory of change annex of the Strategic Plan are a result of strategic decisions based on UNFPA's comparative advantages. Readers of the Strategic Plan are, however, not privy to these strategic considerations, as the Strategic Plan does not elaborate on UNFPA's comparative advantages vis-à-vis its sister UN agencies (or other actors) in achieving the SDGs and transformative results by 2030. It confines itself to mentioning some aspects of the Fund's strengths, e.g.:

- promoting the rights and choices of women and girls and youth;
- presence in over 150 countries and territories through its global, regional and country programmes;
- expert knowledge and experience, acquired over decades of operation;
- unique expertise in providing innovative, evidence-informed and rights-based solutions that cover both normative and operational dimensions, in line with the 2030 Agenda, United Nations reform and 2020 quadrennial comprehensive policy review.

In the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2018-21, the rationale behind the common chapter (and the annex to the common chapter) was to outline how the New York-based UN funds and programmes UNDP, UNICEF and UN Women intended to work together to provide coherent support to achieve the SDGs based on their respective comparative advantages. As the repositioning of the UNDS (United Nations Development System) unfolded and because it had been interpreted more as a statement of intent that did not lend itself to Operationalisation, the common chapter was removed from the current Strategic Plan. In its place, UNFPA and the other common chapter agencies included "common" and "complementary" indicators in their Integrated Results and Resources Frameworks (IRRF) to demonstrate joint accountability in achieving results. Nearly 56 % of the outcome and impact indicators are common indicators. Around 73% of the output-level indicators are common or complementary.

There is still for UNFPA some potential for better articulate its role vis-a-vis other UN agencies considering their respective footprints and comparative advantages. The evaluation of UNFPA support to gender equality and women's empowerment (2021) notes that UNFPA faces similar challenges as other UN agencies in terms of applying a strategic division of labour with other entities, particularly with UN Women, where – as several interviewees highlighted - the lack of a formal agreement on the division of labour has led to coordination issues and missed opportunities for collaborating at the country level and in terms of synergies and efficiency.

Nevertheless, partner survey responses suggest that at the country level, a clear understanding of UNFPA's role and comparative advantages drives its work (Q1_2): 82% of participating partners strongly agree (33%) or agree (49%) that UNFPA strategies demonstrate good understanding of the Fund's comparative advantages. Governing partners are most affirmative (90% agree or strongly agree) followed by IPs (86%) and peer organisations (81%).

Figure 4: The strategies and policies of UNFPA demonstrate clarity of vision
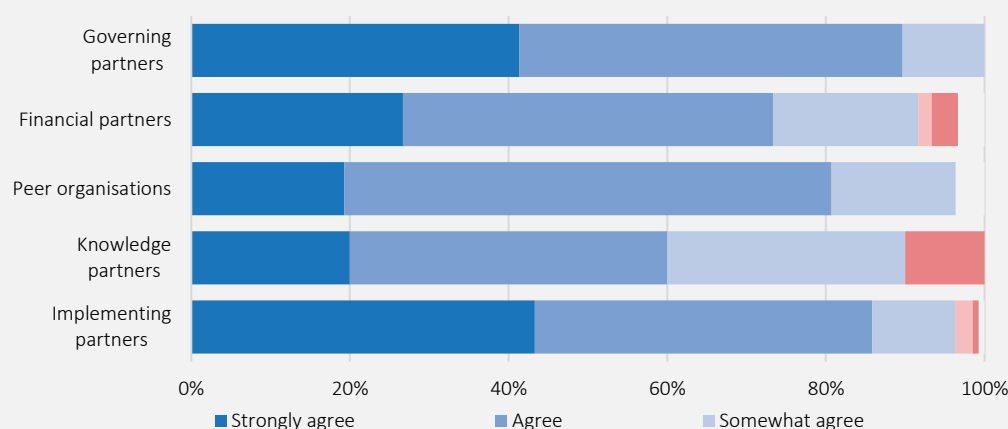
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

Element 1.1.3: The UNFPA Strategic Plan Integrated Results and Resources Framework (IRRF) is logically structured around the transformative results at the outcome level and contains and outputs as well as indicators. Baselines and targets were only added after the Executive Board approved the Strategic Plan. Compared to the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2018-21, the results architecture of the current plan was logically built around the transformative results at the outcome level: By 2025, the reduction of the unmet need for family planning (outcome 1), preventable maternal deaths (outcome 2) and GBV and harmful practices (outcome 3) has accelerated. The plan stipulates that UNFPA will achieve these interconnected outcomes by delivering six interconnected outputs in the areas of policy and accountability (output 1); quality of care and services (output 2); gender and social norms (output 3); population change and data (output 4); humanitarian action (output 5); and adolescents and youth (output 6). All outputs are considered to have a multidimensional, 'many-to-many' relationship with the outcomes. It is the first time a UNFPA Strategic Plan contains a dedicated humanitarian action output.

According to UNFPA, developing strategic plan indicators and results was harmonised with the other New York-based UN agencies, with the agreement to present them in phases. In 2021, the Executive Board approved the Strategic Plan IRRF with indicators for tracking progress towards the outputs and outcomes, however without knowing the baselines or targets for 2022-25. To the extent available, baselines and targets (annual targets at the output level) were added later in the Executive Director's annual report for 2022. While a theory of change ("change story") for the Strategic Plan is available, based on available information, it is difficult to assess whether the output indicator targets are realistic and sufficiently ambitious to achieve the transformative results by 2030.

Element 1.1.4: The UNFPA Strategic Plan is reviewed regularly by the Executive Board, but not systematically from the point of view of continued relevance and attention to risks. Processes are in place that permit the Executive Board to regularly review the implementation of UNFPA Strategic Plans (including their annexes). The primary vehicle for the Executive Board to execute its oversight role is informal briefings and formal debates on the UNFPA Executive Director's annual reports on implementing the Strategic Plan and on annual statistical and financial reviews. Mid-term reviews of the Strategic Plan and Integrated Budget are also an opportunity to review implementation and an opportunity to approve adjustments. The mid-term review of the Strategic Plan 2022-25 was formally tabled during the Annual Session of the Executive Board in June 2024. Alongside evaluations of UNFPA's

regional programmes, the Strategic Plan 2022-25 is also the subject of an independent evaluation, which will, among others, inform the development of the next Strategic Plan 2026-29. The independent evaluation is expected to be formally tabled at the First Regular Session in 2025.

While the implementation of the UNFPA Strategic Plan is regularly reviewed by Member States, inputs or Executive Board sessions on continued relevance and attention to programmatic risks over time and in response to emerging issues (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic) are not a standard feature.

MI 1.1 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 1.2: Organisational architecture congruent with a clear long-term vision and associated operating model	Score
Overall MI rating	Satisfactory
Overall MI score	3.00
Element 1: The organisational architecture is congruent with the strategic plan 2022-25 and long-term vision	4
Element 2: The operating model supports implementation of the strategic plan	3
Element 3: The operating model is reviewed regularly by the Executive Board to ensure continued relevance	3
Element 4: The operating model allows for strong co-operation across the organisation	3
Element 5: The operating model clearly delineates responsibilities for results	2
MI 1.2 Analysis	Evidence documents

Element 1.2.1: The UNFPA organisational architecture has been continuously adapted to better respond to internal management and external programmatic needs in line with the Fund's long-term vision.

The UNFPA headquarters in New York comprises 14 divisions, offices, services and units. Certain headquarters functions are also based in Geneva (humanitarian action) and Copenhagen (supply chain operations). Additionally, UNFPA operates six regional offices, eight representational offices, and two subregional offices in the Caribbean and Pacific. 121 country offices across the six regions manage and implement UNFPA country programmes.

As evidenced by the Mid-term review of the Strategic Plan 2022-25 and informed by interviews, UNFPA has implemented a range of organisational reforms at the global level since the last MOPAN assessment to make UNFPA "fit-for-purpose" – resilient and agile in order to achieve its mandate of sexual and reproductive health for all and support for the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. These reforms include:

186, 205, 206, 142, 87, 80.

- the renaming of the UNFPA Programme Division as the Policy and Strategy Division, including the creation of an Intergovernmental Interagency and Policy Dialogue Branch (IIPDB) in 2019.
- the establishment of the UNFPA Corporate Performance and Foresight Unit in the Office of the Executive Director in 2022, replacing the Change Management Secretariat.
- the creation of an Innovation Unit in the Office of the Executive Director.
- the restructuring of the UNFPA Division for Human Resources (DHR) to address structural and functional gaps and ensure UNFPA's fitness for purpose. Part of the restructuring exercise has been to locate Human Resources Business Partners in all UNFPA regional offices.
- in 2022, given increasing humanitarian needs and reflecting enhanced focus and accountability for emergency response within UNFPA, the Humanitarian Office was reorganised and renamed the Humanitarian Response Division (HRD).
- the restructuring of the Investigations Branch into two units, one of which for Intake

and Reporting that manages the registration and triage of complaints or reports of wrongdoing to UNFPA's Office of Audit and Investigation Services (OAIS).

• the launch of a new Supply Chain Management Unit (SCMU) effective 1 January 2022 to provide oversight and co-ordination to all SCM-related functions and processes, thus ensuring more effective co-ordination and oversight under one accountable unit across development and humanitarian settings and including third-party procurement. The previous Procurement Services Branch was absorbed into the new unit, which is based in Copenhagen and has officers outposted in the regional offices.

Interviewees generally voiced appreciation for these completed reforms (in the case of SCMU, they are still ongoing). There is consensus about the decision to locate HRD in Geneva, closer geographically to many of the world's conflicts and disasters in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia, as well as to other critical humanitarian agencies; and to locate SCMU in Copenhagen, where most UN procurement is centred and major donors are close.

The partner survey also confirms a positive perception of respondents (Q1_3). 74% of survey respondents strongly agree (31%) and agree (43%) that UNFPA organises and runs itself in a way that fully supports its strategic direction and vision. Implementing (82%) and governing (76%) are mostly supportive.

While undertaking the present MOPAN assessment, UNFPA is implementing organisational reforms to further align its organisational architecture with its high-level priorities and objectives – under the framework of the "HQ Optimisation" initiative (see Element 3.1.1).

Element 1.2.2: UNFPA's Business Model has been adapted to support the acceleration of progress towards the transformative results, particularly benefiting those programme countries furthest away. The strategic plan accelerators and strategic shifts were introduced without sufficient conceptualisation, which has affected their implementation.

Several changes have been made to UNFPA's operating model compared to the previous Business Model in support of implementing the Strategic Plan 2022-25 and achieving the transformative results.

With the present strategic plan, UNFPA has classified programme countries into three tiers based on whether they have reached or exceeded thresholds related to the transformative results (the earlier colour quadrants were discontinued). Using the tiers and other criteria, the system for allocating UNFPA core resources (resource allocation system; RAS) was modified to prioritise support to programme countries furthest from achieving the transformative results (the long-term vision).

The five modes of engagement (advocacy and policy dialogue; capacity development; knowledge management; co-ordination; partnership and South-South Cooperation; and service delivery) remain unchanged from the previous Strategic Plan, but there has been a notable shift in the delegation of decision making. Aiming to construct more tailored solutions for each local context, UNFPA country offices now have the autonomy to decide which modes of engagement to employ. In contrast, the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2018-21 specified the modes of engagement for each country as per their respective country quadrant classification (red/humanitarian, orange, yellow and pink).

Moreover, to enhance the effectiveness of the modes of engagement and accelerate progress towards outputs and outcomes, UNFPA defined six accelerators and 12 strategic shifts, which, according to UNFPA, are strategic actions deemed important for UNFPA to do more of or do differently, or both. UNFPA country offices are expected to use those accelerators and make the strategic shifts that suit their specific local contexts. They can also identify additional accelerators tailored to their circumstances.

Interviews provide further insights into UNFPA's operating model:

• Regarding the prioritisation of Tier 1 programme countries, some interviewees pointed out that Tier 2 and Tier 3 countries - e.g., in Latin America - face high inequalities and large population groups that are (at risk of being) left behind. In these countries, UNFPA offices with little more than the allocated minimum floor from USD 300,000 to

USD 500,000 per year struggle to implement programmes and leverage much-needed development financing to benefit vulnerable groups (see Elements 3.1.3 and 4.1.2).

- Interviewees expressing a view welcomed the accelerators and strategic shifts. However, some have not been operationalised to their full potential. There are various reasons – one is lacking capacity; another is insufficient implementation guidance, e.g., for leveraging development finance and integrating the effects of megatrends – and a third is external resistance - e.g., against strengthening UNFPA's normative role. This dovetails with the results of a UNFPA-internal survey and focus group discussions one year into Strategic Plan implementation. That survey found that UNFPA country offices largely had the necessary knowledge to implement the 12 shifts, but not uniformly so. It is also reflected in the Report of the Executive Director on the Mid-term Review of the Strategic Plan 2022-25 (Figure 11). For instance, while 98% of country offices reported having good knowledge of "focusing on achieving the transformative results", 60% said the same regarding "funding to financing", 63% regarding "integrating the effects of megatrends into programming"; and 70% regarding "humanitarian, development and peace complementarity". Some interviewees and partner survey respondents voiced concerns that the forthcoming relocation to Nairobi may negatively affect UNFPA's normative role (see Element 3.1.1).

Element 1.2.3: The UNFPA Business Model has been the subject of a dedicated session at mid-term review to ensure its continued relevance and adequacy to different country contexts.

The UNFPA Business Model is an integral part of the Strategic Plan. Aspects of the business model - e.g., the Resource Allocation System – may be raised in the Executive Director's annual reports to the Executive Board, other Executive Board agenda items and Strategic Plan mid-term reviews. Executive Board members can table questions at any time. UNFPA and EB had a dedicated session on the Business Model at mid-term review. While the integration, including the creation of new organisational units, such as a data and analytics branch, was a long time coming and is generally welcomed by UNFPA staff and Executive Board members alike, the relocation to Nairobi as part of the HQ optimisation, scheduled for March 2025, was unexpected and accompanied by both personal and professional concerns for many staff that require a solid strategy for managing the change.

Element 1.2.4: UNFPA's internal collaboration across the organisation is working well, but at the same time UNFPA recognises that improvements are still needed.

The UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25, including its Business Model, does not delve into the division of labour and internal cooperation among UNFPA organisational units across and between the different levels. The global and regional programmes, annexed to the Strategic Plan 2022-25 (Annex 4.1), reflect the respective roles and expectations of the headquarters level and regional offices regarding achieving the results of the UNFPA Strategic Plan. At an operational level, an Organisational Handbook provides basic information about UNFPA, its purpose, functions and operations. The Handbook also includes terms of reference for UNFPA country offices, regional offices, and individual HQ organisational units, but they are outdated. Regarding cooperation and internal synergies, the 2030 People Strategy recognises weaknesses in UNFPA's organisational structure and operating model and has defined strategic actions, among other things, to:

- Strengthen UNFPA's network approach to enhance and better utilise technical capabilities and to enhance knowledge sharing; and
- Encourage and facilitate movement from HQ to regional and country offices and vice versa.

Nevertheless, interviews provide examples of positive feedback regarding cooperation across UNFPA headquarters - e.g., between the Humanitarian Response Division and the Intergovernmental Interagency and Policy Dialogue Branch (IIPDB) Branch on inter-

governmental and inter-agency humanitarian agendas; between the Humanitarian Response Branch and the Family Planning Branch to ensure access to family planning services in emergencies; between the Resource Mobilisation Branch and the Strategic Partnership Branch regarding partnering and resource mobilisation; and between the Division of Management Services and the Policy and Strategy Division regarding resource planning. One area where a robust common understanding may be lacking, based on an analysis of UNFPA staff views, is the division of labour and cooperation regarding UNFPA support for national emergency preparedness and ensuring complementary development and humanitarian work.

Element 1.2.5: The Strategic Plan emphasises collective accountability, but there is no document that breaks this accountability down into responsibilities for results by individual business unit is not available.

The UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25, the Integrated Results and Resources Framework (IRRF) and the UNFPA Business Model prioritise results-based management and actively promote and support an organisational culture oriented towards results.
The Strategic Plan 2022-25 emphasises 'collective accountability for results' (paragraph 94), and the global and regional programmes, annexed to the Strategic Plan 2022-25 (Annex 4.1) reflect the respective roles and expectations of the headquarters and regional offices in achieving the results of the UNFPA Strategic Plan. Documents specifying the direct responsibilities of each division, branch or unit (e.g., terms of reference) were not identified.

MI 1.2 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 1.3: Strategic plan supports the implementation of global commitments and associated results	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.67**
Element 1: The strategic plan is aligned to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, wider normative frameworks and their results	3
Element 2: A system is in place and applied to track the organisation's contributions to the achievement of the SDGs and other normative results (QCPR, Grand Bargain and the DAC recommendation on the HDP nexus)	2
Element 3: Progress on implementation and aggregated results against global commitments are published at least annually	3
MI 1.3 Analysis	**Evidence documents**
Element 1.3.1: The UNFPA Strategic Plan articulates clear alignment with the SDG Agenda, the ICPD and relevant human rights conventions. However, references to important humanitarian frameworks, to which UNFPA is signatory, are missing. According to the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25, UNFPA is aligned with all 17 SDGs, and it contributes to the following SDGs, especially SDGs 3 and 5 (also see SDG targets in the IRRF that serve to measure progress towards the transformative results): - Goal 1 (end poverty in all its forms everywhere) - Goal 3 (ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages); - Goal 5 (achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls); - Goal 10 (reduce inequality within and among countries); - Goal 13 (take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts); - Goal 16 (promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels); - Goal 17 (strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development)	207, 58, 116, 53, 62

Regarding other normative frameworks, the Strategic Plan consistently refers to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) to which UNFPA is visibly connected, emphasising the imperative for UNFPA interventions that expedite the realisation of its outcomes. It refers to international conventions such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and Universal Periodic Reviews. Staff interviews clearly visualised the centrality of the ICPD Programme of Action and UNFPA's role in advancing its implementation, celebrating success and, in light of political pushback, upholding agreed-upon standards and results.

On the humanitarian side, however, the Strategic Plan fails to highlight the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-30 or the Grand Bargain and the OECD-DAC recommendation on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus to which UNFPA is a signatory. While not mentioned in the narrative, the IRRF of the Strategic Plan 2022-25 includes an indicator related to the Sendai Framework - i.e., the number of countries that adopt and implement national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-30.

With the Information Note 'Update on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 72/279 on the repositioning of the United Nations development system' (2021), UNFPA welcomed the adoption of the 2020 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) of operational activities for development of the United Nations system and affirmed the alignment of the Strategic Plan 2022-25 with the QCPR and its major provisions. Notably, according to the Note, the alignment with the QCPR is ensured by strengthening UNFPA's Business Model with differentiated modes of engagement tailored to national circumstances, strengthening its programming on building resilience and enhancing the youth-women peace and security dimensions, and strengthening its commitment to social and environmental sustainability in programming.

Element 1.3.2: It is difficult to identify a plausible contribution to UNFPA's outcome-level targets. The system, including the recently introduced Quantum+, tracks UNFPA's <u>outputs</u> against Strategic Plan indicators, but not outcomes.

A system is in place and applied to track the delivery of the outputs of UNFPA's Strategic Plan. Those are intended to directly contribute to achieving targets mainly for SDGs 3 and 5 and pertinent objectives of the ICPD Programme of Action. However, the monitoring system does not track the contributions of these outputs to progress made globally. **UNFPA do not clearly demonstrate the contributions of the organisation to results, i.e. to achieving the transformative results by 2030.** In interviews, UNFPA staff explained that this was part of an agreement across UN agencies for ethical reasons (see 7.2.6).

UNFPA is part of system-wide monitoring of the implementation of QCPR commitments. It monitors and tracks its humanitarian efforts against Grand Bargain commitments and self-reports its performance via the yearly stakeholder reporting. UNFPA's performance is regularly mentioned in the consolidated report issued by the Grand Bargain.

As regards the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-30, UNFPA monitors the relevant performance indicator included in the Strategic Plan 2022-25 - i.e., the number of countries that adopt and implement national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-30. However, the indicator is at the outcome level and doesn't represent UNFPA's contributions.

No specific system was observed for monitoring the implementation of the OECD-DAC recommendation on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

Element 1.3.3: UNFPA annual reports on the implementation of the Strategic Plan and key outputs thanks to UNFPA are published on the UNFPA homepage. UNFPA does not

publish results against other global commitments.

As indicated in interviews and confirmed through a review of the website, each year, the Executive Director of UNFPA submits a progress report detailing the implementation of the Strategic Plan to the Executive Board. According to UNFPA, the inter-agency agreement is to feature these annual reports at the output level. The reports for 2022 and 2023 thus highlight the results in UNFPA programme countries, intricately linked to the six Strategic Plan outputs. The extent to which delivered outputs have actually contributed to accelerating progress towards the transformative results and implementing the ICPD Programme of Action, including based on evaluative evidence, is not part of the narrative.

The annual progress report on implementing the Strategic Plan includes an annex detailing the implementation of the QCPR recommendations, following a common format defined by UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UN Women. This encompasses aspects such as funding, governance, functioning and contribution to United Nations operational activities for development, as well as follow-up, monitoring and reporting. The progress report also includes an annex entitled "humanitarian update", which covers but does not provide direct reporting of UNFPA results against the Grand Bargain (which is reported on via other public outlets; see Element 1.3.2 above) and the OECD-DAC recommendation on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

The Executive Director's annual report is available on the UNFPA website (Executive Board tag).

MI 1.3 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

MI 1.4: Financial framework supports mandate implementation	Score
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.83**
Element 1: Annual financial and budgetary planning ensures that all priority areas have adequate funding or are at least given clear priority in cases where funding is very limited	3
Element 2: A single integrated financial and budgetary framework ensures transparency	4
Element 3: The financial and budgetary framework is reviewed regularly by the Executive Board	4
Element 4: Funding windows or other incentives are in place to encourage Member States to provide more flexible/un-earmarked funding at global, regional and country levels	4
Element 5: Policies/measures are in place to ensure that earmarked funds target priority areas	4
Element 6: [United Nations] Funding modalities with UN reform: Percentage of non-core resources for UNFPA development-related activities channelled through inter-agency pooled funds (target 2023: 10%)	4
MI 1.4 Analysis	**Evidence documents**
Element 1.4.1: Although it is impossible to state that annual financial and budgetary planning ensures that all transformative results have adequate funding at all levels, an attempt to set clear priorities considering limited funding is evident with the exception that planning does not differentiate between GBV on the one hand and harmful practices on the other. Financial and budgetary planning at UNFPA is conducted in tandem with strategic planning, which occurs every four years and is approved by the Executive Board as an Integrated Budget as noticed through desktop review and confirmed by interviews. Revenue projections are formulated based on donor indications, an analysis of contribution trends, and an assessment	205-206, 60, 199-202, 12, 115, 220-222, 164, 60, 95, 38, 141, 214, 12, 13.

of the funding landscape. Available programme funds are allocated to UNFPA country offices through a Resource Allocation System (RAS), implemented at the headquarters level, and a Resource Distribution System (RDS), implemented at the regional level to adjust to local and regional contexts and priorities. Decisions on resource planning for individual programmes and interventions - i.e., prioritisation of fund utilisation by outcome and output areas - are decentralised to all country offices (also see Element 3.3.1).

Official documents to the Executive Board do not provide upfront information on annual resource allocation and distribution. Throughout the Strategic Plan cycle, UNFPA undergoes both internal and external audits, leading to the release of a yearly Statistical and Financial Review to the UNFPA Executive Board and a Report of the Board of Auditors. Such Statistical and Financial Reviews do not serve as annual budgets but rather as a retrospective review of the financial activities of the preceding year.

The partner survey shows positive perception (Q1_4). 65% of responding partners strongly agree (13%) and agree (52%) that UNFPA's financial framework supports the effective implementation of the Fund's mandate and strategy. Responding governing partners (66%) and financial partners (65%) are most supportive.

Figure 5: UNFPA organises and runs itself in a way that fully supports its strategic direction and vision
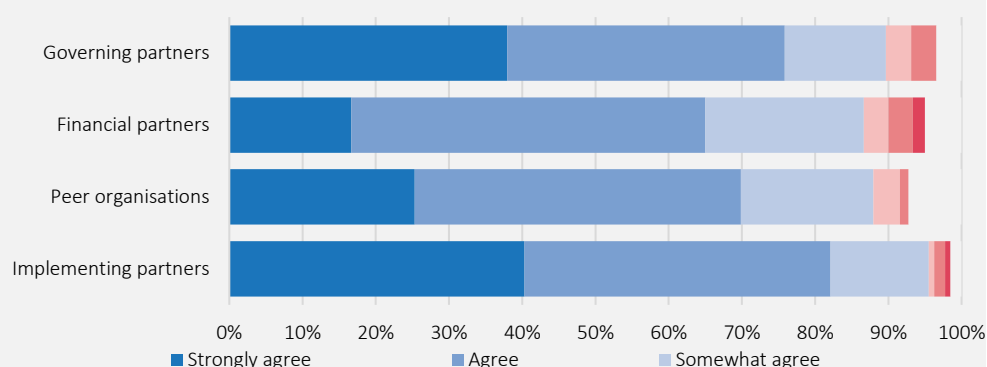
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

The quadrennial Integrated Budget for 2022-25 prioritises the transformative result "unmet need for family planning", based on the rationale that ending the unmet need for family planning indirectly contributes to reducing maternal mortality. Hence, the share of overall programme funds allocated to the three Strategic Plan outcomes (see the IRRF) was expected to be as follows:
- Outcome 1 (reduction in the unmet need for family planning accelerated): 40 %%;
- Outcome 2 (reduction of preventable maternal deaths accelerated): 35 %;
- Outcome 3 (reduction in GBV and harmful practices accelerated): 25 %

As regards Outcome 3, financial and budgetary planning does not differentiate between the acceleration in the reduction in GBV on the one hand and harmful practices on the other.
The Mid-term review of the Integrated Budget in 2024 forecasts declining resources in 2024 and 2025. It proposes keeping the original indicative breakdown of programmatic resources for the three outcomes despite recent spending patterns showing growth in expenditures for achieving Outcome 3, with attendant decreases in the relative shares of the other outcomes.

Element 1.4.2: The single Integrated Budget ensures transparency within and outside the Fund.

The UNFPA Integrated Budget is developed in a consultative, bottom-up manner before its approval by the Executive Board. It provides a single budgetary framework, which includes both core and non-core resources in a transparent way as mentioned in interviews and confirmed through desktop review. The Integrated Budget is developed and managed based on the UNFPA Financial Regulations and Rules (2014), which encompasses various aspects, including funds, trust funds, programme resources, and the institutional budget. It also outlines provisions for internal and external audits, internal controls, financial periods, and procurement. This framework applies to the entire UNFPA, including rules for Implementing Partners where appropriate, and is accessible on the UNFPA website (https://www.unfpa.org/admin-resource/financial-framework).

Element 1.4.3: The Integrated Budget and annual Statistical Financial Reviews are reviewed regularly by the Executive Board for comments and decisions.

The UNFPA Executive Board has strong oversight of the Financial Regulations and Rules and can amend financial regulations. Executive Board members approve the Integrated Budget and any amendments following the Mid-term review. They are, each year, given the opportunity to comment on a Statistical Financial Review, a Report of the Board of Auditors on UNFPA's financial report and audited financial statements, and a Report of the Executive Director on the recommendations of the United Nations Board of Auditors, which details the implementation of recommendations from the United Nations Board of Auditors for the previous financial year. This report outlines the actions taken to ensure sound financial management practices and presents upcoming measures to address the recommendations. For instance, the section "Follow-up of previous recommendations" of the Report of the Board of Auditors on the financial statements 2022 states that "the Board verified the status of implementation of previous year's recommendations for the period ended 31 December 2021" and that 75% of the outstanding recommendations had been implemented and 19% were under implementation. 6% of outstanding recommendations had not been implemented.

Element 1.4.4: UNFPA is very clear regarding its preference for core and *lightly* earmarked non-core funding. To this intent, the Fund has carried out annual Structured Funding Dialogues and set up agency-specific thematic funds.

Structured Funding Dialogues have been carried out annually between UNFPA and its Executive Board within the framework of system-wide funding and collaboration, as spelt out in the United Nations Funding Compact, endorsed at the United Nations Economic and Social Council operational activities for development segment in May 2019, as a set of ambitious commitments by Member States and UNSDG agencies to ensure more predictable and flexible funding for United Nations development activities through providing incentives for Member States to contribute funds, and for UN development entities to increase their coherence, cooperation, transparency and efficiency. Structured Funding Dialogues serve to improve the quantity and quality of funding to achieve UNFPA's corporate objectives as mentioned in interviews and confirmed through desktop review. However, in 2022, the formative evaluation of the UNFPA engagement in the UNDS reform found that financial and political landscapes significantly influence donor funding patterns more than agency performance, despite the Funding Compact. The Funding Compact 2.0 was endorsed at ECOSOC in 2024. UNFPA is now working closely with UN DCO and sister agencies on developing a harmonised global monitoring framework and scorecards for each top donor which will further incentivise donors to align with the Funding Compact commitments. UNFPA has also established/continued to promote four entity-specific thematic funds for lightly earmarked funding: the Supplies Partnership (since 2008), the Maternal and Newborn Health Thematic Fund (since 2008), the Humanitarian Thematic Fund (since 2019), and the Population Data Thematic Fund (since 2020). UNFPA encourages all Member States to prioritise these funding instruments when allocating voluntary non-core resources.

Interviewees specified that "UNFPA works hard to provide greater levels of visibility for donors to core and flexible funding via various reports, documents and digital communications". These documents include a core brochure highlighting core donors each year, as well as other social media visibility and advocacy materials. Recognition is also given to donor for thematic funds, UNFPA's second most flexible form of funding. Core and thematic funding donors are thus prioritised for visibility.

Element 1.4.5: UNFPA's Resource Mobilisation Strategy serves to target core and non-core funding in a complementary manner towards the Fund's priority areas.

With an increase in earmarked contributions comes the risk of fragmentation. UNFPA's Resource Mobilisation Strategy 2022-25 serves to "mobilise and leverage the USD 5,045 million in resources needed to deliver on the UNFPA's 2022-25 Strategic Plan and to help catalyse financing to close the USD 222 billion financing gap for the three zeros". Aside from fully flexible core funds, the next important funding category is UNFPA's current four thematic funds, which are earmarked, but only lightly (pooled donor funds). As mentioned in Element 1.4.4 they are: the Supplies Partnership, the Maternal and Newborn Health Thematic Fund, the Humanitarian Thematic Fund, and the Population Data Thematic Fund. Being closely linked to the Fund's transformative results, they facilitate alignment with UNFPA's priority areas, under the leadership of fund managers, dedicated committees and the UNFPA Resource Management Committee (RMC). In terms of their performance, while the Supplies Partnership has maintained a high level of ambition (USD 250 million annually), meeting the funding goals of the other thematic trust funds has been a more mixed success. In addition, UNFPA mobilises tightly earmarked resources (bilateral single donor contributions) to compensate funding gaps in implementing its development and, increasingly, humanitarian work. No policies or measures are in place to ensure that non-core resources target priority areas, but alignment is assumed - e.g., alignment with CPD outputs and outcomes.

Element 1.4.6: UNFPA has attracted funding through the United Nations pooled funding modality, exceeding, often considerably, the Funding Compact target of 10%.

Compared to project/programme-specific funds, non-core funding provided by Member States through development-related inter-agency pooled funds is considered of higher quality because they give the organisations more flexibility than tightly earmarked funds. The percentage of non-core resources for UNFPA development-related activities channelled through inter-agency pooled funds has fluctuated over recent years, but constantly exceeded the Funding Compact target of 10%: 2018: 18%; 2019: 26%; 2020: 32%; 2021: 30%; 2022: 18%; 2023: 33%.

According to the UNFPA Statistical and Financial Review for the year 2023, combined contributions received by UNFPA through pooled funds and interorganisational transfers declined slightly from USD 218.7 million in 2022 to USD 208.2 million in 2023, which still corresponds to UNFPA's top donor to non-core resources for the fifth year in a row.

Overall, only 54% of partner survey respondents strongly agree (17%) or agree (37%) that UNFPA is promoting and using pooled funding, including multi-donor trust funds (Q1_8). While the percentage was higher among governing partners (76%), 26% of participating partners lacked information.

MI 1.4 Evidence confidence	High confidence

KPI 2: Structures and mechanisms in place and applied to support the implementation of global frameworks for cross-cutting issues at all levels, in line with the 2030 Sustainable	KPI score

Development Agenda principles	
Satisfactory	**3.42**

UNFPA strategic plans do not utilise the term "cross-cutting issues". The strategic plan 2022-25 identified six "accelerators" to achieve its six outputs. We have therefore interpreted KPI 2 accordingly and made changes to cover the following identified cross-cutting issues: gender equality, environment, human rights and innovation/digitalisation.

UNFPA has greatly improved gender equality and women's empowerment recognition at policy level. The UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25 specifies that the Fund's main target groups are women, adolescents, and youth, especially adolescent girls. The strategy is grounded in the principle of gender equality, thus ensuring that UNFPA applies a gender lens to all its work. The Gender Equality Strategy for 2022-25 (UNFPA's third such strategy) outlines the corporate approach to integrating gender equality and the rights of women and adolescent girls into UNFPA planning and programming. There is a clear commitment to gender equality within reporting and evaluation systems, as well strong commitment to adopt a transformative approach, notably through its Agency, Choice and Access (ACA) framework. It must however be noted that the mainstreaming of the gender transformative approach at corporate level could be strengthened by a greater appropriation of gender screening tools and capacity development.

UNFPA has demonstrated its growing attention to climate change and environmental sustainability. While the last MOPAN assessment indicated that the Fund did not have a dedicated policy on environmental sustainability or climate change, UNFPA has made significant progress on these issues. The Strategic Plan 2022-25 indeed pays attention to climate change and commits UNFPA to mainstreaming social and environmental sustainability. The adoption of the Environmental Efficiency Strategy 2021-25 as well as UNFPA's efforts to reduce its carbon emissions demonstrate the effective actions on this cross-cutting issue. However, dedicated resources are not sufficient to reach UNFPA's objectives and ambitions on this issue.

Learning from the Strategic Plan 2018-21, UNFPA has included in its Strategic Plan 2022-25 greater emphasis on promoting human rights for all and the necessity of "leaving no one behind". The Human-Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) and the Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) principle are two of the six accelerators in this new Strategic Plan. Currently, the HRBA and the LNOB principle are not institutionalised through a single corporate strategy but rather integrated as a cross-cutting issue at the corporate level through guidance and the SES framework. The fact that those accelerators are not monitored in terms of resource allocation makes it difficult to appreciate the dedicated resources.

Significant progress has also been observed regarding innovation and digitalisation, as Innovation is institutionalised to a greater extent as compared to what had been observed by the previous MOPAN assessment. Innovation and digitalisation became one of the six accelerators, although there is not yet any dedicated policy/strategy document to ensure and track the strengthening of innovations to improve programming results. Nonetheless, the new Innovation Strategy is being developed and several initiatives such as the Equalizer Accelerator Fund have already been implemented.

MI 2.1: [Gender equality] Corporate/sectoral and country strategies respond to and/or reflect the intended results of normative frameworks for gender equality and women's empowerment	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.50**
Element 1: Dedicated policy statement on gender equality available and showing evidence of application	4
Element 2: Gender equality indicators and targets fully integrated into the UNFPA's strategic plan 2022-25 and corporate objectives	4
Element 3: Accountability systems (including corporate reporting and evaluation) reflect gender equality indicators and targets	4
Element 4: Gender equality screening checklists or similar tools inform the design for all new interventions, including humanitarian assistance	3
Element 5: Human and financial resources are available to address gender equality issues	3
Element 6: Capacity development on gender is being or has been conducted for UNFPA personnel	3

MI 2.1 Analysis	Evidence documents
Element 2.1.1: UNFPA has dedicated policy statements on gender equality, through both its Strategic Plan and UNFPA Gender Equality Strategy, the latter including an implementation framework showing evidence of application. The UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25 specifies that the Fund's main target groups are women, adolescents, and youth, especially adolescent girls. The strategy is grounded in the principle of gender equality, thus ensuring that UNFPA applies a gender lens to all its work, either through a targeted approach (see Strategic Plan output 3 "gender and social norms") or through gender mainstreaming. Paying more attention to human rights-based and gender-transformative approaches ("accelerator") and incorporating the multisectoral needs of women, adolescents and youth and addressing structural inequalities ("strategic shift") are expected to enhance UNFPA's performance in the achievement of the Strategic Plan outputs and the transformative results, whereby ensuring that women of all ages (especially women of reproductive age and young women) are free to develop their abilities and make choices without limitations set by stereotypes, gender norms or roles or prejudices. In addition, UNFPA issued a Gender Equality Strategy for 2022-25 (UNFPA's third such strategy) that outlines the corporate approach to integrating gender equality and the rights of women and adolescent girls into UNFPA planning and programming. The strategy emphasises that for the transformative results to be realised, women and adolescent girls must have greater agency, choice and access (ACA) to and for the realisation of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). The strategy includes an implementation framework, called the 'ACA framework', which consists of three key elements: • Pathways, which are "core areas where structural change, enhanced gender transformative programming, and service delivery are accelerated" • Enablers, which are meant to "create environments that can support and sustain the pathways so they can catalyse change" • Linkages, which are "issues and strategies that need to be addressed and leveraged, to support UNFPA in improving its adaptability and flexibility in dealing with emergent crises, environments, and trends". The implementation framework also defines who is responsible for implementing UNFPA Gender Equality Strategy and the key actions to be taken by UNFPA, thus showing further evidence of implementation. To showcase evidence of application, the strategy includes a framework to track results for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, linking selected desired results for the 2022-25 Strategic plan period with related indicators. UNFPA also applies United nations gender equality indicators to track results. Additionally, UNFPA published in October 2023 its Strategy and Operational Plan to Scale up and Strengthen Interventions on Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies 2023-25. This Strategy aims at enabling delivery on UNFPA's Strategic Plan's call to provide leadership "in system-wide efforts as the lead agency" on GBV in emergencies. It defines actions that aim at meeting the escalating needs of women and girls in humanitarian settings and fulfilling UNFPA's role in delivering survivor-centred GBV services. It is accompanied by UNFPA's GBV Operational Plan, titled "Flourish", which sets a vision for UNFPA programmes to end GBV across four interconnected pillars: prevention, response, creation of enabling environments, and use of data. Therefore, through its Strategic Plan which applies a gender lens to all UNFPA's work and through UNFPA Gender Equality Strategy, UNFPA demonstrates its efforts towards promoting gender equality and measures taken to ensure the application of its gender equality policy. The survey deployed as part of this assessment confirms that UNFPA promotes gender equality through its strategies and programmes: more than 90% of surveyed governing partners, financial partners, knowledge partners and implementing partners agree with this statement and more than 80% of	11, 41, 68, 80, 114, 158,167, 207, 210, 212, 213, 235, 226.

surveyed peer organisations agree.

Figure 6: UNFPA promotes gender equality through its strategies and programmes (including its humanitarian response)
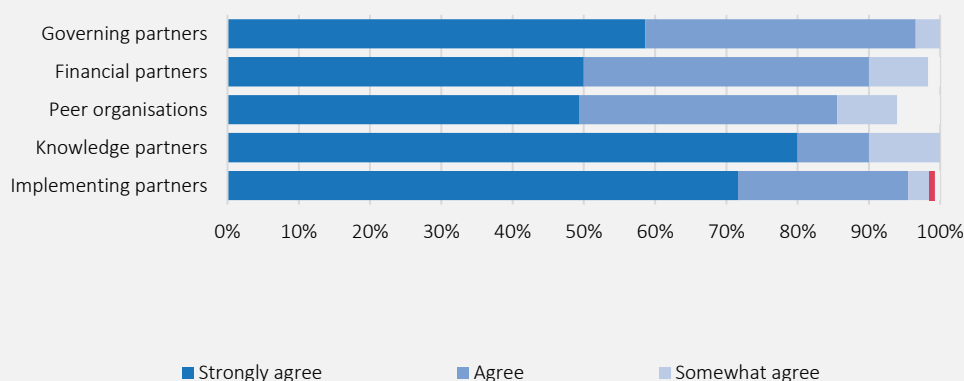
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

Element 2.1.2: In addition to gender equality indicators integrated across all outcomes of UNFPA's Strategic Plan, UNFPA's Gender Equality Strategy sets gender equality indicators and targets.

All three Strategic Plan outcomes are closely aligned with gender equality and have the potential to contribute to structural changes in the unequal power dynamics between men and women. These outcomes are:
- by 2025, the reduction in the unmet need for family planning has accelerated;
- by 2025, the reduction of preventable maternal deaths has accelerated;
- by 2025, the reduction in GBV and harmful practices has accelerated.

Similarly, all six interconnected Strategic Plan outputs defined for the period are correlated with gender equality, especially output 3: "by 2025, strengthened mechanisms and capacities of actors and institutions to address discriminatory gender and social norms to advance gender equality and women's decision-making".

Indicators accompany Strategic Plan outcomes and outputs. UNFPA's gender equality strategy highlights a sample of indicators related to the Fund's work towards gender equality and the elimination of GBV and harmful practices across outputs 1, 2, 3,4 and 6 - i.e.,

- OP1.2 (Resources for transformative results)
- OP1.10 (Integrating population change within policies related to the transformative results)
- OP2.11 (Benefiting from scaled-up services)
- OP3.1 (National and subnational mechanisms to address social and gender norms)
- OP3.2 (Capacity for changing discriminatory social and gender norms)
- OP3.5 (Promoting positive masculinities)
- OP4.1 (Strengthening health information management information system)
- OP4.2 (Strengthening disaggregated incidence data on GBV and harmful practices)
- OP4.5 (Strengthening analysis on population, megatrends and the three transformative results)
- OP6.3 (Youth participation in policy-making).

However, the Executive Board approved the Strategic Plan without baselines and targets. Baselines

and targets were included later in the 2022 output scorecard report.

UNFPA Strategy for Promoting Gender Equality 2022-25 defines a list of selected desired results for the 2022-25 Strategic Plan period, related to SDGs and Strategic Plan indicators. The tracking framework shows that the Gender Equality Strategy is monitored against 16 SDG and Strategic Plan's indicators, demonstrating an alignment between this Gender Equality Strategy, UNFPA's Strategic Plan and SDGs.

Element 2.1.3: Gender equality indicators and targets are integrated across UNFPA's reporting and evaluation at both global and programmatic levels. UNFPA's accountability systems provide elements on gender equality regarding obtained results and UNFPA's expenses.

Considering the Executive Director's Report on the Strategic Plan's implementation, gender equality stands as a key component among the regularly monitored indicators and targets. Notably, the output most directly addressing this theme, namely 'gender and social norms,' exhibits the lowest achievement percentage to date. However, challenges intrinsic to UNFPA's scope of action are delineated in the Executive Director's Report, encompassing heightened humanitarian and fragile situations compounded by the far-reaching impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the country level, the Report of the Executive Director on Progress in implementing the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25 (Annex 3: Results achieved at the country level) outlines results obtained regarding gender equality for each country covered.

In terms of evaluation, the 2022-25 evaluation strategy prioritises the gender approach, alongside other human rights perspectives. It is essential to highlight that in 2021, the first specific evaluation of UNFPA's contributions to gender equality and women's empowerment (2012-20) was launched. In the annual statistical and financial reviews, expenditures for each output are tracked, including those related to gender and social norms. Additionally, the gender marker is utilised to monitor expenses across all programmes.

Element 2.1.4: UNFPA has developed several gender equality screening checklists and mobilises similar tools by other UN agencies to inform the design for all new interventions, but the adoption of those tools could be further widespread.

UNFPA has developed tools and screening checklist for a human rights and gender equality approach to designing interventions. A non-exhaustive list of those tools includes:

- the Social and Gender Norms Toolkit that offers practical guidance on designing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating programs aimed at shifting harmful social and gender norms. It is grounded in human rights principles, promotes gender-transformative approaches, and provides a wide range of diverse examples from UNFPA's three transformative result areas across the humanitarian - development - peace nexus.
- a guidance note that defines the distinct objectives and links between these two resources to support GBV practitioners in navigating the use of both across a range of contexts ("Addressing Gender-Based Violence Across Contexts: Gender-Based Violence Interagency Minimum Standards and the Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence").
- a technical note published in 2023 provides guidance on gender-transformative approaches and on how adopt them in programming.
- a technical note for practitioners was also published in 2020 on gender-transformative approaches in the global programme to end marriage.
- a technical note on gender norms published in 2020 aims at providing 'practical guidance on the application of key concepts and effective programming approaches'.
- the Guidance Note for Applying a Human Rights Based Approach to programming also covers gender equality.

Regarding humanitarian action, publicly available tools are mostly produced by Regional Offices and focus on Gender-Based Violence and Sexual and Reproductive Health. The guide "Integration of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Gender-Based Violence Considerations in Emergency Shelters" published in April 2021 aims at supporting shelter managers and coordinators as well as Health providers, National Ministries of Health, National Gender machineries, National Bodies for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Coordination bodies to reduce the risks of Gender-Based Violence and integrate essential actions for the provision of lifesaving SRH and GBV response services in emergency shelters through improved planning and response actions. The author of this guide is UNFPA Sub-regional Office for the English and Dutch Speaking Caribbean. More recently, UNFPA published the guidance "Integrating Gender-based Violence and Sexual and Reproductive Health Approaches in Humanitarian Settings" (published in February 2024). This tool is "intended for use by GBV and SRH service providers and programme managers who wish to start, strengthen, or scale up integrated GBV and SRH interventions in humanitarian settings within the Arab region".

At the country level, organisation-specific tools like Gender Equality Accelerator Tool and guidance for developing country programmes are used.

Interviewees confirmed the use of those UNFPA tools, as well as UN system's tools such as UN Gender Mainstreaming Resource guide and UNCT gender marker guidance. However, it must be noted that, according to interviewees, challenges persist in widespreading the adoption and implementation of these tools beyond issue-specific champions.

Element 2.1.5: UNFPA ensures that human and financial resources to address gender equality issues are available, through its Gender and Human Rights Branch and the significant financial resources dedicated to gender equality issues. Yet, the increased demand on these issues, additional resources would be beneficial.

Currently, UNFPA has a Gender and Human Rights (GHR) Branch in the Technical Division at Headquarters, with plans to relocate to Nairobi, Kenya, by 2025. This Branch provides strategic guidance and technical leadership in the substantive areas of gender, social norms and human rights, contributing to position UNFPA's policies and programming at global level, regional level and national level. The positioning of the GHR Branch within the Technical Division is also meant to ensure coherence and integration across UNFPA's thematic areas of work. The Chief of the GHR Branch is, among others, responsible for the oversight and management of the financial and human resources of the GHR Branch.

The evaluation of UNFPA support to gender equality and women's empowerment (2012-20) concluded that "UNFPA possesses adequate human resources globally, regionally, and at the country level to drive gender equality through dedicated programmes and mainstreaming of GEWE". However, the "Agency, Choice and Access UNFPA Strategy" states that resources available to address gender equality issues are not sufficient to achieve UNFPA's objectives regarding gender equality and ending GBV. This statement is based on the analysis of reported staff positions (excluding contractors and consultants) that highlighted that UNFPA staff dedicated to gender and GBV have limited working experience (81% of UNFPA staff dedicated to gender and GBV are found at entry-level positions) and that technical expertise for gender and GBV is mainly outsourced. 69% of Country Offices expressed their need for greater support to gender- and GBV-sensitive approaches to monitoring and evaluation, and 63% for mainstreaming of GBV and gender into programming. (Those figures are stated in the ACA Strategy, quoting a "review of reported staff positions" but the review itself could not be found as it is not referenced in the document).

In terms of finances for gender equality, considering the Gender Marker, 66.1 % of the overall programme expenses were directed towards activities either primarily focused on gender equality and women's empowerment or making a significant contribution to gender equality in 2022. The breakdown of expenses by Strategic Plan outcome indicates that in the same year, the majority of resources were allocated to Outcome 3, specifically addressing the reduction in GBV and harmful practices (36.6%) whereby no break-down is available for GBV on the one hand and harmful

practices on the other. Analysing the distribution of expenses by Strategic Plan outputs, the gender and social norms' category emerged as the second highest in terms of spending (16.2% of the total).

Some interviewees raised questions about the availability of sufficient resources dedicated to addressing gender equality issues. For them, the increased demand for work related to gender equality and human rights has not been accompanied with a proportionate increase in resources. Furthermore, as gender related issues are cross-cutting issues and cross-agencies issues, some interviewees call for a wider definition of resource mobilisation to address them.

Element 2.1.6: UNFPA has developed several trainings to ensure capacity development on gender for UNFPA personnel, although greater proficiency and hands-on experience remain necessary to guarantee gender mainstreaming in all work streams.

According to the 2021 evaluation of UNFPA's contributions to gender equality and women's empowerment (2012-20): "in line with others in the UN system, UNFPA introduced the mandatory "I Know Gender" course for all staff in 2016. It remains the primary broad-based staff capacity development in this area, complemented by some tailored training for senior managers". However, the same assessment indicated a perception among the staff that UNFPA lacks sufficient proficiency and hands-on experience in integrating gender perspectives. Even though colleagues may exhibit a certain degree of awareness, there is a recognised need for more frequent skill training. Moreover, gender was not yet a prominent element in the competency framework (although this was being revised at the time of the evaluation).

UNFPA envisages to implement a range of activities, including "to develop staff capacity and competency for gender mainstreaming in all work streams". Accordingly, several gender-related trainings have been launched in response to identified, specific internal staff needs and to support gender-focused capacity building on the programme side of the organisation. As per example, the following trainings took place in in 2022, 2023 and 2024:

- Women@UNFPA Coaching Programme (2022, 2023, 2024), a career coaching programme for Women@UNFPA, a voluntary Employee Resource Group that aims to foster a diverse, inclusive and safe workplace aligned with UNFPA's organisational mission, values, goals, business practices and objectives.
- Women's Security Training (2022, 2023), a 2-day face to face Women's Security Awareness Training to provide a safe space for female personnel to freely express themselves, build self-confidence, and empower women across UNFPA. This training aims at contributing to the UN 's commitment to providing gender-responsive security management.
- Expanding Contraceptive Options (2023, 2024), a series of live webinars to build the capacity of Family Planning/SRHR Focal Points in Country/Regional Offices and at HQ level in applying the contraceptive method skew and method mix. The webinars also focus on how to address barriers and negative trends driving contraceptive use.
- Gender Transformative Approaches (2023), an interactive workshop to enhance capacity and equip staff with the knowledge and skills to integrate GTA into the design and adaptation of programs.

MI 2.1 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 2.2: [Environment] Corporate/sectoral and country strategies respond to and/or reflect the intended results of normative frameworks for environmental sustainability and climate change	Score
Overall MI rating	Satisfactory
Overall MI score	3.33
Element 1: Dedicated policy statement on environmental sustainability and climate change available and showing evidence of application	3
Element 2: Environmental sustainability and climate change indicators and targets fully integrated	3

into the UNFPA strategic plan 2022-25 and corporate objectives	
Element 3: Accountability systems (including corporate reporting and evaluation) reflect environmental sustainability and climate change indicators and targets	4
Element 4: Environmental screening checklists or similar tools inform design for all new interventions, including humanitarian assistance	4
Element 5: Human and financial resources are available to address environmental sustainability and climate change issues	2
Element 6: Capacity development on environmental sustainability and climate change is being or has been conducted for UNFPA personnel	4

MI 2.2 Analysis	**Evidence documents**
Element 2.2.1: In recent years, UNFPA has paid more attention to climate change and environmental sustainability. The integration of climate change in UNFPA's Strategic Plan and the adoption of the Environmental Efficiency Strategy, as well as the programmatic framework that accompanies this Strategy, demonstrate the availability and the application of dedicated policy statement on environmental sustainability and climate change.	
At the highest level, the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25 recognises the effects of climate change on achieving the transformative results: "Climate change and other natural disasters pose major threats to achieving the ICPD Programme of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals. Droughts, water insecurity, floods and landslides, severe tropical storms and hurricanes, and protracted humanitarian crises displace millions of people; increase food insecurity and vulnerability to diseases; disrupt the provision and use of services; and lead to an upsurge in gender-based violence. These factors disproportionately affect women and girls, children, older persons and other vulnerable groups". Consequently, one of the twelve strategic shifts since the previous Strategic Plan calls for "integrating the effects of megatrends, such as climate change, demographic shifts, inequalities and digitalisation, into programming".	
Furthermore, the Strategic Plan commits UNFPA to mainstreaming social and environmental sustainability in programming, preventing pollution, reducing the environmental footprint of its programmes and operations, and pursuing climate neutrality as part of the United Nations Strategy for Sustainability Management 2020-30. Accordingly, UNFPA will continue to implement (a) its environmental efficiency strategy to reduce its environmental footprint and (b) its social and environmental standards to ensure that there is no inadvertent harm to people and the environment caused by its programming.	12, 32, 42, 48, 50, 54, 93, 123, 124, 145, 156, 197, 202, 12, 207.
The Environmental Efficiency Strategy (2021-25) stipulates that "UNFPA will plan annual controls of the EES," and the findings will be discussed during Steering Committee meetings. Additionally, it also states that the management review of UNFPA's EES will take place at least once a year and will include the participants of the Steering Committee. UNFPA publishes on its website indicators on the Fund's emissions, as well as Climate Neutral Certificates on a yearly basis, showcasing the Fund's implementation of its emission-reduction initiatives.	
The Policy and Strategy Division (PSD) is responsible for facilitating and providing support related to SES implementation at the programme level, in consultation with the established Inter-Divisional Working Group on the SES or relevant business units, upon request.	
In 2021, the UNFPA East and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) published a value proposition that aims to mainstream climate change across all of UNFPA's work. The value proposition introduced a programmatic framework with four pillars: • Healthy empowered populations, including women, girls and young people: integrate SRHR, gender equality, and population and development into climate adaptation actions to achieve resilience. • Climate-resilient systems; health, protection and education: strengthen the capacity of health systems to protect and improve population health in an unstable and changing climate.	

- Reduced risk, better preparedness and strong emergency response: meet the SRHR needs of those impacted, displaced, and at risk of climate crises, including protection, prevention and response to GBV.
- Population, health and gender data on vulnerability, impact and resilience: ensure that climate-related vulnerability assessments and actions take into account sexual and reproductive health, as well as GBV risks and protective measures, and that they are informed by disaggregated population data.

This programmatic framework resulted from a symposium organised by UNFPA on SRHR, gender and climate change resilience, which aimed to connect ICPD-based action with the achievement of climate change adaptation and resilience. However, there is no evidence of structured or systematic application of the framework globally. While overall respondents to the survey agree that UNFPA promotes environmental sustainability and addresses climate change, few of them disagree (notably implementing financial implementing partners).

Figure 7: UNFPA promotes environmental sustainability and addresses climate change through its strategies and programmes (including its humanitarian response)
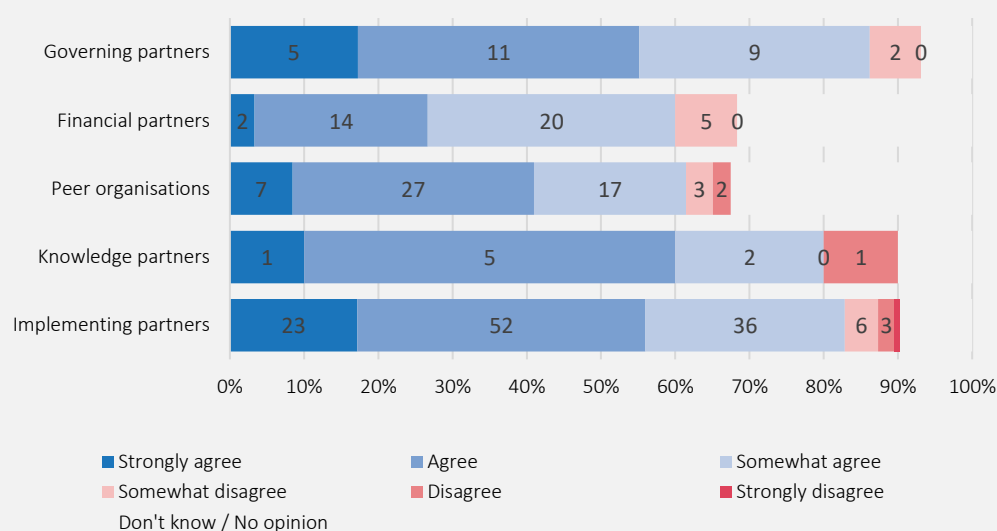
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

Element 2.2.2: Climate change and environmental sustainability indicators and targets have been integrated into the IRRF of the Strategic Plan and UNFPA Environment Efficiency Strategy, in addition to climate change indicators at the programmatic level.

UNFPA's mandate is neither to improve environmental sustainability nor to mitigate climate change. It has thus not integrated such indicators and targets into the Strategic Plan or other corporate strategies. However, the IRRF of the Strategic Plan (Annex 1) has integrated indicators related to the implications of natural disasters and climate change for UNFPA programmes across outputs 1, 4, 5 and 6, including:
- OP1.9 (Transformative results and ICPD Programme of Action integrated into the climate policies)
- OP4.4 (Assuring core population data outputs)
- OP4.5 (Strengthening analysis on population, megatrends and the three transformative results)
- OP5.3 (Inclusion of women and young people in decision-making in humanitarian action)

- OP6.3 (Youth participation in policy-making).

In addition, organisational effectiveness and efficiency output 1 "Improved programming for results" is tracked, inter alia, by indicator 1.24 ("Proportion of UNFPA country offices applying environmental and social standards in programmes") as well as output 2 "Optimised management of resources" by indicator 2.12 ("Proportion of reduction of greenhouse gas emissions").
However, the Strategic Plan was approved by the Executive Board without baselines and targets. Baselines and targets were included later in the 2022 output scorecard report.

Clear targets have been integrated in the UNFPA Environment Efficiency Strategy (2021-25) for reducing the environmental footprint of UNFPA in terms of facilities management (reduce greenhouse gas emissions attributed to facilities by 30% by 2025), travel (reduce 30% of greenhouse gas emissions attributed to travel by 2025), procurement, ICT, events, HR, and programmes.

Interviewees specified that indicators in the Strategic Plan relate to both carbon emission reductions and macro-indicators. Climate change indicators are fully integrated to the design process of new programmes.

Element 2.2.3: Through its guidance for evaluation, its monitoring and evaluation frameworks for Country and regional programmes, and its reporting framework for country and regional offices, UNFPA demonstrate the integration of environmental sustainability and climate change indicators and targets. Such indicators have however not been found in financial statements.

In August 2022, the UNFPA Evaluation Office published the "Guidance on integrating social and environmental standards into evaluations" which aims at "[encouraging] managers and evaluators to dedicate attention to environmental standards as a cross-cutting issue along with other essential social dimensions such as gender equality, human rights, and disability inclusion". The Guidance indicates that evaluations should seek to incorporate environmental standards into evaluation questions, as well as throughout the entire evaluation process (Terms of Reference, evaluation team, data collection, analysis and reporting, as well as dissemination).

At the Country/sub-regional level, 22 target COs and the Caribbean Sub-Regional Office were instructed to screen and assess programmes to ensure compliance with the Social and Environmental Standards (SES). The accountability system includes a rationale for demonstrating how their programmes meet the SES standards, a categorisation of potential SES risks and impacts classified, as well as an action plan for mitigating and managing medium to high-level risks accompanied with a monitoring plan over a specific time period. It must however be noted that this accountability system is primarily based on self-assessment and self-reporting by the COs and no mechanism for verification has been established so far. An analysis of Social and Environmental Standards Implementation was conducted based on the 2022 cohort of COs, but this analysis has not been made publicly available yet.

Additionally, in 2023, UNFPA included environmental-performance indicators for senior managers to ensure accountability towards reaching the strategy's objectives.

The Executive Director's reports on the progress in implementing the Strategic Plan (annex 1: output scorecard and indicator updates) consistently address the corporate targets for greenhouse gas reduction and the implementation of the climate change strategy.

It must however be noted that the Statistical and financial review in the Annual Report of the Executive Director does not contain any climate change/environmental sustainability specific indicator. UNFPA specified that the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) the Fund is audited against do not currently include standards for reporting on environmental

sustainability and climate change. However, as the IPSAS Board has issued an Exposure Draft, some level of reporting on environmental sustainability and climate change is expected to be included in the standards in the near future.

Interviewees specified that the tracking system of the SES Strategy also focuses on how offices integrate environment in the management functions (HR, events, travels, etc.).

Element 2.2.4: Since 2022, UNFPA has developed procedures and environmental screening checklists to inform design for all new interventions.

In 2022, UNFPA launched its "Policy and Procedures for Implementation of UNFPA Social and Environmental Standards in Programming." The policy applies to all UNFPA organisational units involved in programming at country, regional and global levels. The policy includes a social and environmental standards checklist, which comprises three main steps:
- Step 1: Identify relevant social and environmental thematic areas to your programme.
- Step 2: Check for compliance of your programme with the social and environmental standards.
- Step 3: Classify and assess social and environmental risks of the programme.

According to the Social and Environmental Standards Implementation Analysis based on the 2022 cohort of country offices, an e-learning course on "UNFPA Social and Environmental Standards for Programming" was launched mid-2022.

The interview process allowed to confirm the availability and the actual use of environmental screening checklists/tools to inform design for all new interventions. Notably, at the development stage of new UNFPA country programmes, all programmes are effectively designed and developed in compliance with the criteria set in the SES checklist, which covers environmental thematic areas:
- Community Health, Safety and Security
- Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency
- Biodiversity, Ecosystems and Sustainable Natural Resource Management
- Climate Change Mitigation, Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction

Additionally, UNFPA's Policy and Procedures for Selection, Assessment and Registration of Implementing Partner states" priority should be given to organisations who have social and environmental policies in place and are committed to implement the workplan activities in a socially and environmentally responsible and sustainable manner."

Element 2.2.5: Although environment and climate change have gained increasing attention, human and financial resources dedicated to these issues have not grown commensurately and there is insufficient reporting in this area.

While no organisational unit is dedicated to environmental sustainability and climate change at UNFPA headquarters, the following human resources are in place address those issues:

- A team of three (including one partial staff position) based in HQ's Division for Management Services

- Both ESARO and LACRO have full-time advisors on climate change and resilience at P5 level,

- In other regional offices, responsibilities relating to climate change are streamlined within the TORs of existing staff members in other regional offices, 2 and HQ's Programme Division (leadership staff in the Quality Programming Branch is responsible for advancing corporate social and environmental standards, the Population and Development Branch of the Programme Division has a P5 programme adviser on megatrends and a P4 programme staff on climate change agenda).

UNFPA has indeed demonstrated its efforts to streamline responsibilities relating to climate change and environmental sustainability. The UNFPA Policy and Procedures for Implementation of UNFPA Social and Environmental Standards in Programming stipulates that the heads of organisational units (or delegated officers, as appropriate) must designate a social and environmental standards (SES) focal point to manage social and environmental risks and impacts throughout the programme cycle. These focal points are required to play a leading role in programme coordination, management, quality assurance, and oversight.

However, the interviews revealed that despite the increased efforts to address environmental sustainability and climate change issues, the dedicated resources have not increased in proportion to the growing attention on those matters. While staff mobilised on those issues have been able to launch a significant amount of initiatives (such as the online reporting on climate change-related indicators), the human resources do not seem sufficient in regards to UNFPA's objectives and 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda principles.

The financial statements do not provide a breakdown of expenses that allows verifying the volume of expenditures on interventions related to environmental sustainability and climate change. Interviewees indicated that the following amounts were spent in 2022 and 2023 for the implementation of the UNFPA Environmental Efficiency Strategy:
- Dedicated staff: USD 209 000 & USD 220 000
- Carbon Offsets: USD 19 000 & USD 33 000
- GHG Calculator: USD34 000 & USD 34 500
- Facilities improvements: USD 382 000 & USD 57 000
- E-waste Recycling at HQ: USD 5 000 & USD 5 000

Interviewees added that until recently, the Global Programming System (GPS), and currently, Quantum+ allow tracking programme spending on SDG13 (Climate Action). In 2022, these expenses amounted to USD 167.4 million (as reported by UNFPA to OECD). Additionally, from 2024 onwards, Quantum+ has a dedicated tag for SDGs further simplifying monitoring amounts budgeted and spent for advancement of each SDG, including SDG 13 on Climate Action.

Element 2.2.6: UNFPA has developed several training modules, including a mandatory one, to ensure capacity development on environmental sustainability and climate change UNFPA personnel.

UNFPA social and environmental standards focal points must take an e-learning course on the UNFPA Social and Environmental Standards and their application to programming before taking on the responsibility.

As an introduction to UNFPA's commitment to climate neutrality, all UNFPA staff should complete the "Greening the Blue" mandatory training on green office behaviour.

UNFPA also provides for an Environmental Efficiency Community on its intranet, which serves to inform interested staff about the latest developments in this area.

Interviewees specified that a training is annually conducted to show focal points how to use the calculator of carbon emission. Additionally, a training being produced on how to use the SES checklist.

MI 2.2 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 2.3: [Human rights] Corporate/sectoral and country strategies respond to and/or reflect the intended results of normative frameworks for human rights including the protection of vulnerable people (those at risk of being "left behind")	Score
Overall MI rating	Satisfactory

Overall MI score	3.50
Element 1: Dedicated policy statement on human rights available and showing evidence of application	4
Element 2: Human rights indicators and targets fully integrated into the UNFPA strategic plan 2022-25 and corporate objectives	4
Element 3: Accountability systems (including corporate reporting and evaluation) reflect human rights indicators and targets	4
Element 4: Human rights screening checklists or similar tools inform design for all new interventions, including humanitarian assistance	3
Element 5: Human and financial resources are available to address human rights issues	3
Element 6: Capacity development on human rights is being or has been conducted for UNFPA personnel	3

MI 2.3 Analysis	Evidence documents
Element 2.3.1: Although UNFPA does not have a single corporate human rights strategy, the Fund integrates human rights in its Strategic Plan and its procedures related to Country and Regional Programmes and its guidance on programme design. A lesson learnt from the implementation of the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2018-21 was that a development approach that is rooted in respect for fundamental human rights is essential. Furthermore, that a Human Rights-Based approach (HRBA) facilitates more effective and equitable responses to address barriers to achieving the transformative results. As a consequence, the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25 calls for protecting and promoting human rights for all and, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, seeks to ensure that no one is left behind. Human rights clearly cut across the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25, included in the context as well as in the intended outcomes and outputs. It is also worth noting that the HRBA and the LNOB (Leave No One Behind) principle are two of the six accelerators emphasised in the plan to achieve the transformative results and thus universal access to sexual and reproductive health, and the realisation of reproductive rights. Currently, UNFPA does not have one single corporate human rights strategy. Yet, the 2022 revised version of the Policy and Procedures for Development and Approval of the Country Programme Document states that programmes "must be guided by -and advance- key programming principles, such as leaving no one behind, the human-rights-based approach, gender equality and women's empowerment, resilience, sustainability, accountability, and an integrated and multidimensional programming approach". Rather, management and programme personnel rely on guidance for applying a HRBA to programming in general (2020) and to family planning in particular (2023). They can fall back on an operational plan for leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest behind (2021) and a disability inclusion strategy (2021). Despite the absence of a single corporate human rights strategy, UNFPA is seen by interviewed governing partners, financial partners, peer organisations, knowledge partners and implementing partners as an organisation that promotes human rights across its work as more than 80% of respondents agree with this statement.	228, 50, 51, 154, 205-206 217, 114, 158, 24, 170, 26, 98, 92, 202, 132, 91.

Figure 8: UNFPA promotes human rights across its work

Strongly agree | Agree | Somewhat agree | Somewhat disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know / No opinion
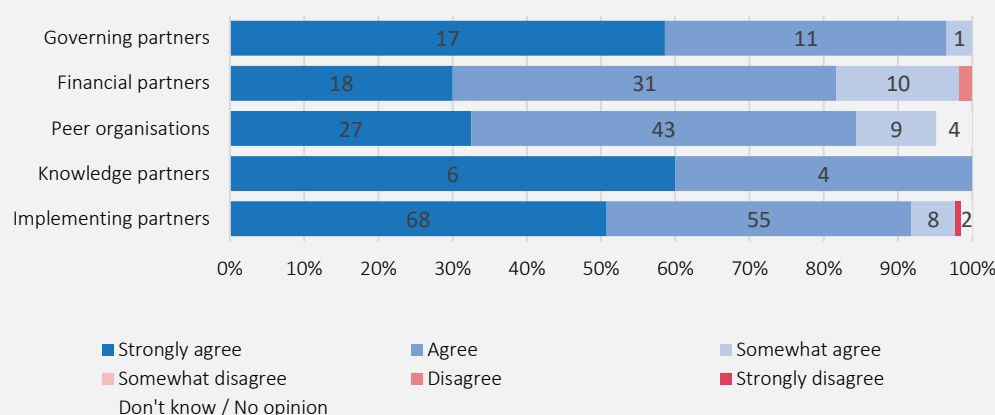
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

Element 2.3.2: Realising and building on human rights are central to UNFPA's Strategic Plan and an integral part of all expected outcomes and outputs. Therefore, UNFPA Strategic Plan includes several human rights indicators.

Realising and building on human rights are central to UNFPA's Strategic Plan and an integral part of all expected outcomes and outputs. It is therefore difficult to extract dedicated human rights indicators and targets from the IRRF. This said, the IRRF (Integrated Results and Resources Framework) does make explicit reference to human rights in outputs 1 and 3 - i.e., in:

- OP1.11 (Legal framework for transformative results); and
- OP3.6 (Following up human rights recommendations related to social and gender norms and discrimination).

Furthermore, human rights and the LNOB principle, in particular as regards disability, are the subject of organisational effectiveness and efficiency output indicators that track improved programming for results:

- OEE1.1 (Proportion of new country programmes that meet organisational quality standards for technical quality, including (i) a focus on accelerating leaving no one behind and (ii) addressing the rights of persons with disabilities)
- OEE 1.3 (Proportion of country offices that use markers for tracking and reporting on expenditures for leaving no one behind)
- OEE1.5 (Proportion of minimum standards/indicators for which UNFPA meets or exceeds requirements as regards the United Nations disability inclusion strategy accountability standards)
- OEE1.6 (Number of country offices that have supported the roll-out of United Nations Country Team Scorecards as regards United Nations disability inclusion strategy accountability standards)

However, the Strategic Plan 2022-25 was approved by the UNFPA Executive Board without baselines and targets. Baselines and targets were included later in the 2022 output scorecard report.

Element 2.3.3: Accountability systems reflect human rights indicators and targets as UNFPA Evaluation Strategy applies a Human rights approach to evaluation and reporting.

One of the key priorities of the UNFPA Evaluation Strategy is to have a "Human rights approach to evaluation" to assess the application of a HRBA. Several documents have been created to guide the implementation of this principle in evaluations, such as the Evaluation Handbook, which provides updated guidance on mainstreaming human rights and gender equality in UNFPA country programme evaluations. Additionally, some evaluations conducted in recent years have focused on this theme, such as the Assessment of the human rights-based approach to family planning at UNFPA, conducted with the support of the IEO.

Furthermore, the Output Scorecard and Indicator Updates are compiled annually for the Executive Director's report, encompassing the progress of indicators specifically related to human rights, such as the Proportion of countries that are following up (plan of action, review) accepted recommendations from international and regional human rights mechanisms (OP3.6).
The accountability framework of UNFPA Disability Inclusion Strategy 2022-25 also includes human rights indicators, as the strategy adopts a human rights-based approach to disability inclusion. The indicator 4 'Institutional set-up' and indicator 5 'Consultation with persons with disabilities' thus include elements on human rights.

To ensure the operationalisation of those accountability systems, the IEO Decentralised Evaluation Team conducts capacity building workshops for CO and RO evaluation staff. These workshops provide guidance on mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues into the evaluation process: gender equality, disability inclusion, LNOB and social and environmental standards.

Element 2.3.4: Following the 2020 assessment of the human-rights based approach that shed light on the lack of specific human rights related guidance on programme design, UNFPA has developed several tools that prove to be effectively used.

The 2020 assessment of the human rights-based approach to family planning at UNFPA stated that there was little specific guidance for a human rights-based approach in the Programme Review Committee (PRC) User Guide or in the Policy and Procedures for Development and Approval of the Country Programme Document. That same year, the UNFPA Gender, Human Rights and Culture Branch of the UNFPA Technical Division produced a" HRBA to programming" checklist. This checklist is meant to help implement a HRBA to all stages of programming (situation assessment and analysis, planning and design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation). In response to the 2020 assessment that identified a need for further guidance, UNFPA published in 2023 the support tool "Human Rights-Based Approach to Family planning", offering a holistic programme perspective and a step-by-step approach.

It must however be noted that interviewees, when asked about the human rights tools they use to inform design for new interventions, mainly mentioned the use of the SES criteria. The Policy and Procedures for Implementation of UNFPA Social and Environmental Standards in Programming (2022) and the UNFPA Social and Environmental Standards Checklist ensure indeed that social and environmental sustainability issues are considered and integrated into a programme's design. The SES checklist does ensure that Human rights are taken into account in the design of new interventions, as Human Rights are included in the checklist and several references to the UNFPA Human Rights Based Approach to Programming are made across the SES checklist. To ensure that this checklist effectively informs the design of new interventions, the CPD peer review includes the assessment of compliance with disability, inclusion and HRBA principles.

Element 2.3.5: Human rights issues being transversal to UNFPA's scope of action, one can state that human and financial resources are available to address human rights issues. However, HRBA is not sufficiently monitored in terms of resource allocation, and the growing attention given by UNFPA on these issues has not been accompanied with a proportionate increase of dedicated resources.

In terms of human resources, currently, UNFPA has a Gender and Human Rights Branch situated in the Technical Division at Headquarters, with plans to relocate to Nairobi, Kenya, by 2025. This Branch provides strategic guidance and technical leadership in the substantive areas of gender, social norms and human rights, contributing to position UNFPA's policies and programming at global level, regional level and national level. The positioning of the GHR Branch within the Technical Division is also meant to ensure coherence and integration across UNFPA's thematic areas of work. The Chief of the GHR Branch is, among others, responsible for the oversight and management of the financial and human resources of the GHR Branch.

In terms of resource allocation, on the one hand, it can be considered, as explained in Element 2.3.2, that the three transformative results are directly related to the realisation of fundamental human rights. The majority of resources are allocated to activities aimed at achieving these strategic objectives, and therefore, addressing human rights issues.

On the other hand, it can also be considered that 'accelerator a', HRBA, is not monitored in terms of resource allocation, making it difficult to understand the extent to which financial resources are executed in actions aimed at mainstreaming human rights within the organisation. Although growing attention is given to UNFPA's normative role on human rights, as shown through the new Strategic Plan, the production of tools and training and through interviews in the framework of this assessment, resources for human rights work have remained stable and have therefore not grown in proportion to increasing demands.

Element 2.3.6: Following the 2020 assessment of UNFPA's approach to human rights showing the lack of measures to develop UNFPA personnel's capacity on human rights, UNFPA has deployed a training on this topic, which is yet to be completed by complementary capacity development measures.

An assessment of UNFPA's HRBA to family planning (2020) included among its recommendations the strengthening of the training strategy and materials to equip staff with awareness, practical knowledge, and skills related to human rights-based approaches. According to the assessment: "There is neither a standardised curriculum for HRBA programming nor a cohesive training system or strategy to ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills they need to fulfil their responsibilities with respect to rights-based FP programming". In response to this assessment, UNFPA now offers a "101 on Human Rights" course on its online training platform.

MI 2.3 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 2.4: [Innovation and digitalisation] Corporate/sectoral, regional and country strategies and programmes reflect the institutional emphasis on harnessing innovation and digitalisation in UNFPA's programming	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.33**
Element 1: Dedicated policy statement on innovation and digitalisation available and showing evidence of application	3
Element 2: Innovation and digitalisation-related indicators and targets fully integrated into the UNFPA strategic plan 2022-25 and corporate objectives	3
Element 3: Accountability systems (including corporate reporting and evaluation) reflect innovation and digitalisation-related indicators and targets	3
Element 4: Innovation and digitalisation-related screening checklists or similar tools inform design for all new interventions, including humanitarian assistance	3
Element 5: Human and financial resources (exceeding benchmarks) are available to address innovation and digitalisation	4
Element 6: Capacity development on innovation and digitalisation is being or has been conducted for UNFPA personnel	4

MI 2.4 Analysis	Evidence documents
Element 2.4.1: At the time of this current assessment, the rollout of UNFPA's Innovation Strategy is still pending. Yet, UNFPA has publicly available elements on its approach to innovation and its initiatives related to innovation and digitalisation. Guidance is also available to ensure and track the implementation of the strategic pillars for increased use of innovation. A lesson learnt from the implementation of the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2018-21 was that investments in expanding the capacity of the organisation to learn, innovate and adapt, including through digital solutions, can accelerate progress towards the achievement of the three transformative results. Consequently, innovation and digitalisation became one of the six accelerators established in the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25 for achieving the transformative results by 2030. Article 101 of the Strategic Plan indicates that strengthening innovations is a priority to improve programming for results, especially through: • strengthening the corporate innovation architecture and capabilities; • scaling up innovations that have proven to be effective and impactful; • forming new partnerships and connecting with relevant innovation ecosystems; • strengthening and leveraging financing for innovation; and • expanding communities and culture for innovation. Interviewees confirmed that the new Strategic Plan was however not accompanied by a new Innovation Strategy as it coincided with the establishment of an Innovation Unit and the Equalizer Accelerator Fund transitions of teams. However, by the time the new Strategic Plan was being adopted, the Roadmap for Mainstreaming innovation was developed and approved internally. This Roadmap ensures and guarantees the tracking of the implementation of the strategic pillars for increased use of innovation as opportunities for achieving the Strategic Plan outputs and accelerating the achievement of transformative results. The UNFPA website provides an overview of UNFPA's approach to and work in innovation. It presents the same five strategic pillars as listed in the Strategic Plan, along with underlying examples and stories of successful innovations. The rollout of the new Innovation Strategy is being developed and its first draft has already been completed. This strategy is meant to be finalised by the end of 2024 pending it was approved by the leadership in September 2024. Additionally, the ICT Strategy 2022-25, approved in October 2023, sets the directions for how UNFPA aims at utilising information and communication technology in accelerating UNFPA's Strategic Plan in delivery of its main programmatic and organisational effectiveness and efficiency outputs. Through the duration of the new Strategi Plan, this ICT Strategy identifies three strategic themes: • Mainstreaming of Artificial Intelligence • Increased use of Data • Leveraging and Scaling Innovation initiatives. A new GenAI Strategy has been published outside of the data collection phase of this assessment. This strategy details how UNFPA can leverage the benefits of responsible and ethical generative artificial intelligence while minimising risks. UNFPA shows evidence of application of its Innovation initiatives through its reports regarding the Equalizer Accelerator Fund, the WomenX Collective, and the Equity 2030 Alliance. The MTR also shows evidence of application of innovation as one of the six accelerators.	119, 129, 162, 171, 177, 205, 230, 231.

However, although the MTR of the UNFPA Strategic Plan states that 98% of Country Offices embrace innovation in their strategic objectives, the results of the online survey deployed in the framework of this assessment provides a more nuanced picture of UNFPA's effective use of innovation and digitalisation to deliver its development programme and humanitarian response. Less than 50% of surveyed financial partners strongly agree or agree with the statement that UNFPA promotes the use of innovation and digitalisation to deliver its development programmes and humanitarian response, and less than 60% of surveyed peer organisations and knowledge partners strongly agree or agree. These results question the relevance of the indicator used in the MTR to show evidence of application of innovation and digitalisation initiatives.

Figure 9: UNFPA promotes the use of innovation and digitalisation to deliver its development programmes and humanitarian response
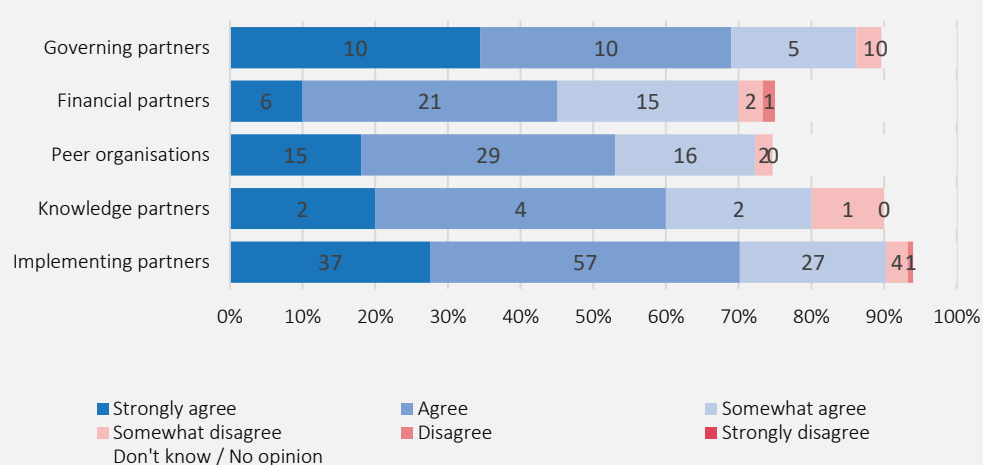
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

Element 2.4.2: Innovation and digitalisation-related indicators are integrated into the UNFPA Strategic Plan and corporate objectives, although the Strategic Plan was approved without baselines and targets.

While innovation and digitalisation can/should be applied to all Strategic Plan outputs, only integrated two programme indicators explicitly relate to the use of innovation and digitalisation in UNFPA's programming are included in the Strategic Plan's Integrated results and resources framework that:

- OP2.4 (Service delivery adaptation)
- OP6.5 (Youth-led innovations in accelerating the transformative results)

Furthermore, the IRRF contains three organisational effectiveness and efficiency indicators:

- OEE1.19 (Proportion of UNFPA offices that have dedicated resources to support innovation to accelerate high-quality programme delivery)
- OEE1.20 (Proportion of UNFPA offices that have at least one innovative solution taken from pilot to scale)
- OEE3.2 (Proportion of annual resource mobilisation targets met as regards innovative funding modalities)

The Strategic Plan 2022-25 was approved by the UNFPA Executive Board, however without baselines and targets. This is explained by UNFPA by the fact that there was no reference data collected prior to the adoption of the Strategic Plan, the development of those newly introduced indicators had to be based on the collected data after the first year of implementation of the Strategic Plan. Baselines and targets were thus included later in the 2022 output scorecard report. Two innovation-related indicators were added to the new Strategic Plan: "Human and financial resources dedicated to innovation", "Number of innovation Transition to pilot to scale".

The ICT Strategy 2023-25, which aims at complementing the new Strategic Plan, sets six key Strategic ICT Goals, with goals 1-3 focusing on what the organisation needs to support its delivery of its mandate (demand for ICT services), and goals 4-6 focusing on how UNFPA will deliver (supply of ICT services). However, this ICT Strategy does not establish indicators to be followed.

Element 2.4.3: Innovation and digitalisation-related indicators and targets have been found in accountability systems related to the Strategic Plan, but no evaluation on innovation has been found after 2017.

Annually, the "Output Scorecard and Indicator Updates" are released as part of Report of the Executive Director on Progress in implementing the UNFPA Strategic Plan, where the indicators and targets of the Strategic Plan are monitored. In 2022, all indicators and targets related to innovation and digitalisation had been reported on, with both goals related to final outputs achieved for that year, along with one related to organisational efficiency. The unmet goals for that year pertain to OE1.19 and OE1.20. The Executive Director's report, while providing a review of the numbers related to innovation, does not explain the reasons for those unmet organisational targets (OE1.19 target in 2022: 74%, actual 2022: 62%; OE1.20 target in 2022: 65%, actual 2022: 60%).

However, the last internal evaluation found related to this topic is from 2017, "Formative evaluation of the UNFPA Innovation Initiative".

The interview process allowed to identify that annual innovation fairs allow to map all innovations sourced by Country Offices. Those fairs engage all personnel in knowledge exchange on innovation and reach an engagement between 3,000 and 4,000 personnel a year.

Element 2.4.4: Screening checklists and guidance on innovation and digitalisation-related issues to inform design for all new interventions have been found, but not to the same extent as for other accelerators.

There is no "one-size-fits-all" manual for interventions on innovation and digitalisation. As innovation and digitalisation are part of the six accelerators of the Strategic Plan, all programmes and interventions at global, regional and country levels ought to be designed to enhance program achievements by applying these accelerators.

Yet, UNFPA has screening tools and guidance to inform new interventions:

- Innovation and digitalisation are also screened as part of the Country PD peer review criteria across various dimensions, such as transformative vision, focus and prioritisation, scale-up, investment case and financing, evaluative evidence, and lessons learned.

- The UN Innovation Toolkit is used to support implementation in the field.

- All IT systems developed as part of UNFPA programme interventions undergo vetting and screening by the ICT Portfolio Committee, a subcommittee of the ICT Board. This process ensures adherence to the ICT Governance Policy, alignment with the ICT Strategy, compliance with policies and guidelines established by the ICT Board, feasibility of proposed technological solutions (including architectural roadmap, security requirements, data privacy, and infrastructure requirements), and soundness of resource and budget

requirements to avoid high costs or duplication with other existing initiatives/systems.

Despite all these tools that have been put in place, it must be however noted that existing screening tools on innovation and digitalisation are not as developed as for other accelerators, such as gender and human rights. Nonetheless, the relatively lower state of development of tools for innovation as compared to other accelerators is justified by the fact that the rolling-out of the Innovation Strategy is still pending at the time of this assessment.

Element 2.4.5: UNFPA has developed several tools to ensure the availability of resources to address innovation and digitalisation.

Regarding human resources, after the innovation function was moved out of the Technical Division in early 2021 to the Executive office, an Innovation Unit was set up in 2022 in the Executive Office in New York, with 2 Fixed Term staff under the Institutional Budget at the P5 and P4 levels. The leadership, oversight and coordination unit sits at the Office of the Executive Director since the establishment of the Innovation Unit in 2022. The recruitment of an additional P3 level Programme and Technical Innovation Specialist funded from the Institutional Budget should be completed by the end of 2024.

Under the Strategic Plan midterm review in 2023, it was also approved to establish a WomenX Collective, a global research and innovation center to drive investments in women's health, with hubs in Berlin and Nairobi and four posts approved to take effect in 2024 (2) and 2025 (2) funded by the Global and Regional Programmes (GRP) funds.

At the Regional Offices level, three regions have dedicated posts on innovation, and three other Regional Offices have colleagues partially mobilised on innovation.

In terms of financial resources, the UNFPA Equalizer Accelerator Fund is a new modality for the Fund to channel funds for innovation. It currently has eight partners: the Government of Denmark, the Government of Finland, the Government of Luxembourg, Bayer Pharma AG, Maternity Foundation, the United Nations International Computing Centre (UNICC), the World Food Programme Innovation Accelerator, and the World Intellectual Property Organisation. UNFPA has also introduced the Strategic Investment Facility (SIF) as a financing mechanism to support program countries in leveraging international, domestic, and private resources to attain three transformative results. Countries that qualify for this support must apply at least two accelerators from the Strategic Plan, one of which is innovation and digitalisation.

It is however worth noting that although Results and Resources Planning in Quantum Plus enables UNFPA to track all activities and programme expenses related to innovation and digitalisation, UNFPA's integrated budget and financial statements do not provide a breakdown of expenses that would allow the verification of the volume of funds available for innovation and digitalisation.

Element 2.4.6: UNFPA has developed several initiatives to ensure capacity development on innovation and digitalisation to ensure mainstreaming innovation across UNFPA.

In its efforts to mainstreaming innovation, UNFPA has established a Reference Group on Mainstreaming Innovation in 2020 'to provide varied perspectives and recommendations designed to optimise the organisational approach to mainstreaming innovation'. The group formulated recommendations on Mainstreaming Innovation.

In line with those recommendations, there is continuous support towards capacity building on innovation at all levels, such as:

- Integrated innovation learning as part of People's Strategy and enrolled colleagues in internal and external innovation-related training.

- An average of 8 Innovation Talks a year, introducing various innovation topics and methodologies. The average attendance was 150+ from all geographies (cumulatively, 1,200 a year).

- Annual Innovation Fairs engaging all personnel in knowledge exchange on innovation (with engagement between 3,000 and 4,000 personnel a year)

- Drop-in Innovation Clinics on topics identified as bottlenecks by Country Offices.

- Knowledge management platforms through a network of regional innovation focal points, Innovation Champions, and an innovation zone. The innovation zone serves as an operational forum for innovation, where we answer questions and support colleagues from the field.

- "Innovation Week" every year with three flagship webinars on innovation topics, with an average of 150+ personnel attending.

- Partner with external providers to deliver dedicated courses with certification on innovation (by WFP Innovation Accelerator on "from ideation to pilot" in 2022, UNSSC on innovation toolkit in 2022, United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC) on "Innovation Design Thinking" in 2023, Global Pulse on scale in 2023). On average, with the fee covered by Headquarters, such courses engage 60 colleagues from 40+ Business Units.

- In 2023, the IT Support Office also rolled out Google Duet AI for Workspace at UNFPA. Since then, the IT Support Office has run a series of Google Duet AI and Google Workspace training sessions for all UNFPA staff.

MI 2.4 Evidence confidence	High confidence

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

KPI 3: Operating model and human and financial resources support relevance and agility	KPI score
Highly satisfactory	**3.65**

KPI 3 assesses how UNFPA's operating model and resources support relevance and agility. The assessment is structured along four MIs: human resources (including in the context of the UN resident coordinator system), UNFPA's performance assessment system, resource mobilisation, and decentralisation.

UNFPA is no longer a small UN agency. Its workforce has increased considerably over the last ten years, mainly thanks to increased non-core resources. Core resources have tended to bolster HQ, which the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) critiqued. Linked to UNFPA's commitment to strengthen the UN development system, UNFPA Representatives are put forward to serve as Resident Coordinators and Acting Resident Coordinators.

The last ten years have seen national officers grow by 47%, international professional staff by 40%, and general services staff by 23%. As of the end of December 2022, UNFPA had a workforce of 5,227 personnel. 60.3% were staff members, and 39.7% were non-staff personnel consisting of consultants (17.4%), service contractors (16.8%) and UN Volunteers (5.5%). This workforce growth in the development and humanitarian spheres has primarily been possible thanks to non-core resources rather than strategic considerations and long-term planning. With existing core resources, UNFPA has tended to bolster headquarters rather than country presence, which was critiqued by the ACABQ.

Furthermore, UNFPA has been a reliable and generous supporter of the resident coordinator system. In addition to doubling its cost-sharing contribution (USD 17.7 million for 2019-22), UNFPA representatives acted as Resident Coordinators for a month or more in 32 countries in 2022 and 2023. As of September 2024, six UNFPA staff members were serving as Resident Coordinators. Linked to UNFPA's commitment to strengthening the UN development system, UNFPA management has continued to promote UNFPA country offices to apply and benefit from mutual recognition within the UNDS, which permits agencies to utilise or depend on policies, processes,

contractual systems and associated operational frameworks of another entity to facilitate collaboration and reduce transaction costs for governments and collaborating agencies.

UNFPA has redesigned its performance assessment system to include changing the culture and behaviours around performance beyond focusing on the performance of individual staff members. The new Career and Performance Management (CPM) system, which includes senior staff, aligns individual, team and strategic plan goals but has struggled to fully reflect inter-agency collaboration. A clear process is available for addressing disagreements and complaints.

During the review period, UNFPA transitioned from a Performance Appraisal and Development system to a more comprehensive Career and Performance Management (CPM) system for its staff. The CPM focuses on changing the culture and behaviours around performance rather than solely on performance. It should ensure that individual and team goals are aligned with UNFPA's Strategic Plan; motivate, enable and empower staff to set clear expectations and recognise achievements and high performance; manage and address underperformance promptly; and link performance management with talent and career development. The new CPM includes senior staff and is implemented at the stipulated frequency. It endeavours to recognise achievements and high performance on the one hand and manage and address underperformance on the other. Documentation exists, and a clear process is in place for handling disagreements and complaints, which encompasses a performance approval plan and, ultimately, the possibility of submitting a rebuttal. While UNFPA's CPM aligns individual performance indicators with those of individual business units and the Fund's overarching strategic objectives, it currently overlooks the valuable contributions of staff to UNDS reform processes and inter-agency collaboration for achieving programmatic goals. Recently, UNFPA management committed to reflecting inter-agency work in all relevant job descriptions and to acknowledge and reward staff performance in the area of inter-agency coordination.

UNFPA's Resource Mobilisation Strategy 2022-25 aligns well with the Fund's Strategic Plan, emphasising securing multi-year funding and expanding its funding sources. While this approach is essential, implementation has proven challenging. The recent launch of the UNFPA Financing Strategy marks a significant step towards engaging partners in support of the Fund's priorities.

The UNFPA Resource Mobilisation Strategy 2022-25 is entitled "Mobilising Resources and Finances to Achieve the Three Transformative Results in the Decade of Action." In substance and timeframe, it is clearly aligned with the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25. Specifically, the strategy's emphasis on multi-year funding has shown results, with the percentage of multi-year funding fluctuating between 49% and 67 between 2019 and 2022. However, there is a long way to go to achieve the Funding Compact indicator of 100%. Facing great financial strain, UNFPA is also aware of the continued, if not increased, need to diversify its core funding base beyond the top donors. Since the peak in 2020, when 101 governments provided core funding, the number has decreased to 95 in 2023. While this may seem high, available data indicate that 99.6% of UNFPA's core funds come from 25 government partners, and 68% of total revenue comes from these same governments. Interviews confirm that resource mobilisation from governments and other stakeholders such as IFIs, other UN agencies, the corporate sector and foundations presents a significant challenge. For this reason, the strategic plan and resource mobilisation strategy stresses a transition from solely mobilising funding for UNFPA's programmes to leveraging financing from programme country domestic budgets and IFIs. However, the operationalisation of this shift remains undeveloped. The recent launch of the UNFPA Financing Strategy 2024-30 is a crucial step.

To promote joint UN programming and discourage earmarked non-core funding, the UN introduced a 1% coordination levy for tightly earmarked third-party non-core contributions to UN development-related activities. It serves as one of three sources for funding the Resident Coordinator systems (alongside voluntary contribution and cost sharing by UNSDG Agencies). UNFPA has upheld its commitment to pass on the 1% levy for the benefit of the Resident Coordinator system.

UNFPA regional and country office leaders have significant decision-making autonomy, which was especially valuable during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Information on the delegation of decision-making authority within UNFPA exists but is set out in different corporate documents about resource management, programming, emergency situations, human resources management, etc., rendering it challenging to understand the complete picture. There is evidence that, in practice, the decentralised levels of UNFPA enjoy considerable flexibility to ensure the Fund's responsiveness to needs, and that UNFPA is committed to further improving and sustaining decentralised decision-making. The COVID-19 pandemic is a case in point where reprogramming and resource reallocation decisions were delegated promptly. The formative evaluation

of the organisational resilience of UNFPA in light of its response to the COVID-19 pandemic (2024) found that, despite the lack of preparedness for such a systemic shock as the COVID-19 pandemic, UNFPA took early administrative and financial mitigation measures to navigate internal and external challenges. These measures, which supported the UNFPA response, included timely guidance on reprogramming work plans, repurposing funds and fast-tracking procedures for local procurement to maintain the flow of supplies.

MI 3.1: [Resources aligned to functions] Organisational structure and staffing ensure that human and financial resources are constantly aligned and adjusted to key functions	Score
Overall MI rating	Satisfactory
Overall MI score	3.50
Element 1: The organisational structure is aligned with, or being reorganised to priorities and goals set out in the current strategic plan	3
Element 2: Staffing is aligned with, or being reorganised to, organisational priorities and goals set out in the current strategic plan	3
Element 3: Resource allocations across functions are aligned to current organisational priorities and goals as set out in the current strategic plan	4
Element 4: Internal restructuring exercises have a clear purpose and intent aligned to the organisational priorities and goals of the current strategic plan and the long-term vision	4
Element 5: [United Nations] Engagement in supporting the resident coordinator system through cost-sharing contributions and resident coordinator nominations	3
Element 6: [United Nations] Implementation of the principle of mutual recognition in the areas of finance, human resources, procurement, logistics, ICT and facility services	4
MI 3.1 Analysis	Evidence documents

Element 3.1.1: The UNFPA HQ Optimisation initiative, decided by the Executive Director in September 2023, has been met with support but (at the time of data gathering) has also raised concerns on the part of staff and Member States.

Since 2019, UNFPA has undertaken reforms to align its organisational structure with the priorities and objectives established in its Strategic Plans (2018-21; 2022-25), especially the strategy to achieve the transformative results by 2030. These reforms are discussed in MI 1.2.

In September 2023, the UNFPA Executive Director launched a "UNFPA HQ Optimisation" initiative, critical elements of which are:

- Integration of the Policy and Strategy Division and the Technical Division into one Programme Division, largely based in Nairobi (by 2025) (a new Programme Liaison Branch, functionally part of the Programme Division, will remain in New York);

- Renaming of the Evaluation Office to Independent Evaluation Office and relocation to Nairobi (by 2025).

- Integration of the Intergovernmental, Inter-Agency and Policy Dialogue Branch of the Policy and Strategy Division as well as the Geneva and Addis Ababa Representation Office to the African Union and the UN Economic Commission for Africa into the Division of External Relations (former Division of Communications and Strategic Partnerships).

178, 114, 119, 60, 142, 103, 195, 207, 133, 43, 83.

The UNFPA Executive Director decision to proceed with this reorganisation and to relocate the technical, programme and evaluation functions to Nairobi was based on organisational reviews, including a cost-benefit analysis, a risk assessment and a calculation of staff time spent working with New York-based stakeholders versus non-New York-based stakeholders. While the Executive Board was not involved in the decision-making process as confirmed during interviews, in 2024, four informal sessions with the Executive Board specifically focused on the HQ Optimisation were conducted, and UNFPA - pro-actively and in response to requests from Member States – has shared a number of background documents on the initiative. UNFPA staff have also been kept informed through written

messages, townhalls, webinars and community page among others.

The available documentation demonstrates several arguments supporting this reorganisation, showcasing the benefits of adopting a new organisational arrangement and location. External and internal key informant interviews and verbatim responses to the partner survey also reveal an understanding of and support for the reorganisation but, at the time of data gathering for this assessment, also voiced concerns regarding the initiative and a desire for more information and consultation. On the plus side, stakeholders see the strategic advantage of moving parts of UNFPA to Africa and expect advantages from the relocation to Nairobi regarding costs, the organisation's environmental footprint, and its proximity to UNFPA country offices, stakeholders and beneficiaries regarding location and time zone. They anticipate streamlined and more consistent programmatic and technical guidance to regional and country offices (thanks to the new Programme Division) and welcome the establishment of a new data and analytics branch (in addition to the population and development branch within the new Programme Division).

However, they also anticipate challenges (some of them raised during interviews) related to communications with New York, talent loss (25% of New York-based staff are affected by the relocation) and disruptions to business continuity, negative impacts on UNFPA's normative role and its interactions with Member State delegations and its presence in UN intergovernmental processes and activities in New York, especially in light of growing pushback against SRHR (see Element 1.4.2), and a heavy burden on the small liaison offices remaining in New York. UNFPA is reportedly currently working on an outstanding request for a framework to monitor the impact of the initiative on the Fund's performance and effectiveness. In light of concerns and potential risks, it is placing special attention on systematically identifying and managing the associated risks, overseen by the Chief Risk Officer.

Element 3.1.2: UNFPA is a field-based organisation. Its workforce has increased considerably over the last ten years, at the country level largely thanks to increased non-core resources.

As of the end of December 2022, UNFPA had a workforce of 5,227 personnel. 60.3% were staff members, and 39.7% were non-staff personnel consisting of consultants (17.4%), service contractors (16.8%) and UN Volunteers (5.5%). The last ten years have seen a growth in national officers by 47%, international professional staff by 40%, and general services staff by 23%. 88% of UNFPA staff serve in field duty stations, a ratio that has reportedly remained stable for several years, but has significantly had to rely on non-core resources. However, both the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) in 2021 and 2023 respectively, commented on a recent trend towards an increasing headquarters presence.

During interviews, opinions were voiced that staff allocations have not matched the growing country needs and expectations of UNFPA in terms of gender equality and population data and dynamics (as seen in Element 3.1.1, data and population development capacities are now being increased as part of the HQ Optimisation initiative). Furthermore, concerns were expressed that potential funding cuts in the future (e.g., due to upcoming national elections) could result in staffing contractions. Positive references were made to "career conversations", staff mobility within the UN system, and the ongoing development of a staff mobility policy to mitigate staff stagnation.

The partner survey shows mixed views on the adequacy and alignment of staffing with organisational priorities and goals: Overall, only 53% of responding partners agree (39%) or strongly agree (14%) that UNFPA has enough staff, either in or accessible to countries where it operates to deliver intended results (Q2_1). Responding implementing partners are comparatively affirmative (63% agree or strongly agree), but only 48% of governing partners. Verbatim responses suggest that inadequate staff numbers to meet workloads, vacancies because of staff rotation and turnover and long recruitment times (including for humanitarian

emergencies) are particular weaknesses.

Figure 10: UNFPA has a sufficient number of staff, either in or accessible to countries where it operates to deliver intended results
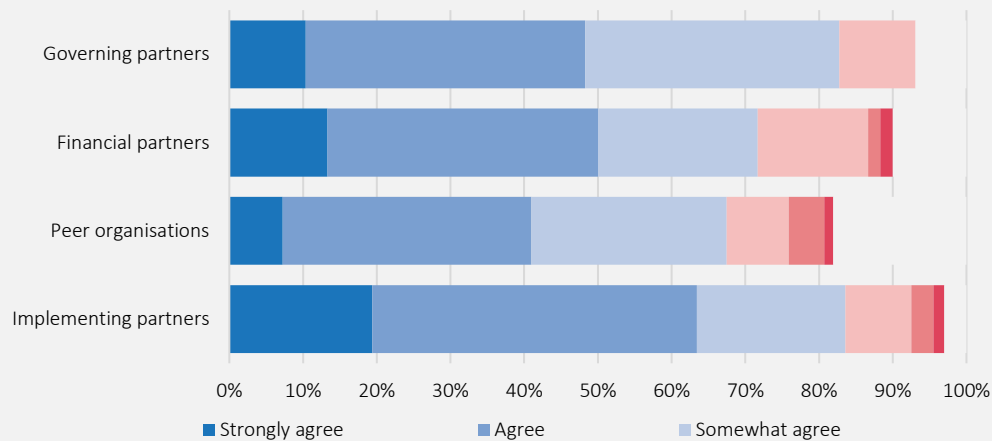
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

However, a high 83% of respondents are of the view that UNFPA staff are present in country for a long enough time to build the relationships needed (35% strongly agreed and 48% agreed) (Q2_3). Implementing partners are particularly favourable (86% agreed or strongly agreed), followed by 82% of participating peer organisations. Furthermore, 75% of respondents strongly agree (26%) or agree (49%) that UNFPA staff are sufficiently experienced and skilled to work successfully in different contexts (Q2_2). Implementing partners have particularly favourable views (81%), followed by governing partners (76%) and peer organisations (74%). An important discussion is noted around the optimal balance between project staff and the presence of experienced, senior-level or international staff for effective sharing of best practices and engagement in advocacy and policy dialogue.

Figure 11: UNFPA staff are sufficiently experienced and skilled to work successfully in the different contexts of operation
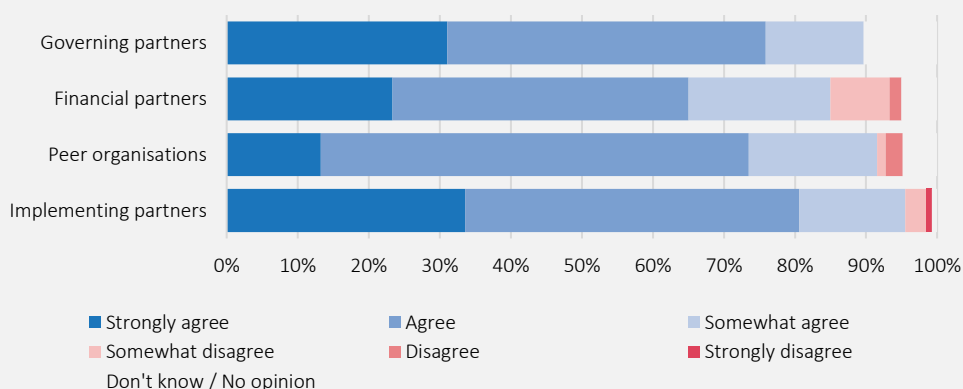
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

Figure 12: UNFPA staff are present in country for a long enough time to build the relationships
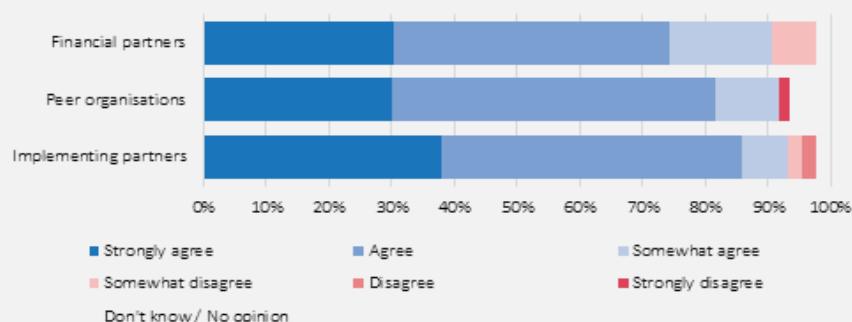
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

Element 3.1.3: Resource allocations across functions are aligned to current organisational priorities and goals as set out in the current Strategic Plan.

Core resource allocations are strongly linked to the transformative results, as evidenced by desktop review and raised during some interviews. As seen above (Element 1.2.2), the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25 established a new resource allocation system (RAS) based on a "three-dimensions, two-adjustments and one-floor approach" for allocating core resources to programme countries:

- Three dimensions: distance from reaching the transformative results, health inequality and vulnerability to disasters;

- Two adjustments: total female population (10-24 years) and income level;

- One floor: USD 500,000 floor per country programme per year.

The Plan also established that during the four years of the Strategic Plan, UNFPA will ensure that 60% of regular (core) resources for country programmes are allocated to 54 Tier I countries (comprising of 56% of the population across all tiers) to address their significant needs. Besides, it determined an increase in the resources available for the two multi-country programmes in the Pacific and the Caribbean subregions.

These guidelines set out in the Strategic Plan are being followed, as evidenced by the annual reports and statistical and financial reviews. The rule of allocating 60% of regular resources for country programmes to Tier 1 countries was met (67%) in 2022. The total volume of expenses allocated to the multi-country Caribbean programme surged from USD 2.3 million in 2018 to USD 6.7 million in 2022 - an increase of almost 200%. The leap for the multi-country Pacific Islands programme was from USD 6.9 million in 2018 to USD 14.8 million in 2022.

Regarding the ringfencing of 60% of programme resources for Tier 1 countries, interviewees pointed out that Tier 2 and Tier 3 countries - e.g., in Latin America - face high inequalities and large population groups that are (at risk of being) left behind. While the RAS/RDS takes country-specific poverty rates and inequalities into account, in these countries, UNFPA offices struggle to implement programmes, mobilise stakeholders and leverage much-needed development financing to benefit vulnerable groups with little more than the allocated floor of USD 500,000 per year (also see Element 4.1.2).

Element 3.1.4: There is a clear purpose and intent to adjust the organisational structures to UNFPA's long-term vision.

The adoption of the Strategic Plan 2022-25 has been accompanied by internal restructuring, including the HQ Optimisation initiative (see Elements 1.2.1 and 3.1.1), which will continue into the next strategic plan cycle leading up to the post-2030 agenda. The methodology adopted to establish and implement organisational reforms demonstrates a clear purpose and intent aligned to the organisational priorities and goals of the current Strategic Plan and the long-term vision.

Element 3.1.5: UNFPA has been a reliable and generous supporter of the resident coordinator system, in financial terms and in terms of serving as acting Resident Coordinators.

The Fund has not successfully put candidates forward for the position of United Nations Resident Coordinator. One of the central areas of reform within the UNDS, as outlined in General Assembly resolutions 72/279 and 74/297, is the repositioning of the Resident Coordinator (RC) system. To fund this, the United Nations entity cost-sharing contributions under the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) cost-sharing arrangement were doubled.

The UNFPA IRRF for 2022-25 establishes two indicators related to UNFPA contributions provided to the RC system (OE3.5), one of which has four sub-indicators. They are:
- OE3.5 (a): Contributions in cash provided to the Resident Coordinator system (millions of USD);
- OE3.5 (b): Contribution in-kind provided to the Resident Coordinator system:
  (b1): Strategic analysis and planning (number of country offices);
  (b2): External communications and advocacy (number of country offices)
  (b3): Serving at least a month as acting Resident Coordinator (number of country offices)
  (b4): Number of candidates prepared by UNFPA to undertake an assessment to become Resident Coordinator.

Since then, UNFPA has doubled its financial contribution to the RC system. According to the evaluation of UNFPA's engagement in the UN development system (2022), in 2019-22 inclusive, UNFPA contributed USD 17.7 million through the cost-sharing agreement (USD 4.6 million per year in 2019-21 and USD 3.9 million in 2022). UNFPA also contributed the expected USD 3.9 million in 2023.

In terms of RC nominations, UNFPA has not achieved its targets. The goal for 2022 was to have five candidates prepared by UNFPA to undertake an assessment to become a Resident Coordinator; however, the outcome was zero. The equivalent numbers for 2023 are ten and one. In 2022 and 2023, UNFPA representatives acted as Resident Coordinators for a month or more in 32 countries, respectively (planned: 30 countries). At the time of writing, six UNFPA staff members were serving as Resident Coordinators. Three staff members were lined up to go through the Residence Coordinator assessment in November 2024.

Element 3.1.6: UNFPA management has promoted, and country offices have applied and benefited from mutual recognition within the UNDS.

The UNSDG Mutual Recognition Statement formalises the joint commitment to implement the principle of mutual recognition within the UNDS, permitting an entity to utilise or depend on the policies, processes, contractual systems, and associated operational frameworks of another entity for implementation, with minimal need for additional assessments, checks, or approvals whenever feasible, "with the aim of facilitating active collaboration across agencies and reducing transaction costs for Governments and collaborating agencies".

In practice, UNFPA had already applied this principle in some of its operational functions, even before the issuance of this Statement in 2018. For instance, among the procurement modalities established by the UNFPA Financial Regulations and Rules, revised in 2014, is the option to cooperate with other organisations of the UN system (Rule 115.2b). This includes "UNFPA entering into a contract in reliance on a procurement decision of another organisation or requesting another organisation to carry out procurement activities on behalf of UNFPA".

UNFPA's internal guidance to its country offices regarding implementing mutual recognition encourages country offices to benefit from it. It notes that "offices should be actively looking for opportunities to benefit from mutual recognition within the areas mentioned in the guidance." During interview, it was confirmed UNFPA is progressing a lot on mutual recognition and for instance Malawy was cited as a good example implementing the MRA (with operational management team).

According to the evaluation of UNFPA's engagement in the UN development system (2022), general appreciation for the principle of mutual recognition stands out. 69% of country offices (58 in absolute numbers) that responded to a survey agreed that mutual recognition had resulted in the implementation of common operations in their respective UNCTs. 31% (equivalent to 26 country offices) responded in the negative. Four of the UNFPA regional offices confirmed that mutual recognition had led to the implementation of common operations.

MI 3.1 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 3.2: [Resource mobilisation] Resource mobilisation efforts consistent with the core mandate and strategic priorities	Score
Overall MI rating	Highly satisfactory
Overall MI score	3.80
Element 1: Existence of a resource mobilisation strategy/case for support, with clear targets and monitoring and reporting, explicitly aligned to current strategic plan	4
Element 2: Resource mobilisation strategy/case for support reflects recognition of need to diversify the funding base, particularly in relation to fundraising from the private sector	4
Element 3: Resource mobilisation strategy/case for support seeks multi-year funding within mandate and strategic priorities	4
Element 4: Resource mobilisation strategy/case for support prioritises the raising of domestic resources from programme countries/institutions, aligned to goals and objectives of the relevant UNFPA country programmes	3
Element 5: [UN] 1% co-ordination levy on tightly earmarked third-party voluntary contributions to development activities systematically collected and passed on to the UN Secretariat	4

MI 3.2 Analysis	Evidence documents
Element 3.2.1: The UNFPA Resource Mobilisation strategy is clearly aligned to the current UNFPA Strategic Plan in terms of substance and timeframe. The UNFPA Resource Mobilisation Strategy 2022-25 is entitled "Mobilising Resources and Finances to Achieve the Three Transformative Results in the Decade of Action". The strategy centres on delivering three priority objectives for the period: • Sustaining and shock-proofing UNFPA's revenue base with predictable, flexible, multi-year support to UNFPA; • Increasing, diversifying, and scaling resources required to deliver on UNFPA's mandate with core funding and non-core funding; • Advancing UNFPA's commitment to catalysing and leveraging finances to close the USD 222.2 billion funding gap for the Strategic Plan and its transformative results.	117, 207, 213, 80, 13, 218, 1, 12.

This alignment was confirmed during interviews with several UNFPA's staff. This is complemented by the definition of seven strategic prongs to encourage increased funding to UNFPA and financing for the transformative results through solid engagement with key government donors, tailored approaches to emerging donors, expanded engagement in the multilateral space, increased focus on programme countries' funding to UNFPA, as well as expanded and increased partnerships with the private sector, philanthropies, individuals, IFIs and regional banks. UNFPA will look at ways to increase humanitarian funding by positioning itself as a partner of choice while also intensifying efforts around both funding and financing. The alignment with the Strategic Plan 2022-25 is particularly evident in various passages of the Resource Mobilisation Strategy, such as in "Clear resource Mobilisation targets have been set for each of the three transformative results, in order to mobilise the USD 5,045 million needed to finance the UNFPA's 2022-25 Strategic Plan" (page 5), " guide UNFPA in the move from "funding" to "funding and financing" as called for in UNFPA's 2022-25 Strategic Plan" (page 8), and "the new resource and finance Mobilisation strategy is aligned with paragraphs 108, 109, and 112 of UNFPA's 2022-25 Strategic Plan" (page 10).

Element 3.2.2: Facing great financial strain, UNFPA is aware of the continued, if not increased, need to diversify its funding base beyond the top donors. This is reflected in the Resource Mobilisation Strategy.

UNFPA recognises the need to diversify its funding base, especially its core funding, as evidenced through desktop review and confirmed during interviews. In 2019, the Fund launched a "150 Core Donors Campaign." As a result, 101 governments provided core resources in 20.21 (up from 96 in 2020), 96 in 2022 and 95 in 2023. Recent data indicate that 99.6% of UNFPA's core funds come from 25 government partners, and 68% of the total revenue comes from these same governments.

The UNFPA Resource Mobilisation Strategy 2022-25 indicates that: "Reliance on key government partners for core and non-core funding demonstrates a need to intensify efforts to diversify the donor base", making it clear that "in the future, coordinated partnerships with public, private, and multilateral partners will be critical to sustaining and scaling UNFPA's impact". Among the seven strategic prongs of the Resource Mobilisation Strategy features: "Attract emerging and diverse donors – private sector, philanthropy, individual giving, IFIs, and regional banks". As regards the private sector specifically, the Resource Mobilisation Strategy establishes ways to advance fundraising, for example, by "enhancing data availability on priority areas for UNFPA to align with business/geographical priorities for private sector investment" and "participating in innovative financing instruments with the private sector to attract resources to the SRHR Agenda."

The **UNFPA Strategic Investment Facility (SIF)** is a new mechanism through which country offices can leverage funding "to catalyse new funding from governments in the form of domestic resources, concessional loans by IFIs, in-country donor contributions, and investments from the private sector". SIF-funded initiatives implemented USD 3.7 Million, and leveraged an estimate USD 22.7 Million to date (May 2024), approximately a 1:6 return on investment. To provide a few examples:
• UNFPA reported that a SIF-supported project in **Bangladesh** realised a rate of return of USD 1 to USD 8 in 2023, with a USD 50,000 investment unlocking a national commitment of USD 4,484,592 – USD 4.25 million from the government, the rest from a private partner – to be spent on increasing the use for sexual and reproductive health services in 2024-25. UNFPA Bangladesh unlocked a national commitment of USD 4.48 million with just USD 50,000 from the SIF, to achieve increased use of sexual and reproductive health services.
• UNFPA **Rwanda** catalysed USD 5,93 million with the SIF in 2022-23, as the innovative health sector investment model incentivized commitment from both public and private sector which enabled the creation of 31 new health posts (health clinics). As a result,

over 377,000 additional beneficiaries accessed primary health care; more than 1,600 live births were delivered; and over 8,000 women of reproductive age became new registered users of family planning methods.

- UNFPA **Uganda** leveraged investment of USD 840,282 in 2022-23 from 287 partnerships (including large multinationals such as MTN Uganda Limited, MTN Mobile Money Limited, Equity Bank Uganda Limited, Sanlam Investment, Financial Sector Deepening, USADF, and 281 private sector healthcare players) towards a mobile money health saving model to empower pregnant mothers to save in Uganda. In that period, 33,437 mothers saved a total of USD 792,889 for maternal health services. UNFPA Botswana unlocked 1.6 million using a public sector financing approach that aimed at using drones to deliver life-saving drugs and commodities.

Reporting on the implementation of the Strategic Plan indicates that the amount (core and non-core resources) contributed by donors other than the top 15 exceeded the target in 2022 (USD 360.4 million versus USD 276.0 million) but dropped considerably in 2023 (USD 214.0 million versus USD 302.4 million). In addition, despite UNFPA's efforts, there was a decline in the core to non-core ratio of funding provided by Member States, from 30% in 2022 to 27% in 2023, below the Funding Compact 30% threshold, but higher than other United Nations agencies. Private sector resource mobilisation targets were exceeded in 2022 (USD 42.9 million versus USD 26.0 million) but also declined in 2023 (USD 26.0 million versus USD 29.9 million).

Interviews confirm that funding presents a significant challenge and that UNFPA's ambition is to broaden its donor base beyond its top donors and go beyond governments, looking at innovative ways to mobilise IFIs, other United Nations agencies, the corporate sector and foundations to ensure as much stability as possible, particularly in light of possible forthcoming funding gaps depending on the outcome of the presidential elections in the USA and elsewhere in 2024. Only 55% of respondents to the partner survey agree (44%) or strongly agree (11%) that UNFPA's resource mobilisation efforts ensure that the Fund has the funding in place to deliver its strategy (Q5_4). Participating governing partners are most favourable (76%); peer organisations most sceptical (43%). Overall, 24% of respondents lack the necessary information to respond.

Figure 13: UNFPA resource mobilisation efforts ensure that the organisation has the financing in place to deliver its strategy
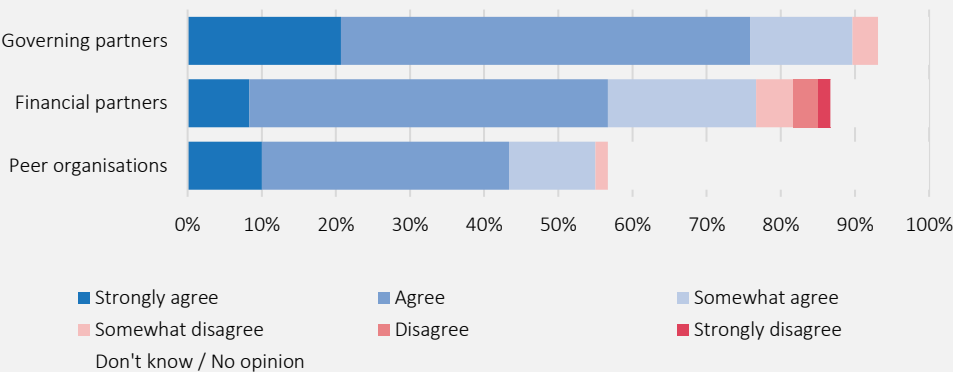
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

Element 3.2.3: UNFPA's Resource Mobilisation Strategy emphasises multi-year funding and the Fund's efforts have shown results with 50% of UNFPA being multi-year. UNFPA emphasises multi-year funding, but this has not significantly affected donor

decisions. "Sustaining and shock-proofing UNFPA's revenue base with predictable, flexible, multi-year support to UNFPA" is the first of the UNFPA Resource Mobilisation Strategy's three strategic objectives. The Strategy does not provide implementation guidance or the narrative underpinning this objective.

The "fraction of UNDS entities indicating that at least 50% of their contributions are part of multi-year commitments" is a Funding Compact indicator (the target being 100% by 2023). The fraction of UNFPA contributions that were reported multi-year (i.e., with a lifetime of two years or more) has fluctuated and is currently on target: 2019: 55%; 2020: 49%; 2021: 67%; 2022: 49%; 2023: 50%.

Element 3.2.4: UNFPA emphasises the need for more funding from programme country governments and raising more domestic funding for UNFPA country programmes. Moreover, the Resource Mobilisation Strategy, aligned with the Strategic Plan 2022-25, stresses a transition from solely seeking funding to strategically leveraging financing; however, the Operationalisation of this remains undeveloped.

Prong 5 of the UNFPA Resource Mobilisation Strategy 2022-25 is to increase programme country contributions. The key measure of success is the proportion of annual resource Mobilisation targets met through programme country governments. The Strategy provides the rationale for this decision and provides guidance for implementation. Reporting on the Strategic Plan's implementation indicates that annual targets for 2022 and 2023 were not met. The proportion of annual resource Mobilisation targets met in terms of non-OECD DAC donors was 81% in 2022 (USD 59.2 million versus 73.0 million) and 88% (USD 73.4 million versus 83.0 million) in 2023.

Apart from raising domestic funding for UNFPA, the UNFPA Resource Mobilisation Strategy also stresses the need to transition from funding to funding and financing (Prong 7). This intentional change was raised during several interviews with UNFPA staff. This reflects the strategic shift in the Strategic Plan: "Shifting the focus from funding the ICPD agenda to financing the ICPD agenda" while recognising that funding for UNFPA remains essential. However, the Mid-term Review of the Strategic Plan 2022-25 identified gaps and challenges regarding the implementation of the shift from funding to funding and financing for the transformative results and the ICPD agenda.

Element 3.2.5: UNFPA has upheld its commitment to pass on the 1% levy for the benefit of the RC system despite the transaction costs that arise from collecting and managing it.

In May 2019, UNFPA issued internal operational guidance on the implementation of the UN co-ordination levy (1%) for tightly earmarked third-party non-core contributions to United Nations development-related activities, to be paid at source.

UNFPA has contributed to the RC system by systematically collecting and passing on the 1% co-ordination level. However, the formative evaluation of the UNFPA engagement in the reform of the United Nations development system (2022) found that the Operationalisation (i.e., the negotiation, administration, tracking and reporting) of the levy was process-heavy and not cost-neutral for UNFPA, besides carrying the risk of translating into a net reduction of development resources for UNFPA should the principle of "additionality" not be applied and of disincentivising potential private sector partners.

Indeed, UNFPA reported to the Executive Board that the cost of collecting and managing the RC system levy under the agency-administered option is estimated at USD 125,000 for 2023 (2022: USD 109,200) and that it continued to be managed within the existing

administrative resources. Information about actual amounts passed on are not available. Interviews confirm that challenges related to including the levy in donor agreements may arise, but it is ultimately collected and reported. It was suggested that more insights into implementation at the country level would be useful.

MI 3.2 Evidence confidence Analysis mainly based on document review.	**High confidence**

MI 3.3: [Decentralised decision making] Resource reallocation/programming decisions responsive to need can be made at a decentralised level	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.50**
Element 1: An organisation-wide policy or guidelines exist that describe the delegation of decision-making authorities at different levels of the organisation	2
Element 2: Policy or guidelines provide evidence of a sufficient level of decision-making autonomy available at the regional or country level regarding resource reallocation/programming to ensure responsiveness to needs	4
Element 3: Evaluations or other reports contain evidence that reallocation/programming decisions have been made to positive effect at regional or country level	4
Element 4: UNFPA has made efforts to improve or sustain the delegation of decision-making on resource allocation/programming to the regional and country levels	4

MI 3.3 Analysis	**Evidence documents**
Element 3.3.1: Information on delegation of decision-making authority within UNFPA can be found in several different corporate documents. Regional and country office terms of references are outdated; overall, delegation of authority would benefit from more clarity. • In terms of resource management, the UNFPA Resource Management Policy (2022) states that "The high-level allocation of programme resources is prepared as part of the Integrated Budget. However, resource planning for individual programmes and interventions is decentralised to all offices." Furthermore, "Budget holders have the flexibility to adjust their budgets within a year to enable them to respond to changing priorities. Adjustments should, in principle, be budget-neutral and within the parameters established in the Institutional Budget guidelines." • Regarding programming, the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25 introduced a fundamental shift in that the decision on which modes of engagement (such as advocacy, service delivery, and capacity development) to employ in each country was transitioned from being centrally defined to a country-driven determination. • In emergency situations, the Fast-Track Policy and Procedures provide eligible UNFPA country offices responding to emergencies with greater delegation of authority and flexibility in specific programme and operational areas (namely, financial and operations management, human resources, and procurement) for a time-bound period. • As regards human resources management, the Division for Human Resources, in 2022, issued the document "Delegation of Authority in Matters Relating to Human Resources", which includes a delegation of authority matrix that sets out the delegation approved in different human resources areas of operation. The JIU found that the delegation of authority does not adequately delegate human resources functions but rather expands centralised control in field duty stations through newly appointed HR Business Partners in each regional office. The JIU also found that the document treats UNFPA Representatives, Country Directors and Heads of Office as one level, and that their reporting relationships are not clear, creating confusion over the respective roles and authorities. Furthermore, the main functions of the UNFPA regional offices and country offices performed	195, 163, 205 34, 217, 232.

under the delegation of authority are detailed in the regional office/country office terms of reference, but these are outdated.

Element 3.3.2: There is evidence that the decentralised levels of UNFPA enjoy flexibility in resource allocation and programming to ensure responsiveness to needs, including in emergency situations.

The Strategic Plan 2022-25 defines a fundamental shift in the organisation's programming function. The decision on which modes of engagement (that is, the functions performed by UNFPA in a given country, such as advocacy, service delivery, and capacity development) to employ in each country transitioned from being centrally defined to a country-driven determination. This change aims to achieve the desired results in a programme country through a more customised approach, responding to local realities and priorities.

As already seen in Elements 1.4.1 and 3.3.1, in terms of resource management, the Resource Management Policy states: "The high-level allocation of programme resources is prepared as part of the Integrated Budget. However, resource planning for individual programmes and interventions is decentralised to all offices". In other words, the implementation and monitoring of resources are decentralised, and regional directors and country representatives are responsible for the management of resources entrusted to them, serving as "budget holders." According to the policy: "Budget holders have the flexibility to adjust their budgets within a year, to enable them to respond to changing priorities. Adjustments should, in principle, be budget-neutral and within the parameters established in the Institutional Budget guidelines." This flexibility was confirmed during interviews with local UNFPA staff.

In emergency situations, the Fast-Track Policy and Procedures provide eligible UNFPA country offices responding to emergencies with greater delegation of authority and flexibility in specific programme and operational areas (namely, financial and operations management, human resources, and procurement) for a time-bound period.

75% of partner survey respondents agree (46%) or strongly agree (29%) that UNFPA staff can make critical strategic or programming decisions locally (Q2_4). Participating peer organisations (78%) and implementing partners (75%) are particularly favourable.

Figure 14: UNFPA can make critical strategic or programming decision locally
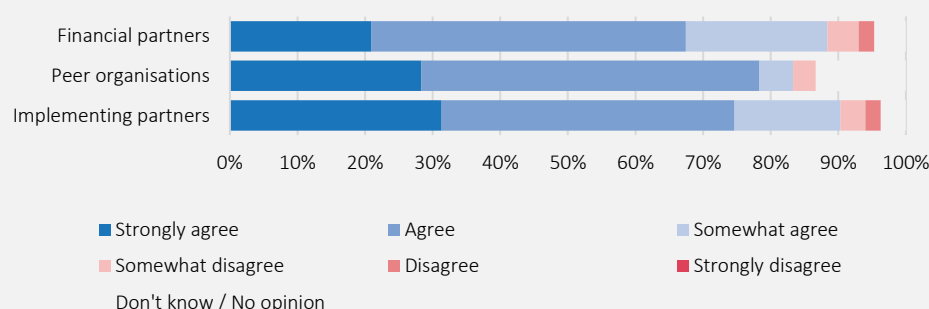
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

Element 3.3.3: Further decentralisation of decision-making authority during the COVID-19 pandemic is a good example of further decentralising decision-making to the country level.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a case in point where reprogramming and resource reallocation decisions were delegated promptly. The formative evaluation of the organisational resilience of UNFPA in light of its response to the COVID-19 pandemic (2024) found that, despite the lack of preparedness for such a systemic shock as the COVID-19 pandemic, UNFPA took early administrative and financial mitigation measures to navigate internal and external challenges. These measures, which supported the UNFPA response, included timely guidance on reprogramming work plans, repurposing funds and fast-tracking procedures for local procurement to maintain the flow of supplies. Interviews confirm that the COVID-19 response is a good example of flexibility and responsiveness at the country level, including negotiating the reallocation of donor funds (non-core) based on emerging priorities.

Element 3.3.4: UNFPA is committed to improving and sustaining decentralised decision-making.

Newer policies, such as the "Delegation of Authority in Matters Relating to Human Resources (2022)," along with the delegation of decision-making authority for modes of engagement to country offices as defined in the Strategic Plan 2022-25, demonstrate UNFPA's commitment to efforts to improve and sustain the delegation of decision-making.

MI 3.3 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 3.4: [Performance-based human resources] HR systems and policies performance-based and geared to the achievement of results	Score
Overall MI rating	Highly satisfactory
Overall MI score	3.80
Element 1: A system is in place that requires all staff, including senior staff, to undergo performance assessment	4
Element 2: There is evidence that the performance assessment system is systematically implemented by the organisation for all staff and to the required frequency	4
Element 3: The performance assessment system is clearly linked to organisational improvement, particularly the achievement of corporate objectives, and to demonstrate the ability to work with other entities, particularly within the United Nations development system	3
Element 4: Staff performance assessment is applied in decision-making on promotion, incentives, rewards, sanctions, etc.	4
Element 5: A clear process is in place to manage disagreement and complaints regarding staff performance assessments	4

MI 3.4 Analysis	Evidence documents
Element 3.4.1: UNFPA has transitioned from a Performance Appraisal and Development system to a more comprehensive Career and Performance Management framework for its staff members. This new system also encompasses senior staff and mandates that UNFPA Representatives and Heads of Office seek feedback from UN Resident Coordinators. In 2023, UNFPA launched the Career and Performance Management (CPM) system, a "more holistic approach" replacing its Performance Appraisal and Development (PAD) system as evidenced by desktop review and confirmed during interview. The newly introduced CPM system focuses on changing the culture and behaviours around performance rather than solely on performance. It should ensure that individual and team goals are aligned with UNFPA's Strategic Plan; motivate, enable and empower staff to set clear expectations and recognise achievements and high performance; manage and address underperformance in a timely manner; and link performance management with talent and	149, 1, 194, 142, 193.

career development. In practice, the system includes defining a performance plan at the beginning of the year, continuous feedback, check-in discussions, coaching and adjustments, and documented performance discussions in the middle (voluntary mid-year progress and career conversation) and at the end of the year (Year-end assessment). A CPM module is included in the new Quantum system.

In terms of seniority, the Career Performance Management (CPM) Guidebook establishes that as part of year-end assessments, UNFPA Representatives and Heads of Offices must seek feedback from the UN Resident Coordinator, in addition to having a reporting relationship with the UNFPA Regional Director.

Element 3.4.2: The new CPM system is being implemented at the stipulated frequency.
The recent CPM completion rates demonstrate that UNFPA is systematically implementing the CPM system to the required frequency (year-end completion rate in 2022: 98%, mid-year discussion rate in 2023: 83%).

Element 3.4.3: While UNFPA's CPM aligns individual performance indicators with those of business units and the Fund's overarching strategic objectives, it currently overlooks the valuable contributions of staff to UNDS reform processes and inter-agency collaboration for achieving programmatic goals.

UNFPA's goal-setting strategy ensures that each staff member's expected individual performance goals are aligned with their organisational unit's outputs and with UNFPA's organisational priorities. The CPM Guidebook defines a cascade strategy for setting individual performance indicators. Firstly, goals and objectives are defined at the highest levels of the organisation - i.e., the Strategic Plan, which then cascade down to the business units. The business units themselves determine their role in contributing to these high-level objectives and develop a work plan through UNFPA's reporting tool. The work plan forms the basis for setting individual performance goals for the year in question. The Guidebook further specifies that staff members work with their supervisors to define their annual performance goals. It recommends including three to five performance goals, prioritising those that most impact the organisational unit's objectives. These goals are expected to have approximately five success criteria, with clear targets, to measure whether they were achieved.

As concerns the ability to work with other UN entities, the formative evaluation of the UNFPA engagement in the reform of the United Nations development system (2022) found that staff engagement in the UNDS reform is not planned or acknowledged through a standardised work plan output in the UNFPA performance appraisal system. In other words, time spent is often above and beyond staff responsibilities. The evaluation recommended that UNFPA help staff better manage workloads related to dedicated UNDS reform processes and mechanisms and ensure that responsibilities are planned, acknowledged and accounted for - at all levels of the organisation. Going beyond dedicated UNDS reform processes and mechanisms, UNFPA should prepare guidance on using performance appraisal to incentivise and recognise staff who collaborate with and leverage other United Nations agencies to achieve their work objectives, including for work across the development-humanitarian-peace continuum. In its management response, the Fund outlined that "going forward, UNFPA is committed to reflect inter-agency work in all relevant job descriptions, and that staff performance in the area of inter-agency co-ordination is acknowledged and rewarded".

Element 3.4.4: Staff performance assessments should link high performance with talent and career development.

The UNFPA 2030 People Strategy establishes one of its strategic actions in terms of

performance management as "Provide recognition to high performers, including exploring new options to recognise and reward team performance and individual exceptional achievements of those who contribute the most and those who consistently perform at the next level." The UNFPA Recognition and Rewards Policy (2022), in turn, states that "most initiatives and practices (of recognition and rewards) (...) are based on the competency framework and the Performance Appraisal and Development (PAD) system" and includes among the possibilities of recognition:

- Invitation to apply for participation in a special assignment in another UNFPA office, either in the field or at headquarters;
- Selection for special programmes such as the mid-level manager's programme.

The CPM system endeavours to recognise achievements and high performance on the one hand and manage and address underperformance in a timely manner on the other. In terms of addressing underperformance, the CPM Guidebook establishes that if a staff member receives a "partially meets expectations" or "does not meet expectations," it is advisable to develop a Performance Improvement Plan to address the underperformance.

Element 3.4.5: Documentation exists on handling disagreements and complaints, and a clear process is in place. This process encompasses a performance approval plan and, ultimately, the possibility of submitting a rebuttal.

In terms of addressing underperformance, the CPM Guidebook establishes that if a staff member receives a "partially meets expectations" or "does not meet expectations," it is advisable to develop a Performance Improvement Plan to address the underperformance. Should disagreements or complaints regarding performance assessments occur, the UNFPA Rebuttal and Related Remedies Regarding Performance Appraisal and Development Policy (2022) establishes a straightforward process for managing the situation. The Policy defines that "a formal performance appraisal rebuttal may only be submitted following a good faith attempt by the staff member to seek a resolution of the disagreements regarding performance rating(s)", meaning that a rebuttal can only be considered a last resort. Before that, steps such as discussing disagreements with supervisors, seeking the assistance of the higher-level manager and the Strategic Human Resources Partner to resolve the disagreement, and including the staff member's comments on the PAD Form should be implemented. Staff members may submit a rebuttal statement to the UNFPA Chief, Talent Management Branch. Rebuttals are judged by a rebuttal panel, which must have at least eight members who are UNFPA staff or retired staff members. The panel should aim to complete reviews within one month of receiving the rebuttal statement. Official documentation to the Executive Board does not provide information on the extent of the use of rebuttals.

MI 3.4 Evidence confidence	High confidence

KPI 4: [Cost and value consciousness, financial transparency] Organisational systems are cost- and value-conscious and enable financial transparency and accountability	KPI score
Satisfactory	3.44

KPI 4 assesses UNFPA organisational systems and the extent to which they are cost- and value-conscious and enable transparency and accountability. The assessment comprises eight MIs covering results-based budgeting, resource disbursement and allocation, enterprise risk management and control mechanisms, and PSEAH.

UNFPA employs results-based budgeting at the strategic plan output and outcome levels, aligning with projected income and following International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS). The earlier disbursement of Member State core contributions would enhance predictability and improve resource planning and allocation to decentralised levels. UNFPA is implementing a new core resource allocation system (RAS), which is now in its third year. It uses transparent systems to track expenditures from programme activities to outputs and outcomes.

The Strategic Plan Mid-term Review missed an opportunity to learn from past experiences implementing the RAS.

UNFPA has significantly progressed in aligning financial resources with its transformative results through results-based budgeting. The Integrated Budget indicates the estimated resource allocation (core and non-core) for each strategic output and outcome based on the projected income and following the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS). However, a disaggregated analysis that differentiates between indicative resources for GBV on the one hand and harmful practices on the other is absent.

To facilitate effective planning and allocation to the decentralised levels, UNFPA has advocated for the early disbursement of core resources from Member States. However, the prevailing trend indicates that these payments are often received later in the year. While early payments increased from 2018 to 2020 (33% of payments were obtained in the first two quarters in 2018 and 85% in 2020), delays were observed in 2021 and 2022 (only 46% of payments were received in the first two quarters of 2022, which is 14% less than in 2021).

As mentioned above, the Executive Board approved new criteria in 2021 governing the allocation of core resources to UNFPA country programmes. According to these criteria, UNFPA country offices are entitled to a minimum floor of USD 500,000, 60% of available core resources are ringfenced for Tier 1 countries, and resources for the multi-country programmes in the Pacific and the Caribbean have been increased. Subsequently, UNFPA revised the Policy for Regular Resources Allocation and Distribution for Country Programmes and established a Resource Management Committee to operationalise the policy with the help of a guidance note. Within the framework of these criteria, resources may be redistributed within the regions during the year based on requests from the UNFPA regional offices. The new resource allocation system is now in its third year of implementation. Lessons learned from its implementation were not included in the Strategic Plan 2022-25 Mid-term Review.

UNFPA has implemented transparent systems to track expenditures from programme activities to their corresponding results at output and outcome levels. The Fund's annual statistical and financial reports submitted to the Executive Board provide detailed breakdowns of its financial outlays by region and recipient country/territory.

UNFPA has consistently strengthened its enterprise risk management system. The Fund has robust control mechanisms in place to enforce its zero-tolerance policy for fraudulent and other prohibited activities and maintains transparency with the EB.

Enterprise risk management (ERM) in UNFPA was the subject of two reviews - by the JIU in 2020, and by UNFPA OAIS in 2021. The JIU assessed UNFPA's internal oversight structure as robust with some areas for improvement. OAIS found that UNFPA had created the groundwork for a more integrated ERM process. It determined the overall assessed maturity level of UNFPA's ERM process following the 5-level HLCM Reference Maturity Model (RRM) as Level 2 - "Developing". To take the Fund to the next level "Established", in 2022, UNFPA adopted its first comprehensive Enterprise Risk Management Policy, which brings together several risk management policies, guidelines, processes, and practices and created an informal Integrity Group. It was being rolled out during this assessment; the 'unsatisfactory' score in some microindicators is due to the fact that the roll-out is still underway across country programmes.

UNFPA has maintained its zero-tolerance Policy against Fraudulent and Other Prohibited Practices. This policy clearly delineates the responsibilities of both management and UNFPA personnel regarding these matters and mandates staff to complete mandatory ethics training. Clear and accessible guidelines are in place for staff and non-staff personnel to anonymously report identified issues and concerns. Most wrongdoings should be reported to OAIS; cases of retaliation should be reported to the Ethics Office.

OAIS generally conforms to all elements of independence and has aligned its operations with international best practices and standards. It offers a variety of channels for reporting wrongdoing. Evidence confirms that UNFPA has adhered to its Policy against Fraudulent and Other Proscribed Practices. Annual reports detailing cases of fraud, corruption, and other irregularities, along with corresponding actions taken, are presented to the UNFPA Executive Board and made publicly accessible. Historically, fraud and financial irregularities constitute the majority of wrongdoings investigated by the OAIS. For example, of the 306 open cases at the beginning of 2023, 170 (55%) concerned fraud and financial irregularities. OAIS prioritises time-bound cases and those concerning retaliation, sexual misconduct, fraud, and theft of large sums.

Clear and delineated procedures are in place for UNFPA management to address findings and recommendations arising from investigations, internal and external audits and reviews, and evaluations, including sharing management responses with the Executive Board. UNFPA tracks the responses and actions taken in response to issues raised by control mechanisms.

Over the years, UNFPA has built a robust framework to address SEAH through its policies, personnel training, reporting mechanisms, and survivor support services. The challenges of operating in complex humanitarian settings have made it even more pressing for the organisation to continue to strengthen its efforts to prevent and respond to SEA, emphasizing accountability and protection for those affected.

Over the years, UNFPA has built a robust framework to address sexual misconduct through its policies, mandatory training, reporting mechanisms and survivor support services. UNFPA's first organisation-specific policy to protect from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), adopted in July 2024, provides a clear direction for UNFPA's work in this area for the biennium (UNFPA, 2024d). The organisation strengthened its resources, technical capacity and processes in place for PSEA during the assessment period, although only few of them are part of the regular budget. To ensure its implementing partners (IPs) also prevent and respond to SEA, UNFPA has clear standards in place to hold them accountable in line with the UN's IP protocol.

UNFPA is a strong inter-agency player in PSEA, acted as a PSEA champion, provides many UN PSEA coordinators and initiated several collaborative efforts within the UN system. It is a driving force among the 10 UN agencies that work to make implementing partners accountable and advance the use of the UN Partner Portal and its PSEA-related mechanisms for due diligence and capacity building. UNFPA also plays a strong role in promoting and applying victim-centred approaches, especially in its role of lead agency on GBV and provider of last resort for other agencies when it comes to victim support. To avoid hiring former UN personnel who have previously been linked with sexual misconduct, UNFPA uses ClearCheck, and moreover, is also among a handful of UN agencies that pioneer the Misconduct Disclosure Scheme (MDS) that has a broader coverage.

Opportunities for continuous strengthening remain as UNFPA implements its SEA strategy. Resources merit scaling up, especially financial and human capacity to coordinate and implement PSEAH efforts at the country-level and ensure they are effective and lead to a coherent approach. Securing staff dedicated to drive the implementation of UNFPA's commitments to protecting from SH will also be important, including at the country level. Also, given UNFPA's role as the provider of last resort for SEA survivors, and as the lead agency on GBV prevention and response, it is important that it clearly delineate resources for GBV and PSEAH so that resources are adequate for PSEAH but without jeopardizing UNFPA's resources for GBV. It will be important for the organisation, going forward, to communicate clearly the different uses and aims of GBV and PSEA work to donors, understand their institutional setup in this regard, and take account of this in its fundraising strategy. Furthermore, it would be helpful to measure the impact of the mandatory training that UNFPA undertakes to raise awareness of both SEA and SH.

MI 4.1: Transparent decision-making for resource allocation, consistent with strategic priorities over time (adaptability)	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.00**
Element 1: An explicit organisational statement or policy is available that clearly defines criteria for allocating resources to UNFPA regional and country programmes	3
Element 2: The criteria reflect targeting to the highest priority themes/countries/areas of intervention as set out in the current strategic plan	3
Element 3: Resource allocation mechanisms allow for adaptation in different contexts	4
Element 4: The organisational policy or statement is regularly reviewed and updated	2
MI 4.1 Analysis	**Evidence documents**
Element 4.1.1: The UNFPA Executive Board has approved explicit criteria governing the allocation of regular resources to country programmes. Conversely, the distribution of softly earmarked funds is determined by thematic fund steering committees and is not explicit in an organisational policy. Since the last MOPAN assessment, the criteria for allocating regular (core) resources to UNFPA's country offices have changed. The new criteria for allocating regular (core) resources to UNFPA country programmes are explicitly stated in the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25, approved by the Executive Board in September 2021. In summary, UNFPA has set a yearly minimum floor of USD 500,000 for each country office "as the foundation for building and implementing the country programme, particularly carrying out the UNFPA normative role to promote the ICPD Programme of Action and to advocate achieving the three transformative results". The allocation of the remaining regular resources follows a "three-dimensions and two-adjustments" approach:	205, 206 168, 192, 64

- Three dimensions: (i) distance from reaching the transformative results, (ii) health inequality, and (iii) vulnerability;
- Two adjustments: (i) total female population aged 10-24 years, and (ii) gross national income in purchasing power parity per capita.

Furthermore, the Strategic Plan defines priority targets for allocating regular resources: allocating at least 60% annually to Tier 1 countries (those furthest away from achieving the transformative results) and increasing the resources available for the two multi-country programmes in the Pacific and Caribbean sub-regions.

After the UNFPA Executive Board approved the Strategic Plan, UNFPA revised their Policy for Regular Resources Allocation and Distribution for Country Programmes (2022) to align with the revised criteria. A newly established Resource Management Committee operationalises the policy with the help of a Guidance Note.

Interviewees mentioned that UNFPA trust funds - e.g., the Maternal Health Trust Fund - have their own steering committees and resource allocation criteria that are not governed by the UNFPA Executive Board. Corporate efforts have led to the integration of the resource allocation processes in terms of timing, but so far, the alignment of criteria has not been considered.

However, only 42% of partners responding to the survey, conducted as part of this assessment, agree (29%) or strongly agree (13%) that UNFPA is transparent about the criteria it applies to allocate financial resources to its regional and country programmes (Q5_1). While governing partners are largely affirmative (62%), financial partners (35%) and peer organisations (37%) are less so. Overall, 37% did not have the necessary information to respond to this survey question.

Figure 15: UNFPA is transparent about the criteria it applies to allocate financial resources to its regional and country programmes
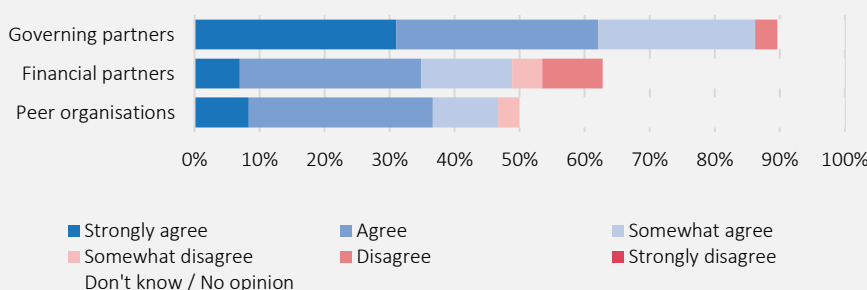
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

Element 4.1.2: Regular resource allocation prioritises countries furthest from achieving transformative results and those highly susceptible to risks. However, including because of core resources constraints overall, this allocation strategy may result in resource insufficiency for other UNFPA country offices.

UNFPA does not prioritise themes at the central level within the framework of the Strategic Plan. Prioritisation and resource allocation to outcomes and outputs are delegated to UNFPA country offices as part of the country programme document development and approval process and annual work planning, as confirmed during interviews.

The allocation of regular resources to UNFPA country programmes, as envisaged in the Strategic Plan 2022-25 and Business Model, based on the "three-dimensions, two-adjustments, and one-floor" approach (as outlined under Element 4.1.1), as well as the ringfencing of 60% of regular

resources for the 54 Tier 1 countries, ensures that UNFPA prioritises those programme countries furthest away from reaching the transformative results by 2030 and vulnerable to risks according to the INFORM Risk Index.

Interviewees, however, pointed out that Tier 2 and Tier 3 countries - e.g., in Latin America - face high inequalities and large population groups that are (at risk of being) left behind. In these countries, UNFPA offices struggle to implement programmes and leverage much-needed development financing with little more than the minimum allocated floor of USD 500,000 (also see Elements 1.2.2 and 3.1.3). In its written feedback, UNFPA pointed out that despite the fact that regular resources have not grown since the previous strategic plan cycle, the minimum floor allocated to each country office was increased from USD 300,000 to USD 500,000. Furthermore, that the minimum floor resources serve as "the foundation for building and implementing the country programme, particularly carrying out the UNFPA normative role to promote the ICPD Programme of Action and to advocate achieving the three transformative results", instead of funding services.

Only 52% of partner survey respondents strongly agree (15%) or agree (37%) that the strategic allocation of resources is transparent and coherent with the Fund's strategic priorities (Q1_5), of which 66% are governing partners, 52% financial partners and 50% peer organisations.

Element 4.1.3: Under certain conditions, UNFPA resource allocation mechanisms allow for adaptation in different contexts.

The UNFPA resource allocation and distribution system allows for flexibility under certain conditions. The UNFPA Guidance Note on the Resources Allocation System (RAS) and Resource Distribution System (RDS) defines, in Section VI entitled "Request for adjustments during the year," that "the Regional Offices have the flexibility to make adjustments to regular resource ceilings for country programmes between countries within their respective regions", provided they adhere to the minimum floor of USD 500,000 and the minimum of 60% for Tier 1 countries. Additionally, the UNFPA Policy and Strategy Division and the Division of Management Services must approve the request for resource redistribution.

Element 4.1.4: The UNFPA Executive Board has not conducted a specific review of the current resource allocation and distribution system.

As mentioned in Element 4.1.1, the criteria for allocating regular (core) resources to UNFPA's country offices have changed since the last MOPAN assessment. The UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25 with the new resources allocation system is now in its third year of implementation. While context-relevant adjustments to resource allocation and distribution throughout the year are possible, the categorisation of programme countries according to the "three-dimensions and two-adjustments" approach and the implications of focusing 60% of available resources on Tier 1 countries have not been reviewed since the approval of the Strategic Plan by the Executive Board in September 2021, including to take any shifts due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic or the outbreak of armed conflict into account.

The Strategic Plan 2022-25 Mid-term Review report is available and was formally tabled during the Executive Board's annual session in June 2024. It does not address any lessons learned from implementing the Business Model in general and the current resource allocation and distribution system specifically.

MI 4.1 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 4.2: [Allocations and disbursements as planned] Allocated resources disbursed as planned	Score
Overall MI rating	Satisfactory
Overall MI score	3.50
Element 1: The institution sets clear targets for regional and country-level allocations and for	3

disbursements– in terms of quantity and timeliness	
Element 2: Financial information indicates that planned allocations and disbursements were met within institutionally agreed margins	4
Element 3: Clear explanations, including changes in context, are available for any variances against plans	4
Element 4: Variances relate to external factors rather than to internal procedural blockages	3
MI 4.2 Analysis	**Evidence documents**

Element 4.2.1: Regarding timeliness, while UNFPA advocates for the early disbursement of regular resources from Member States to facilitate effective planning and allocation to the decentralised level, the prevailing trend indicates that these payments are often received later in the year.

Based on the UNFPA Strategic Plan, the Policy for Regular Resource Allocation and Distribution for Country Programmes (2022) and the Integrated Budget 2022-25, the newly established UNFPA Resource Management Committee determines overall available regular resources for country programmes in an Initial Regular Resources Distribution Plan. This document initially outlines the main sources of resources and their estimated values for the year, as well as Executive Board-approved cost classification and Integrated Budget components (institutional budget and programme countries). In more detail, the annexes of the document present the ceilings for the distribution of resources by location and region/division, both for the institutional budget and country programmes, as well as the country programme ceilings.

The report on the structured funding dialogue 2022-23 published in June states that in 2022, "payments were received later in the year, in comparison with 2021". As the graph below shows, while early payments increased from 2018 to 2020 (33% of payments were received from Member States in the first two quarters in 2018 against 85% in 2020), further delays were observed in 2021 and 2022 (46% of payments were received in the first two quarters on 2022, i.e. 14% less than in 2021). The report warns about this trend, as 2023 core projections were at Strategic Plan target levels while they were significantly above in the previous years, "making it all the more critical to have early payment of contributions for planning and allocation purposes".

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102, 233

Figure 16: Timing of contributions recorded during 2018-22 (as e percentage of total per quarter each year)
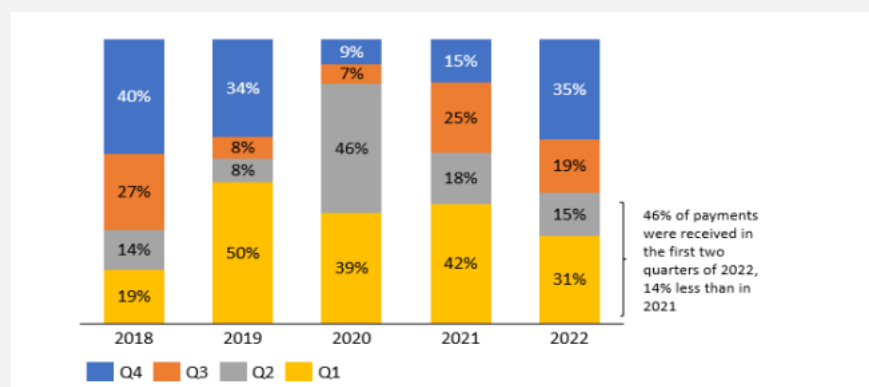
Source: Report on the structured funding dialogue 2022-23.

Element 4.2.2: The UNFPA Strategic Plan's prudent resource-related targets have been achieved or exceeded. Furthermore, planned allocations related to expenses have also been met.

The report on the structured funding dialogue 2022-23 states that "while the overall financial situation

of UNFPA […] was robust in 2022, UNFPA contribution targets are set based on the resources estimated to be raised during the period", thus requiring a "prudent budgeting and results-planning approach". Therefore, "unless major shocks occur, the contribution targets are expected to be met or surpassed", thanks to a "carefully conducted funding-scenario analysis". The graph below shows that the resource-related targets set in the Strategic Plan have all been met or surpassed from 2018 to 2022 included.

Figure 17: Strategic plan targets compared to actual contributions (2018-22) (in million of USD)
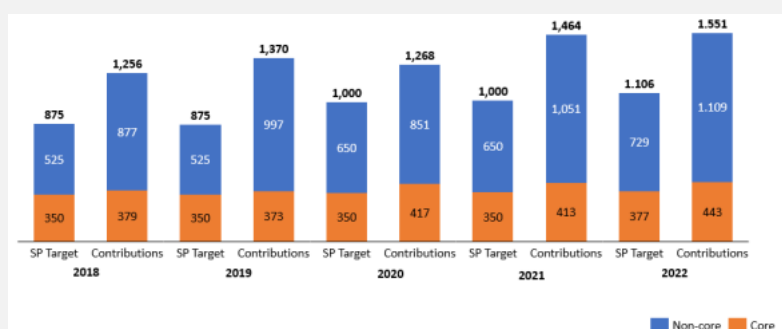
Source: Report on the structured funding dialogue 2022-23.

Planned allocations related to expenses have also been met. As shown in the report on the structured funding dialogue 2022-23, expenses for 2022 show a good alignment with the planned indicative allocation of resources per outcome and organisational efficiency and effectiveness output for the four years of the Strategic Plan 2022-25. The graph below shows that in 2022, a certain alignment with the indicative budget can be seen, although actual expenses for Outcome 3 "The reduction in gender-based violence and harmful practices has accelerated" are higher than the indicative budget (21% in the indicative budget versus 32% for actual expenses in 2022), showcasing greater investments in women and girls and in efforts to leave no one behind.

Figure 18: Indicative budget versus actual expenses to outcomes and (OEE) outputs, 2022-25
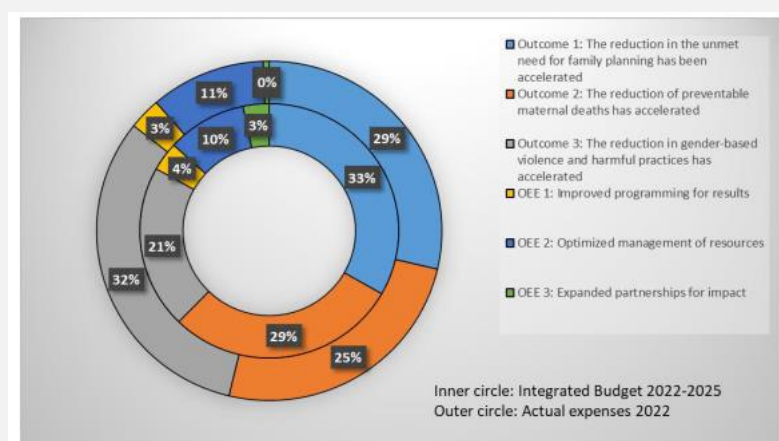
Source: Strategic Plan 2022-25.

Element 4.2.3: The Mid-term Review of the UNFPA Integrated Budget provides context to proposed modifications.

The Mid-term Review of the UNFPA integrated budget 2022-25 gives strategic and financial context

to the revision of the integrated budget. The review "focuses on changes to the strategic, operational, and financial context affecting UNFPA and relevant Executive Board mandates established after the approval of the integrate budget, 2022-25. Such changes constitute the basis for this review and for proposals contained herein, and are aligned with the revised Strategic Plan 2022-25".

For instance, the review details the factors considered to plan the revised regular resources: "For regular resources, UNFPA prudently plans the budget based on an income estimate of USD 370 million in 2024 and USD 330 million in 2025. This reflects several factors. First, budgetary pressures in some key donor countries are likely to be amplified in the coming years and could result in cuts to regular resources contributions both in the short and long term. Second, exchange rate volatility has increased significantly over the past year, and the relatively strong US dollar impacts the dollar-denominated income forecast. If additional regular resources become available during the remainder of the cycle, they can be invested in country programmes."

Element 4.2.4: External factors account for discrepancies in core resource provision by Member States. Internal disbursement to UNFPA business units follows a strict schedule.

The section "managing risk, volatility and uncertainty" of the report on the structured funding dialogue 2022-23 explains variances for the provision of core resources by Member States. The reports explain variances by the following factors:

- General global economic downturn and an increasingly complex humanitarian environment that put the economies of many key traditional donors of UNFPA under strain.
- UNFPA's vulnerability as a voluntarily funded organisation.

It can be noted that UNFPA has put in place internal procedures to overcome its vulnerability to external variances, notably prudent approaches to budget management, delayed distribution of core resources from 2022 to face the uncertainty of donor commitment in 2023, and advocacy towards all Member States to secure multi-year funding and early payments.

As concerns internal disbursements from the Division of Management Services to all UNFPA business units, this happens at the end of one year for the next year following the schedule that is published in the annual accounts closure instructions. There are reportedly no timing delays that would require any explanations.

MI 4.2 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 4.3: Principles of results-based budgeting applied	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.50**
Element 1: The most recent organisational budget clearly aligns expected financial resources with the outputs and outcomes of the current strategic plan	3
Element 2: A budget document is available that provides clear costs for the achievement of each output and outcome	4
Element 3: Systems are available and used to track costs from activity to result (outcome)	4
Element 4: There is evidence of improved costing of strategic plan outputs and outcomes in budget documents reviewed over time (evidence of building a better system)	3
MI 4.3 Analysis	**Evidence documents**

Element 4.3.1: UNFPA has demonstrated significant progress in aligning financial resources with its transformative results through results-based budgeting. However, a disaggregated analysis differentiating between GBV and harmful practices is absent.

The UNFPA integrated budget for 2022-25 demonstrates a high alignment with the Strategic Plan for the same period. Table 4 of the integrated budget outlines the estimated resource allocation (regular and other) for each strategic output and organisational effectiveness and efficiency output, based on the projected income available and keeping in mind the bottom-up nature of country programme formulation and approvals and that country programme cycles are not synchronised with the Strategic Plan cycle. Meanwhile, Figure 18 illustrates the indicative allocations of

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60, 117
199-2022, 12.

programme resources by the three transformative results outcomes (and organisational effectiveness and efficiency). Figure 18 does not differentiate between indicative resources for GBV and harmful practices. 76% of partner survey respondents strongly agree (34%) or agree (42%) that UNFPA applies principles of results-based budgeting and reports expenditures according to results (Q1_6).

Element 4.3.2: An Integrated Budget document is available that provides clear costings for the achievement of each Strategic Plan output and outcome (transformative result).

Output and outcome-level funding estimates in the UNFPA integrated budget 2022-25 are not based on needs but on the projected income for the period in question. The projected funds are clearly indicated for each output and outcome (transformative results) for the four years and per year.

Element 4.3.3: UNFPA has implemented transparent systems to track expenditures from programme activities to corresponding results. Detailed breakdowns of UNFPA's financial outlays are accessible in the Fund's statistical and financial reports submitted to the Executive Board.

The UNFPA's Statistical and Financial Reviews present annual expenses across various classifications, providing a detailed overview of costs from activities to outputs and outcomes. Costs associated with activities are outlined in tables detailing expenditures by region and recipient country/territory, organised by Programme Resource Component. Monitoring costs per output can be found in various tables disclosing outputs of the Integrated Results and Resources Framework. Lastly, expenses associated with outcomes are also monitored, as illustrated in multiple tables within the annual Statistical and Financial Reviews.

Element 4.3.4: Financial reporting structures and information presented to the Executive Board have remained consistent. Considering the period under review (from 2019 to the present), the two integrated budgets released during this timeframe are presented in a consistent format as approved by the Executive Board. Both integrated budgets (2018-21; 2022-25) present indicative resource allocations for individual outputs and outcomes, whereby the costing of the outputs and outcomes is based on programmatic models. Regarding the annual statistical and financial reviews for the Executive Board, the same situation is observed, being quite similar across the years and not of improvements to the costing methodology over the years. The implementation of International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) have contributed to the transparency of the financial reporting and the financial health of UNFPA.

MI 4.3 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 4.4: [Audit] External audit or other external reviews certify that international standards are met at all levels, including with respect to internal audit	Score
Overall MI rating	Highly satisfactory
Overall MI score	3.75
Element 1: External audits or other external reviews of UNFPA are conducted that comply with international standards	4
Element 2: Most recent external audit or external review confirms UNFPA compliance with international audit standards at all levels of the organisation	3
Element 3: Management responses are available to external audits or external reviews	4
Element 4: Internal audit function meets international standards, including for independence and transparency	4
MI 4.4 Analysis	Evidence documents
Element 4.4.1: UNFPA's external audits and reviews adhere to internationally recognised standards. External audits of UNFPA financial statements and reviews of the Fund's activities are conducted on a yearly basis by the United Nations Board of Auditors (in accordance with General Assembly resolution 74 (I) of 1946). The reports are submitted to the UNFPA Executive Board alongside	223, 226 115, 222 227, 67 182, 219 31, 164.

reports of the Executive Director on the status of implementation of the United Nations Board of Auditors recommendations as confirmed during interviews. According to the Board of Auditor reports, the audits are conducted in conformity with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations as well as the International Standards on Auditing and in accordance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS).

In addition, as one of 28 participating organisations, UNFPA is subject to reviews by the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), an independent external oversight body of the United Nations system mandated to conduct evaluations, inspections and investigations system-wide. According to its website, the JIU is governed by a statute, which is complemented by a set of standards and procedures in line with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) norms and standards.

Led by the United Nations Secretary-General, a System-wide Evaluation Office (SWEO) was established in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General in 2018, and which has produced system-wide evaluations that include UNFPA as an evaluand and stakeholder, such as an evaluation of the UNDS socio-economic response to COVID-19 in 2022. Pending the finalisation of a system-wide evaluation policy, this MOPAN assessment was unable to establish how the SWEO complies with international standards.

Element 4.4.2: The JIU has assessed UNFPA's oversight structure as robust, albeit with identified areas for improvement.

In addition to the Executive Board, UNFPA's Oversight Policy (2015) is implemented by the following internal bodies: the Office of Audit and Investigation Services, the Oversight Advisory Committee, the Evaluation Office, the Ethics Office, and the Oversight Compliance Monitoring Committee. An "Integrity Group" was established in 2023 to facilitate collaboration between concerned offices (including the Legal Unit, the Division for Human Resources, and the Ombudsman), but, according to one key informant, it requires revitalising due to the arrival of new staff. A joint action plan envisages activities to promote culture change, build capacities and strengthen prevention.

The latest external review of UNFPA conducted by the JIU in 2023 entitled "Review of management and administration in the United Nations Population Fund" featured a dedicated chapter evaluating this internal oversight structure (Section VIII of the report), indicating that it "provides a solid oversight framework for UNFPA activities (...) linked by well-established processes, including appropriate monitoring and regular reporting mechanisms". However, the JIU review also suggests the need to reduce some possibilities of conflict of interest within relevant bodies in accordance with generally accepted best practice and professional standards. For example, "the Inspector could not find additional protective measures (...) that would prevent Board members [from the Executive Board] from being eligible for employment with UNFPA in other strategic positions". Additionally, the Inspector also concluded that UNFPA's Oversight Advisory Committee could not be considered as a fully independent oversight entity because "the selection and appointment of its members and the approval of its terms of reference are the responsibility of the Executive Director".

As part of its management response, UNFPA took on board the recommendation regarding the engagement of former members of the Executive Board as part of its senior management structure to ensure protective measures aimed at promoting independence, transparency and the reduction of the perception of conflict of interest in the overall management of UNFPA. Furthermore, UNFPA management disagreed and conveyed its strong concerns regarding the JIU characterisation of the Oversight Advisory Committee.

Element 4.4.3: UNFPA transparently disseminates management responses to both external audit findings and JIU review recommendations.

Annually, the Executive Director issues, in accordance with Executive Board decision 97/2, a report on the status of implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations Board of Auditors,

including those that were not accepted (5% in 2022), those that had been fully implemented by that time, and those that were under implementation.

In addition, UNFPA shares management responses with JIU, such as was the case for JIU's single-organisation Review of Management and Administration in UNFPA (also see Element 4.4.2). It issues annual reports to the Executive Board on the recommendations of the JIU. In 2022, for example, JIU conducted general reviews of ethics functions, business continuity management, and the management of implementing partners (formulating at least 20 recommendations relevant to UNFPA).

Element 4.4.4: UNFPA's Office of Audit and Investigation Services (OAIS) aligns its operations with international best practices and standards for internal auditing, including the IPSAS.

Adherence to international best practices and standards, including ensuring independence, are principles of the UNFPA Office of Audit and Investigation Services (OAIS), as emphasised in various passages of its Charter (Article 2; Articles 56 to 64).

In August 2022, an assessment of the independence of OAIS concluded that "OAIS generally conforms to all the elements of independence set out in its charter, and OAIS does so in conformity with relevant governing conventions in the financial regulations and rules, UNFPA policies on oversight, professional standards in audit and investigation, and other professional standards, principles, guidelines, and best practices".

MI 4.4 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 4.5: [Control mechanisms] Issues or concerns raised by internal control mechanisms (operational and financial risk management, internal audit, safeguards etc.) are adequately addressed	Score
Overall MI rating	Highly satisfactory
Overall MI score	3.80
Element 1: A clear policy or organisational statement exists on how UNFPA addresses issues or concerns identified through internal control mechanisms/reporting channels	4
Element 2: Management guidelines or rules provide clear guidance on the procedures for addressing identified issues or concerns and include timelines	4
Element 3: Clear guidelines are available for staff and non-staff personnel on reporting any issues or concerns identified	4
Element 4: A tracking system is available that records responses and actions taken to address identified issues and concerns	3
Element 5: Executive Board or management documents indicate that relevant procedures have been followed/action has been taken in response to identified issues and concerns, including recommendations from audits (internal and external) with clear timelines for action	4

MI 4.5 Analysis	Evidence documents
Element 4.5.1: UNFPA adopted a comprehensive Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Policy in 2022 as raised during interviews, which serves as the umbrella framework for organisational risk mitigation, bringing together several risk management policies, guidelines, processes and practices, including the initial UNFPA Oversight Policy. Risk management in UNFPA was the subject of two reviews by the JIU in 2020 and UNFPA OAIS in 2021. In its report, JIU showcased UNFPA's senior management risk committee chaired by the Executive Director. It also highlighted the "MyRisks" risk register integrated with the results-based management system "MyResults" in the UNFPA Strategic Information System (SIS) (rather than being a stand-alone tool). Alongside other reviewed United Nations organisations, UNFPA was required to implement four formal recommendations - i.e., • legislative/governing bodies should incorporate ERM into their meetings at least annually, with substantive coverage determined by the organisation's mandate, field network and risk exposure;	187,188 88, 155 190, 3 147, 37 28, 96 189, 216 96, 26-29, 115, 220-22, 108-112, 249, 250

- executive heads should undertake a comprehensive review of their ERM implementation against JIU benchmarks 1 to 9 for successful implementation of ERM;
- members of the High-level Committee on Management (HLCM) of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) should ensure that its Cross-Functional Task Force on Risk Management is continued as a viable mechanism to further promote and facilitate inter-agency cooperation, coordination and knowledge sharing and to explore shared risks associated with United Nations reform efforts; and
- legislative/governing bodies of participating organisations should request executive heads to report on the outcomes of a comprehensive review of the against JIU benchmarks 1 to 9.

In the report to the Executive Board on the JIU recommendations in 2020, the UNFPA Executive Director responded that it is the prerogative of the Executive Board to decide on their agenda, considering competing priorities and limited time, and that UNFPA will support the Board as needed. The Executive Director committed to undertaking a comprehensive review of its ERM implementation against the JIU benchmarks and to reporting on its outcome. They confirmed that UNFPA will continue to engage in the HLCM task force and the newly formed HLCM Risk Management Forum.

In 2021, OAIS found that UNFPA had progressed since the ERM process was operationalised in 2015 and that progress made thus far had created the groundwork to build a more integrated ERM process. The overall assessed maturity level of the ERM process in accordance with the Reference Maturity Model (RRM) was determined as Level 2 - "Developing".[1] To take the Fund to the next target maturity level ("Established"), UNFPA management commissioned the development of an Enterprise Risk Management Policy. The Policy that was adopted in 2022 and is being introduced with the support of an ERM Secretariat in the Executive Office builds on best practices, including a three-line internal control framework model, and sets a roadmap for achieving ERM maturity at all levels of the organisation. Interviewees welcome the new risk management system. [Add visual from ERM Policy; para. 20.]

The older, but still valid, UNFPA Oversight Policy (2015) aims to encourage good governance, create the necessary environment of accountability and transparency in UNFPA and ensure that the Fund operates effectively and efficiently while continuously improving its performance. The policy defines the roles and responsibilities of the actors involved in the oversight process of review, monitoring, evaluation, supervision, reporting and audit of the Fund's programmes, activities, policy implementation and results, to ensure organisational, financial, operational and ethical accountability, effectiveness of internal controls and prevention of fraud and malpractice.
In addition, corporate policies are available for different types of wrongdoings (corrupt, unethical, obstructive, coercive, collusive and fraudulent practices) that provide a range of remedies. They include:

- UNFPA Disciplinary Framework (2018)
- UNFPA Policy against Fraudulent and Other Proscribed Practices (2018)
- Prohibition of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority and Discrimination (2018)
- UNFPA Anti-Fraud Strategy (2019)
- UNFPA Policy and Procedures for Implementing Partner Review and Sanctions (2021)

Element 4.5.2: Clear and delineated procedures, including specified timelines, are in place for addressing findings and recommendations arising from evaluations and audits.
Concerning evaluations conducted by the Evaluation Office and decentralised evaluations, UNFPA management must issue a management response to the annual report of the Evaluation Office on evaluation activities and results, as well as for specific evaluations, which includes responsibilities

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[1] Level 1: Initial; Level 2: Developing; Level 3: Established; Level 4: Advanced; and Level 5: Leading.

and timelines.

Regarding the OAIS, management is also required to issue a response to the annual reports on internal audit and investigation activities presented to the Executive Board and to the report of the Audit Advisory Committee. The same applies to external audits, whose recommendations must be addressed internally and included in the annual response produced by the management, as well as in the annual report from the Ethics Office.

Furthermore, the review of the adequacy of these management responses is the responsibility of the Oversight Advisory Committee, according to its Terms of Reference (Article 17).

Element 4.5.3: Clear and accessible guidelines are in place for both staff and non-staff personnel to report identified issues and concerns.

UNFPA staff and non-staff personnel have various entry points to information and taking action on issues and concerns. Generally speaking, most wrongdoings should be reported to OAIS. Cases of retaliation should be reported to the Ethics Office (by email, in person, or by mail).

It is possible for anybody to report wrongdoing to OAIS through a link at the bottom of the UNFPA website where an overview of mechanisms for reporting wrongdoing can also be found (again no "go-to" page). According to the overview, there are five different channels for reporting wrongdoing - i.e. a confidential web-based hotline on the official UNFPA website (available in Arabic, English, French, Russian, and Spanish); a dedicated investigation hotline email address; physical mail marked as "Confidential" to the Director, OAIS; a dedicated OAIS fax number; and reporting by telephone to an OAIS-dedicated voicemail.

78% of partner survey respondents strongly agree (31%) or agree (47%) that UNFPA adequately addresses issues and concerns raised through reporting channels (Q1_7). 84% of Implementing Partners agreed or strongly agreed.

Element 4.5.4: An Oversight Compliance Monitoring Committee monitors and tracks the implementation of the recommendations, management responses and recommended actions stemming from internal audits, JIU reviews, centralised evaluations and other select assessments. The Committee meets on a monthly basis, with special focus on recommendations past their deadline.

Element 4.5.5: OAIS presents internal and external audit reports to the Executive Board along with reports of the Executive Director on the implementation of recommendations. Annually, the OAIS submits to the Executive Board a report on its audit and investigation activities, which also includes actions taken for reported cases of wrongdoing. The document provides a breakdown of the number of cases carried over from previous years and those initiated in that particular year, categorised by the type of cases (fraud, retaliation, sexual misconduct, prohibited conduct, and others) and by location (by regions, including headquarters).

The report also reports the closures and open cases by the end of that year. The OAIS prioritises time-bound cases and those concerning retaliation, sexual misconduct, fraud, and theft of large sums. In terms of actions taken, the report provides the quantity of disciplinary actions involving UNFPA personnel (including types such as dismissals, loss in grade, written censure, and others), as well as the number of cases involving implementing partners that were referred to the IPRC for decision.

As regards internal and external audits, annual reports are issued by the Executive Director to the Executive Board on the implementation of OAIS recommendations.

Of 180 respondents to the MOPAN partner survey, 78% strongly agree (31.0%) or agree (47.0%) that UNFPA adequately addresses issues and concerns raised through reporting channels (including operational and financial risk management, internal audit, social and environmental

safeguards). Of the participating governing partners (29), 17.0% strongly agreed, 49.0% agreed and 21.0% somewhat agreed. Of the financial partners (17), 12.0% strongly agreed, 41.0% agreed and 18.0% somewhat agreed.

| MI 4.5 Evidence confidence | High confidence |

MI 4.6: [Anti-fraud policies and procedures] Policies and procedures effectively prevent, detect, investigate and sanction cases of fraud, corruption and other financial irregularities	Score
Overall, MI rating	Highly satisfactory
Overall, MI score	4.00
Element 1: A clear policy/guidelines on preventing, detecting, investigating and sanctioning cases of fraud, corruption and any other financial irregularities is/are available and made public	4
Element 2: The policy/guidelines clearly define/s the roles of management and UNFPA personnel in implementing/complying with them	4
Element 3: Training/awareness-raising has been conducted for UNFPA personnel on the policy/guidelines	4
Element 4: There is evidence of policy/guidelines implementation, e.g. through regular monitoring and reporting to the Executive Board	4
Element 5: There are channels/mechanisms in place for reporting suspicion of misuse of funds (e.g. anonymous reporting channels and "whistle-blower" protection policy)	4
Element 6: Annual reporting on cases of fraud, corruption and other irregularities, including actions taken are available, and made public	4
MI 4.6 Analysis	Evidence documents

Element 4.6.1: UNFPA has maintained its publicly accessible, zero-tolerance policy against Fraudulent and Other Proscribed Practices.

The UNFPA Policy against Fraudulent and other Proscribed Practices (2018) clearly states that UNFPA has a zero-tolerance principle for fraudulent and other proscribed practices, meaning that UNFPA staff members, non-staff personnel, suppliers, implementing partners, and any third parties are not to engage in these practices. It goes on to say that UNFPA is strongly determined to combat any form of proscribed practices, including fraudulent practices. The policy is publicly available on the UNFPA website.

Among other things, the policy emphasises the importance of raising awareness about the policy and the duties of each staff member related to the subject (Section 5.1), training, including online ethics training and other specialised trainings (Section 5.2), the need for due diligence when hiring and contracting new personnel, suppliers, implementing partners, and third parties (Section 5.4), building prevention of fraudulent and other proscribed practices into programme design (Section 5.5) as well as the implementation of a fraud risk management process (Section 5.6).

26-29, 187-190, 91

Element 4.6.2: Section 4 of the UNFPA Policy against Fraudulent and Other Proscribed Practices delineates the responsibilities of both management and UNFPA personnel in relation to these matters.

Among the responsibilities of staff members are the obligation to complete all mandatory UNFPA trainings, report any situations indicating such practices, and stay informed about their responsibilities and potential sanctions they may face (see Section 4.1). Regarding management, Section 4.2 of the document establishes that they are expected to serve as role models within the organisation. This includes the requirement to perform risk assessments related to fraud, monitor and supervise their units, and seek guidance where necessary.

The guidelines for investigations and sanctions are contained in Sections 7 and 8 of the document, respectively. The document grants autonomy and power to the OAIS (Office of Audit and Investigation Services) to conduct investigation activities related to the theme, following the charter of the Office of Audit and Investigation Services and the Oversight Policy. Sanctions are established and divided by the type of stakeholder involved, ranging from disciplinary and administrative actions

to termination of the contract, financial recovery, and referral to the national authorities of a member state for criminal investigation and prosecution.

Element 4.6.3: UNFPA is mandated to deliver online training programmes to enhance awareness of workplace ethical standards.

The UNFPA Policy against Fraudulent and other Proscribed Practices mandates, in Section 5.2, that staff members complete an online ethics training which outlines methods for identifying fraudulent practices and provides guidance on addressing and reporting them. It also stipulates that UNFPA must continue conducting, in addition to the online course, a specialised training programme aimed at raising awareness and developing the necessary skills for identifying and addressing fraud. Participation in these programmes is also defined as mandatory, and "refresher courses will have to be undertaken every three years". The mandatory online anti-fraud training has a completion rate of 77%; the new version of the mandatory online ethics training 47% six weeks into its launch.

Element 4.6.4: Available evidence confirms that UNFPA has demonstrated adherence to its Policy against Fraudulent and Other Proscribed Practices. The Fund provides annual reports on this matter to the Executive Board.

The annual reports of the Director of the Office of Audit and Investigation Services provide the UNFPA Executive Board with transparent information on the status of complaints and referrals related to fraudulent practices, corruption, and financial irregularities. This includes internal investigations, external investigations (independent contractors, implementing partners, etc.), and third party-led investigations (conducted by implementing partners involving their own personnel).

Historically, cases of fraud and financial irregularities have constituted the majority of wrongdoings investigated by the OAIS until today. For example, of the 306 open cases at the beginning of 2023, 170 (55 %) concerned fraud and financial irregularities, of which 124 were in preliminary review and 46 were in in full investigation. At year-end 2023, 71 cases (22 %) were carried over to 2024.

According to the annual OAIS report to the Board, of the cases involving financial matters, closed following full investigation, 10 had financial consequences for UNFPA, and in each case, OAIS was able to determine the estimated loss. The aggregate value of substantiated cases involving a loss for UNFPA, through fraudulent practices or financial irregularities, amounted to just above one million USD in 2024 (USD 1,047,527, against USD 45,523 in 2022).

Element 4.6.5: Reports of fraudulent and other proscribed practices may be submitted anonymously, and whistleblowers are afforded protection from retaliatory actions.

As regards anonymous reporting, the Policy against Fraudulent and other Proscribed Practices establishes, in Section 6.3, that "those wishing to protect their identity may report fraudulent and other proscribed practices anonymously". ...

Whistle-blower protection is outlined in the UNFPA Oversight Policy ("Dealing with proscribed practices and retaliation against whistleblowers"), which states the need to establish mechanisms to review complaints of allegations of retaliation against whistle-blowers. The UNFPA Protection against Retaliation Policy operationalises this commitment by outlining the procedures for addressing retaliation, such as a 30-day timeframe for the Ethics Office to complete a preliminary review of the case upon receiving the retaliation complaint (and if it exceeds 45 days, the whistle-blower can refer directly to the Chairperson of the Ethics Panel of the United Nations). It also defines possible protective measures, such as a change of supervisor, reinstatement, and counselling and support.

Element 4.6.6: Annual reports detailing instances of fraud, corruption and other irregularities, along with corresponding actions taken, are presented to the UNFPA Executive

Board and made publicly accessible.

Annually, the Director of OAIS issues a "Report of the Office of Audit and Investigation Services on UNFPA Internal Audit and Investigation Activities". The reports, which can be found by search Executive Board documents, detail the number of cases of fraud, corruption and other financial irregularities that were carried over from previous years and the new cases opened in that year. They break down the cases by type and region, including headquarters. Additionally, they provide a breakdown of resolutions and the quantity of annual closures, including the referrals that were made (closure notes after preliminary review, closure notes after investigation), as well as the type of stakeholders involved (preserving anonymity).

MI 4.6 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 4.7: [SEA prevention/response] Prevention and response to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA)	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.00**
Element 1: Organisation-specific dedicated policy statement(s) and code of conduct that address SEA are available, aligned to international standards, and applicable to all categories of UNFPA personnel	3
Element 2: Mechanisms/structures are in place and being used to track the status of implementation of the SEA policy regularly at HQ and at the country / programme / field levels	3
Element 3: Dedicated resources and processes are in place to support implementation of the policy/ action plan/code of conduct at HQ and at the regional and country levels (covering SEA prevention (risk mitigation, awareness, etc.) and response	2
Element 4: Quality training of UNFPA personnel on SEA policies is conducted with adequate frequency	3
Element 5: UNFPA has clear standards, due diligence and capacity support processes, as well as monitoring system in place to ensure that implementing partners meet minimum standards on prevention and response to SEA	3
Element 6: UNFPA can demonstrate its contribution to interagency efforts to prevent and respond to SEA at country level, and contributions to SEA policy/best practice co-ordination fora at HQ and regional levels	4
Element 7: Actions taken on SEA allegations are timely and the number of allegations, related basic information and actions taken, are reported publicly or internally	3
Element 8: UNFPA adopts a victim-centred approach to SEA and has a victim support function in place (stand-alone or part of existing structures) in line with its exposure/risk of SEA	3

MI 4.7 Analysis	Evidence documents
Element 4.7.1: UNFPA has considerably strengthened its policy and oversight function on SEA. It is in the process of rolling out its first organisation-specific dedicated two-year strategy, which came into force during the assessed period. Already before UNFPA introduced its PSEA policy in 2024, its commitment to PSEA was evident in its leadership among UN agencies, including through ED Kanem's role as the PSEAH Champion in the IASC in 2021. UNFPA has clear policies in place prohibiting SEA that apply to the organisation. These include: (1) the **UN staff regulations**, which state that "both sexual exploitation and sexual abuse and prohibited. Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or the age of consent locally." (Staff Rule 1.2[3]). They also further UN policies that specify the response to, and consequences of SEA (Staff regulations 10.1, and Rules 9.10(b) and 10.4(c)). (2) The **Secretary-General's Bulletin (ST/SGB/2003/13)** of October 2003 covers all UN personnel, thus including all categories of UNFPA staff). It establishes the definitions of sexual exploitation ("any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes...") and sexual abuse ("the actual or threatened physical intrusion of	122, 187 143, 66, 85, 135, 138, 134, 44, 55, 134, 130 55, 184 96, 240 bis

a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions"). It also outlines, in Section 3, the possible sanctions for each of the acts, in Section 4, the duties of Heads of Departments, Offices, and Missions, and the investigation procedures, including referral to national authorities (Section 5) and cooperative arrangements with non-United Nations entities or individuals (Sections 6). To ensure that it is understood that the SGB applies to UNFPA, it issued the SGB in its Policies and Procedures Manual in November 2003.

(3) In its Policy on the **UNFPA Disciplinary Framework** of 2018, misconduct is defined for purposes of UNFPA, and specific procedures for enforcement are laid out. SEA is expressly included in its scope and constitutes "serious misconduct" (para 6.1.1) that must be reported. It also includes SEA/H among the examples of misconduct (p. 5 and p.6). The Policies and Procedures Manual, Disciplinary Framework stipulates that managers should ensure that their staff members are made aware of the 2003 SG's Bulletin (para 5.2.1.).

(4) The **2015 Oversight Policy** also includes SEA and "calls for zero tolerance for wrongdoing". PSEAH is specifically mentioned in relation to investigations.

(5) Furthermore, the UNFPA Policy on Prohibition of Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Abuse of Authority and Discrimination also clearly prohibits any form of harassment, sexual harassment, abuse of authority or discrimination.

Zero tolerance and appetite for risk of SEA are also clearly referenced in the UNFPA Risk Appetite Statement, and are part of UNFPA Enterprise Risk Management Policy.

UNFPA's web page serving as an investigation hotline notes that allegations of harassment, sexual harassment or abuse of authority part of wrongdoing that may be reported using the hotline.

UNFPA stipulates that all incoming staff and personnel are required to review the SG Bulletin and the UN Standards of Conduct. For incoming staff, this requirement is articulated in their Letter of Appointment, for which UNFPA shared its standard template with the assessment team (p. 7, under Step 3: Submit Personal Documents). Contracts for individual consultants shared by UNFPA make direct reference to the SGB, to the UNFPA policy "Prohibition of Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Abuse of Authority and Discrimination" and the "Policy against Fraudulent and other Proscribed Practices".

According to UNFPA, the PSEAH Unit is currently coordinating with the Legal Unit and DHR to explore the inclusion of an organisation-specific code of conduct which will supplement the conduct the UN Staff Regulations, UNFPA's Disciplinary Framework, requirements of the SGB and the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service that together constitute the 'code of conduct' that applies to UNFPA. It intends to include a signature pane to confirm staff and personnel have reviewed and confirmed their commitment. This would reinforce accountability.

UNFPA's PSEAH strategy 2024-25 was approved by the Executive Director in June 2024. The three pillars of the strategy are:

- evidence-driven prevention and response;
- comprehensive accountability and adherence to survivor-centred principles; and
- organisational commitment to systems-level and culture change.

Specifically, the Strategy states that UNFPA is committed to:
- Scaling up its human resource capacity to coordinate PSEAH workstreams;
- Strengthening country-level capacity to improve effectiveness, accountability and coherence;
- Providing leadership in system-wide efforts as the lead agency on gender-based violence prevention and response.

Interviewees explained that this first-ever, targeted PSEAH strategy of UNFPA was important for the organisation given its specific mandate on GBV and PSEAH and to put the UN concepts and frameworks into UNFPA's specific context, while bringing in the broader expertise on empowerment that UNFPA has.

UNFPA has also an organisation-wide **PSEAH Action Plan**. Its most recent version (2024) highlights the 2024 targets for the following action area: "UNFPA Policies are assessed and updated to enhance PSEAH standards of practice and conduct":

- Roll-out of new PSEAH Strategy;
- UNFPA-specific Code of Conduct developed;
- PSEAH integrated in Emergency Procedures;
- UNFPA policies updated.

We could not find evidence on the extent to which 2024 targets were met during the time frame being assessed.

Element 4.7.2: Mechanisms are in place to monitor the implementation of the SEA policy, but it is currently difficult to track overall progress.

The mechanisms and structures in place at UNFPA responsible for monitoring the implementation of the SEA policy include notably the informal **Integrity Group**, which does not have specific ToR but is tasked to track and oversee staff wellbeing and promote a culture of accountability on all forms of workplace conduct. It brings together the PSEAH Unit, OIAS, Ethics, legal affairs, and HR.
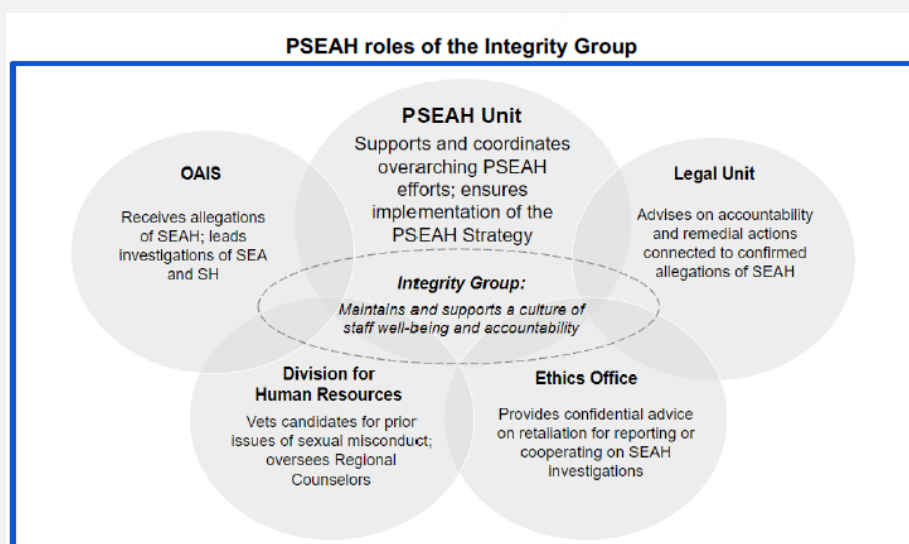
Source: UNFPA Strategy on Protection PSEAH, 2024–25.

- To track progress, as noted in 4.7.1, UNFPA has an **annual PSEAH Action Plan**, OAIS annual reports, and a report by the DED (there are bi-annual reports on SEAH submitted to the ED, DED-M and the Chief of Staff jointly by the PSEAH Unit and OAIS). The 2024 annual UNFPA Action Plan on PSEAH defined four outputs and 20 indicators to specify and monitor the activities to be carried out during the year. Among the targets of the 2023 Action Plan were the ongoing review of the policy framework, the PSEAH assessment of 95% of IPs, and training for PSEA focal points. Highlights of the 2024 Action Plan include the roll-out of the new PSEAH strategy, a dashboard on trends, the development of regional portfolios on PSEAH, and of a SEA risk tool, along with others. UNFPA submits two Action Plans - one to the OSCSEA and one to the EB, as part of its reporting requirements across both those functions.
- The **OAIS annual reports**, which provide the status of investigations regarding sexual misconduct (including sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual assault, or sexual harassment) involving UNFPA staff, independent contractors, or IP personnel. Reports of the OAIS on UNFPA internal audit and investigation activities are available until 2022.
- A regularly issued report (sometimes annually, sometimes biennially) from the Deputy

Executive Director of Management details UNFPA's practices in cases of allegations of wrongdoings, including cases of sexual exploitation and abuse (most recently in March 2024).

Independent assessments of policy implementation include the "Independent review of UNDP, UNFPA, and UNOPS policies and procedures to tackle sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and sexual harassment (SH)," conducted in 2019, and the JIU review of UNFPA's management and administration (JIU/REP/2023/1).

The assessment team did not find evidence on how UNFPA synthesises these different reports, reviews, monitoring and reporting tools to provide a coherent picture to governing bodies on progress in PSEA policy implementation. However, each of the reports submitted are mandated by external entities: e.g. the Action Plan is a requirement of the OSCSEA and the EB; the EB report now follows a uniform template, and the Management Compliance letter is submitted, by mandate, to the SG each year.

Actions Plans are updated yearly, but do not yet seem to be linked with a monitoring and evaluation system, with benchmarks or targets. In the Background Note to the Executive Board, UNFPA provides an update on investigations, reporting, implementing partners, and training, and notes that a monitoring and evaluation system will be developed. This should make it easier to track progress against the SEA policy and the two-year strategy. The new PSEAH Strategy now includes an action to develop an internal M&E PSEAH Framework, and the Strategy workplan includes both benchmarks and targets. The EB uniform report template also includes benchmarks, against which UNFPA reports progress.

Element 4.7.3: UNFPA has strengthened its resources, technical capacity and processes in place for PSEA during the assessment period, but only few of them are part of the regular budget.

UNFPA has continued to strengthen its human and financial resources in place for implementing its PSEA commitments during the assessment period.

Human Resources

At the corporate level, the Deputy Executive Director of Management in the ED's office is the most senior Focal Point for PSEAH. He oversees the dedicated **PSEAH team** based in the Executive Office that leads both PSEA and PSH efforts globally within UNFPA. The dedicated Senior Global focal point (FP) for PSEAH leads the team and, at the time of the assessment, was the only staff member financed out of the Institutional Budget working on PSEAH. She is supported by four temporary staff, including a PSEA Coordinator appointed in 2018 (as mentioned in the independent review on UNFPA in 2019). The Senior Global FP focuses on providing strategic direction for the organisational setup to be able to respond to SEAH, whereas the Coordinator ensures SEA and SH strategy implementation within UNFPA and across the UN system.

Being anchored in the ED's office, independent from the Ethics office, is an advantage for PSEA structures and underscores their importance and visibility within the organisation, although the link with DED of Programming merits being spelled out.

The temporary support indicated above was regularised in the framework of the MTR and a fixed-term P4-level post was established under the Global and Regional Programme effective 2024. The Institutional Budget thus foresees funding for a P5 position (USD 352,730 in 2024), while the Global and Regional Programme provides funding for a P4-level PSEA specialist (USD 299,294) and USD 238,300 for activities.

At the **country and regional levels**, UNFPA has established a **network of 250 PSEA Focal Points,** managed out of the HQ PSEA Unit. The FPs meet quarterly online to support PSEA efforts at the operational level (2022). They focal points are not dedicated personnel; PSEA responsibilities are an additional commitment alongside their regular job responsibilities, such as gender or GBV experts, HR, or programme managers. Focal Points interviewed by MOPAN stated that they spent 5-10% of their time on PSEAH. They noted that UNFPA revised their TORs in 2023 to clarify that

their role was not only inter-agency co-ordination, but also reach out to the entire office – including colleagues in HR, project implementation, programme design, etc. Several interviewed FPs stressed their importance in co-ordinating PSEA-related surveys and mentioned that their role included reviewing staff survey results to identify and address gaps. Many highlighted that their capacity was very stretched in playing their role within UNFPA in terms of training, programmatic and IP-related responsibilities, and survey co-ordination. In addition, several said that there was a high expectation from other agencies for UNFPA to take leadership on SEA because of its GBV expertise, but that it was under-resourced to do so.

Interviewees confirm that at the country level, a number of *dedicated* **PSEAH specialists** have been hired (complementing the Focal Points). They are funded as part of programmes, where donors specifically asked for such capacity. Such specialists have been deployed, for instance, in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, CAR, DRC (under recruitment), Madagascar, Niger, Nigeria, Ukraine (at P5 level), as well as Lebanon (with OCHA funding). In South Sudan, UNFPA implemented a UN Trust Fund project to support victims of PSEA and recruited an PSEA expert consultant to support this project. In addition, UNFPA hosts, and partly finances, a comparatively large number of **inter-agency PSEA specialists** who support the RC's office in 7 countries.

Furthermore, UNFPA allocated additional financial resources to **increase the capacity of OAIS,** which accelerated the review of SEA allegations. As of end of 2024, 63% of investigators had obtained formal certification in conducting SEAH investigations.

Financial resources

As regards **financial resources** to support the PSEAH mandate, the institutional budget only covers the above-mentioned staff costs and a small number of field visits; and it and partially funds PSEA training. Core programmatic activities of the PSEAH unit (including SH) are funded by the Global and Regional Programmes.

Furthermore, every year projects funding proposals are submitted to the Global Learning Central Budget (a number of initiatives to boost organisational capacities through learning and training have been funded that way).

However, PSEA focal points at the country level have no budget for PSEAH. Thus, any strategic-level, global initiatives as well as specific country-related initiatives rely on external sources of funding. Interviewees confirmed that ensuring budget resources at the country level was a key challenge. They described donor support at country level as the only source, but would favour predictable PSEAH funding, integrated in programme funding so that efforts can become consistent and sustained. It should be noted, however, that each Country Office has the flexibility to allocate core resources up to the existing programme ceiling towards PSEA activities.

There is an unresolved debate within UNFPA around whether advocating for more PSEAH funding would jeopardize GBV funding. Going forward, it will be important for UNFPA to communicate clearly the different uses and aims of GBV and PSEA efforts to its donors, understand donors' institutional setup in this regard, and take account of this in its fundraising strategy.

Complaints mechanisms

UNFPA has **structures in place to report allegations**. According to the Background Note to the Executive Board of June 2024, it has established a global confidential reporting mechanism to report wrongdoing, including SEA and SH, which is managed by OAIS.
In country programmes, UNFPA supports PSEA efforts with confidential web-based reporting mechanisms, available in five languages. The assessment team has not been able to ascertain how many complaints have been made through this mechanism versus others.

As noted in the most recent bi-annual SEAH report to senior leadership, it is only possible to monitor reports and allegations that are submitted through UNFPA's formal reporting channel(s). It is not possible for any UN entity to monitor or track reports submitted through informal channels, however there are efforts at the global level to explore how the UN and IASC Systems can better track informal reporting channels.

UNFPA has reported 37 allegations of SEA through the UN's public tracker iReport since 2017. At the Inter-Agency level, reports go through the senior-most UN official. PSEA focal points in 2023 received training on reporting obligations, safe/appropriate reporting, and survivor-centred principles. The 2024 Background Note to the EB quotes UNFPA survey data that suggest that:

- 85% of the offices surveyed reported having safe, accessible, gender and child-sensitive, and victim/survivor-centred mechanisms for reporting SEA and sexual harassment (18% of mechanisms are UNFPA-specific; 33% are Inter-Agency; and 49% are both UNFPA and Inter-Agency)
- 79% reported carrying out community engagement and awareness-raising on PSEA (31% were UNFPA-specific; 26% were Inter-Agency efforts; and 43% were both UNFPA and Inter-Agency).

Element 4.7.4: Prevention efforts include mandatory training for all personnel, but questions remain over completion rates, and about how UNFPA wants to situate training within its larger efforts for effective prevention going forward.

Mandatory training courses on SEA (and SH) are provided to personnel online. The Background Note to the Board confirms that all new and incoming UNFPA personnel are required to complete the online PSEA course, and interviewees confirmed that mandatory courses were targeted at personnel, staff and consultants. The most recent completion rate for the mandatory training course on SEA stands at 100%, according to the UNFPA Management Compliance letter submitted to the Secretary-General in January 2023, and as reported by UNFPA's Country Office and PSEA Focal Points.

UNFPA also conducts **pre-deployment training;** yet the frequency of these face-to-face training initiatives merits being increased. According to the 2019 Independent review of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS policies and procedures to tackle SEA and SH (2019), "[w]hen personnel are going on missions in the field, they are provided with specific training on SEA and SH. However, the 2022 PSEA Survey by OSC reveals that almost a quarter of personnel say that they "have not received pre-deployment training on PSEA" (Q8); and 60% of respondents who were new at their duty station said they had "not received induction training" over the last 12 months (Q9a). This stands in contrast with UNFPA's mandatory requirement. UNFPA seems to do better when it comes to regular / refresher training. 69% of those who had been at their duty stations longer had benefitted from refresher training. It is worth noting, however, that in the same survey, overall, 94% of personnel said they had received some kind of training on PSEA over the last 12 months (Q9c).

Moreover, there are additional **training modules for managers** on SEA and SH. For managers, interviewees explained that PSEA training was part of the induction course on sexual misconduct in general, where the policy framework is presented and specific responsibilities of managers are highlighted (90mn length). There is also a mandatory training course on Impactful Conflict Management for Leaders.

At **country level, PSEA Focal Points** are expected to deliver **a yearly in-person learning session** for the personnel in their office, based on a case study developed by IOM/UNHCR. UNFPA conducted 'Training of Trainers' (ToT) for the FPs in 2023 to help them use that material. It is based on case studies that can trigger discussions on various complex situations, including responsibilities of managers, implementing partners and community members. Focal points we interviewed spoke positively about the ToT, noting that it helped reinforce their capacity and deliver that training for their respective offices.

In the 2023 Action Plan, training is incorporated into various targets established for indicators, such as in 1.6 (Dedicated induction/refresher training provided to all Focal Points (FPs) and Training of Trainers for PSEA FPs delivered); 2.2 (Conflict resolution training provided to all UNFPA managers; New training programme on prohibited conduct for bystanders developed) and 4.2 (Guidance and refresher training provided to all PSEA focal points).

Reflections are ongoing in UNFPA (as elsewhere) on what constitutes quality training and whether

or how it can play any role in preventing SEA. The 2019 independent review highlighted "the risk that the training primarily becomes a compliance and check-the-box exercise", especially when it is online. More broadly, as UNFPA recognises in the 2023 Background Note, it is difficult to evaluate the impact of training, even when feedback is gathered after each session. High completion rates are not a criterion for success. Several interviewees stressed this, adding that "the real results are in staff surveys (staff awareness)". It seems, however, that at least those who were trained consider that they have become more aware of their duties and responsibilities when it comes to PSEA and know what to do it they hear rumours of SEA (2022 OSC Survey, Q10 and Q14).

According to the 2024 Background Note to the EB, UNFPA carries out community engagement and **awareness-raising** on PSEA in each community receiving and affected by the UN: 79% of Country Offices that were surveyed reported carrying out community engagement and awareness-raising on PSEA. Of these, 31% were UNFPA-specific; 26% were Inter-Agency efforts; and 43% were both UNFPA and Inter-Agency.

Going forward, UNFPA commits in its 2024-25 Strategy to prioritising efforts beyond training and awareness-raising approaches, to encompass proactive risk mitigation and prevention strategies".

Element 4.7.5: UNFPA has put in place clear standards to hold IPs accountable to minimum standards on SEA and plays an active role in operationalisation of the IP protocol in UNFPA and the UN at large.

The UNFPA General Terms and Conditions (GTCs) for Implementing Partner Agreements contains clause 28 that strictly prohibits SEA: "IP acknowledges and agrees that UNFPA will apply a policy of "zero tolerance" with regard to sexual exploitation and abuse of anyone by the IP, its employees, agents or any other persons engaged by IP to perform any services under this Agreement". The clause obliges IPs to take all appropriate measures to prevent SEA, including successful completion of training, and provides a link for those who do not have their own training material. It obliges IPs to promptly report allegations of SEA to UNFPA's OAIS director. IPs shall investigate allegations of SEA by their employees or sub-contractors without delay and keep UNFPA informed; national authorities can also undertake such investigations, but UNFPA reserves itself the right to review or conduct the investigation itself. UNFPA doesn't use the GTCs with UN entities. The IPs who are governed by the GTCs are governments, NGOs, intergovernmental institutions who are not part of the UN system and academic institutions.

UNFPA first issued **comprehensive guidance on the operationalisation of the UN Protocol** on Allegations of SEA involving IPs in July 2020. It established a common assessment that must be conducted with all IPs of UNFPA in eight key areas (and whose results are valid for a period of 5 years). The areas are:

1. Organisational policy;
2. Organisational management – subcontracting;
3. Human Resources System;
4. Mandatory training;
5. Reporting;
6. Assistance and referrals;
7. Investigations; and
8. Corrective measures.

The guide also outlines procedures for capacity building and monitoring, particularly when partners fall short of expected standards: It defines that "for partners who score less than full capacity, the UN entity will monitor implementation of the capacity strengthening as part of its regular program monitoring". Those classified as having full capacity are also monitored: the policy establishes that the UN entity will accompany the partner and continue to monitor its capacity to prevent SEA for the duration of the partnership.

UNFPA's internal document was adapted and released in 2022 under the title ""Operationalisation of the UN Protocol on Allegations of SEA involving IPs" and **became the basis of the UN-wide**

PSEA guidance.

The organisation has been very active in promoting the IP Protocol and advancing its implementation. It was a founding member of the IP Protocol Working group, and in 2021 UNFPA joined the UN Partner Portal (UNPP), a platform that allows Civil Society organisations (CSOs) to engage with the UN on partnership opportunities. Since January 2022, UNFPA requires its non-governmental partners to have a completed profile in the UNPP prior to signing a workplan with the organisation (Working with UNFPA: Quick Start Guidance for CSO Partners on the UNPP and UNFPA's QuantumPlus System, December 2023).

In 2023, UNFPA reported that it was continuing to operationalise the IP Protocol by ensuring all new partners are assessed for PSEA prior to selection, with the exception of partners engaged in humanitarian response. In such cases, partners will be assessed at the "earliest possible opportunity". UNFPA was to assess at least 95% of its partners by the end of 2023 (at the end of 2023, UNFPA had managed to assess 92% of the IPs). In the 2024 Background Note to the EB, UNFPA reports that of the 92% of civil society organisations partners that were assessed, partner capacity was determined to be as follows:

- 44% full capacity,
- 42% medium or low capacity,
- 5% no contact with beneficiaries,
- 0.31% ineligible for partnership (e.g. Core Standard 8 was assessed as "No"), and
- for 8% rating was unavailable (not yet migrated to the UNPP).

At headquarters, the Division of Management Services (DMS) has an implementing partner review committee (IPRC), which works closely with the PSEA Unit. It receives allegations made against IPs and determines what further action to proceed with.

Interviewees confirmed that these provisions are implemented in practice. They demonstrated that the IP agreement in their programmes encoded PSEA commitments, that UNFPA staff had a Manual with guidance on working with IPs, and confirmed that the contract could not be signed until they had undertaken an IP Assessment. If the assessment concluded that there was not sufficient capacity, a capacity implementation plan was developed. Focal Points we interviewed further confirmed that they helped develop training for IPs to understand policy and procedures, and that they follow up to check that the mandatory training had been done.

On interviewee further confirmed that when a current IP undertakes an investigation, UNFPA retains the right to review the investigation.

UNFPA's work on the UNPP is an important contribution to interagency efforts (element 4.7.6.). As one informant explained, "many IPs did not have PSEA rules before they worked with the UN, and now they do – engaging with them gives them an opportunity to grow in this area". The fact that other UN entities have done IP assessments allows for synergies, "delivering as one". Other interviewees have described good practices in working with IPs, such as retreats organised by country offices with their IPs to discuss SEA and how to support them better.

Data on the number of IP allegations can yet be improved and made more transparent. The Secretary-General's data on iReport on SEA Allegations contain 37 allegations by UNFPA since 2017, but none of them are listed as concerning IPs. UNFPA indicated, however, that between January 2022 and December 2024, UNFPA received 40 SEA allegations involving IPs, 21 of which are third-party investigations wherein the IP conducts the investigation, and 19 are investigated by OAIS itself. Interviewees also mentioned that PSEA reporting by IPs had increased, and that one-third of those IP-related allegations originated from the Arab States region (2017-23).

Element 4.7.6: UNFPA has contributed positively to interagency efforts and used the IASC Championship to take more initiatives. It continues to lead on several fronts.

At a HQ and regional level, UNFPA is recognised for its thought leadership and technical expertise. UNFPA is a key participant in **the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC).** There are many illustrations of its active engagement. Among others, it contributed to the development and

implementation of the UN Protocol on the Provision of Assistance to Victims of SEA, assisted in the "operationalisation of the UN Protocol on Allegations of SEA Involving Implementing Partners and the development and finalisation of the PSEA Government Cooperation Framework", as well as the development of a "Funding Models" reference note for the PSEAH Technical Advisory Group of the IASC. UNFPA is now also, "in collaboration with IASC members and the Secretariat, […] preparing a draft program of action to serve as a roadmap for the IASC in the coming years", according to the background note to the EB. (The roadmap has not yet become available at the time of writing). However, UNFPA is no longer contributing to the development of a funding models reference note for the IASC, as the IASC PSEAH TAG workplan has been updated and this key action has been embedded in other workstreams and lines of effort.

In January 2021, UNFPA Executive Director Natalia Kanem assumed the IASC Championship on PSEAH for a year. The background note for the EB (first regular session 2022) highlights the initiatives taken during the Championship:

1) Established a roster of trained and vetted interagency PSEA Coordinators to ensure rapid deployment of qualified human resources;

2) Rolled out an advocacy campaign in 35 IASC priority countries;

3) Established a PSEA training package for GBV caseworkers to address the needs of SEA victims (the SEA Survivor Support Module is embedded within the GBV Case Management Guidelines capacity building approach, and is not a stand-alone "training package," per se);

4) Commissioned an external review to provide an independent assessment of the IASC's collective progress on PSEAH over the past decade;

5) Convened a high-level roundtable (in November 2021), including IASC leaders, representatives of Member States and civil society organisations to provide an opportunity to discuss the review findings.

UNFPA is also very active in **inter-agency work at country level**, e.g. managing GBV Sub-clusters. Because of its intervention on GBV, the organisation in a good position to tackle issues of SEA. For example, UNFPA's Strategy and Operational Plan to Scale up and Strengthen Interventions on GBV in Emergencies (2023-25) highlights the commitment of the organisation to leading system-wide efforts in GBV. This Plan includes enhancing interagency co-ordination and delivering survivor-centred GBV services which are also critical to addressing SEA-related needs in humanitarian contexts.

The inter-agency PSEA roster is managed by UN OCHA and NorCap. UNFPA contributed to the integration of the PSEA Coordinators on its roster into the newly established PSEACap Roster. UNFPA is also a member of the informal PSEACap advisory group within the IASC TAG.

According to the 2024 EB report, UNFPA currently leads inter-agency PSEA networks with full- and part-time coordinators in 9 IASC priority countries. In some countries, such as Afghanistan, DCR, and Ukraine, these are fixed-term positions at P5 level; in others, such as Bangladesh, Madagascar, Niger, Nigeria, they are fixed-term P4, UNV or international consultancy positions.

Interviewees explained that UNFPA, as lead agency on GBV, is the provider of last resort for other agencies when it comes to victim support. As an agency that leads the collective response to GBV, as one interviewee put it, "the GBV sub-cluster coordinator has to kick off their agency cloak to put on an interagency cloak, and acknowledge that standard-setting, resource mobilisation, prioritisation of programming approaches, QA, etc. are done on behalf of the collective and not the agency." This double-hatted role owed to UNFPA's unique mandate on GBV, some interviewees cautioned that while it was important that all survivors – of GBV or SEA – were given access to services, this should not happen at the expense of GBV efforts, and that "the GBV network should not focus disproportionally on resources for PSEA" (see also 4.7.3).

Element 4.7.7: Action taken on SEA allegations are reported publicly, and personnel trust UNFPA will ensure perpetrators will face disciplinary action.

In 2019, the Independent review of UNDP, UNFPA, and UNOPS policies and procedures to tackle SEAH (2019) indicated that "A recurring issue highlighted in a number of the interviews conducted across the three organisations is the lack of ongoing feedback to victims on the investigation progress of their reported allegations. Consequently, victims may potentially lose confidence in the internal system if they feel that the investigations are not conducted with a focus on timeliness and efficiency". However, five years later, at the time of the assessment, UNFPA ascertained that victims were being regularly updated on the progress of investigating their allegations by OAIS, and given the option to stop the process if for some reason they choose to do so.

UNFPA's investigations are timely. UNFPA has put in place benchmarks for the conclusion of investigations of PSEAH. Its Investigations Manual Guidance recommends a 12-month investigation timeline as a standard. In its Background Note to the Executive Board, reports that UNFPA was slightly ahead of that benchmark, as "completed cases of sexual misconduct were closed on average 11.3 months after receipt". The investigations office confirmed that PSEAH allegations take precedence over others.

The annual reports of the OAI contains a section on investigation activities and a table that shows new cases and cases carried over. And through the regular reports (annual and biennial) from DED Management on the practice of UNFPA in cases of allegations of wrongdoing, UNFPA transparently publishes / discloses (while ensuring the anonymity of those involved) the number of cases, as well as the actions taken in response to cases where the investigation confirmed the accusation (Section I of the document "Practice of UNFPA in cases of allegations of staff misconduct").

According to the Background Note to the EB, UNFPA enters all reports of SEA in the UN public tracker and implements the UN-system wide updated guidance on sharing of information on SEA allegations (including those involving Implementing Partners) at the Inter-Agency level with the senior-most UN official. Disciplinary measures and related actions taken following substantiated allegations of SEA are also updated in the public iReport portal. (The iReport Portal only covers SEA.)

As explained in the Background Note to the EB, UNFPA annually publishes the disciplinary measures and related actions taken following substantiated allegations of SEA and SH, and "the purpose of this publication is to achieve an increased level of transparency in the administration of issues of conduct, to inform personnel of the practice of UNFPA in taking action on such allegations, and to ensure that personnel are informed about common examples of sexual misconduct and related consequences".

The 2022 OSC Survey data from UNFPA personnel (2253 respondents) suggest trust in UNFPA's systems has grown further. The latest survey from 2022 shows that 99% of respondents believe that personnel who engage in sexual misconduct will actually face disciplinary action; up from 94% in 2018. It was not possible to triangulate this figure with other UN agencies as this data is not publicly accessible, but it reflects a very **high trust in UNFPA's accountability**.

UNFPA also reports perpetrators to shared databases that prevent them from being hired by other agencies. The UNFPA policy on the Prohibition of Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Abuse of Authority and Discrimination states that "data of individuals with a record of SEA shall be recorded in ClearCheck as set forth in the "guidelines on the component related to SEA". It is not possible to track the number of times ClearCheck was used, beyond the confirmation that any incoming UN applicant's name is checked through ClearCheck. UNFPA confirms that between 2018 and 2023, it submitted 5 names into the ClearCheck system related to confirmed allegations of SEA, and 10 names into ClearCheck related to confirmed allegations of SH. UNFPA has got no hits through ClearCheck on applicants to UNFPA.

UNFPA is also among a handful of UN agencies that plan to supplement the ClearCheck system by piloting the Misconduct Disclosure Scheme (MDS), a scheme that includes not only the names of UN perpetrators, but also those from NGOs, and is thus likely to provide broader coverage. According to the latest Background Note to the EB, the PSEAH unit is setting up the process in a way so as to learn from the pilot application, together with other agencies such as UNHCR who are

also embarking on this process.

Element 4.7.8: Although UNFPA has adopted a victim-centred approach and is the provider of last resort for victim support for other agencies, there is still work to do to advance the implementation of this approach.

UNFPA has articulated its commitment to a victim-centred approach to SEA across various platforms, both as part of its inter-agency work through the IASC, as well as on its website and in its new strategy. Although it has not issued a policy detailing this approach, it has helped shape the UN's approach. Interviewees noted that when UNFPA was PSEA champion in 2021, it developed the SEA survivor support module that became part of the IASC GBV Case Management Guideline, and a SEA/GBV Tip Sheet, which includes expertise from both GBV and SEA specialists and is intended to support the work of both functions in better meeting the needs of survivors.

As noted in 4.7.6, as the lead agency for the collective response to GBV, UNFPA is also the provider of last resort for other agencies when it comes to victim support. In the report of first regular session 2023 of the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, it is stated that: "with regards to SEA victim assistance, UNFPA rolled-out the UN Protocol on Assistance to Victims of SEA, including the technical guidance on the mapping of services, the integration of gender-based violence and child protection referral pathways in PSEA procedures, and the effective co-ordination at country level". In addition, it is reported that UNFPA also initiated the implementation of two projects funded by the UN SG Trust Fund in Support of Victims of SEA, in the DRC and in South Sudan ("to provide holistic support for victims of SEA, as well as populations at risk, in humanitarian hubs presenting high risks of SEA"). The implementation of the UN Victims Assistance Protocol is strengthened at country level: 76% of Country Offices that were surveyed reported the implementation of the UN Victims Assistance Protocol per the Interagency PSEA Network SOPs (UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS consolidated background note, June 2024).

UNFPA confirms that it has a victim support function in place across both its investigative and GBV case management response efforts (although no details on a victim support function during the investigation stage are provided in the policy or strategy).

OAIS states that all credible allegations are investigated promptly in alignment with the Victim/Survivor-centred Approach and the UN Victim's Assistance Protocols, the PSEAH Unit also aims to ensure that all aspects of response to SEAH are survivor-centred - ensuring that even those survivors of SEAH that may be unwilling or unable to safely report are able to access support. This includes advocacy for funding towards GBV programming, PSEA Focal Points' work in utilising and socialising GBV referral pathways and strengthening GBV programming across ROs and COs to ensure it is relevant for, and safely accessible to, SEA survivors who may choose to access support, but who do not fully disclose their status to service providers (UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS EB Background Note June 2024).

OAIS has shown leadership in developing guidance on a victim/survivor-centred approach to investigations on IASC's behalf. One of its two investigations Chiefs participated in the IASC Expert Panel on Standards for SEAH Investigations, which aimed to establish a victim/survivor-centred approach and contracted the development of an "Investigators' Manual – Investigation of SEA Complaints with a Victim-Centred Approach", which will be submitted to the IASC in January 2025. Together with the Victims' Rights Advocate, OAIS organised three training sessions on the victim-centred approach to investigations in 2024.

On assistance for victims/survivors of SEA and SH, provided in accordance with established protocols and standards, UNFPA reports that 88% of Country Offices that were consulted reported that assistance for victims/survivors of SEA and SH is provided in accordance with established protocols and standards.

Finally, although UNFPA has a whistleblowing policy against retaliation, there is nothing specific about SEA (SEA is not part of the definition of wrongdoing, specifically explained). According to UNFPA, the definition of wrongdoing is intentionally broad to avoid missing any examples of wrongful acts and to prevent assigning varying importance to different wrongdoing acts based on

their inclusion, omission, or order of listing. This broadness ensures that all forms of wrongdoing are encompassed within the definition, without inadvertently creating a hierarchy of wrongdoings. More specifically, wrongdoing is defined as: (i) Misconduct, i.e., the failure by a staff member to comply with his or her obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules or other relevant administrative issuances, or to observe the standards of conduct expected of an international civil servant; (ii) A failure by a vendor (for instance, a legal person such as an implementing partner or a vendor, or an individual independent contractor such as a consultant) to comply with his or her obligations. The term includes proscribed practices."

MI 4.7 Evidence confidence	High Confidence

MI 4.8: [SH prevention/response] Prevention of and response to sexual harassment (SH)	Score
Overall MI rating	Satisfactory
Overall MI score	3.00
Element 1: Organisation-specific dedicated policy statements and codes of conduct that address SH are available, aligned with international standards, and applicable to all categories of UNFPA personnel	4
Element 2: Mechanisms are in place to regularly track the status of implementation of the policy on SH at HQ and at the regional and country levels	3
Element 3: UNFPA has clearly identifiable roles, structures and resources in place for implementing its policy/guidelines/codes of conduct on SH at HQ at the country level: a support channel for victims, a body coordinating the response, and clear responsibilities for following up with victims	3
Element 4: All managers have received training on preventing and responding to SH, and all personnel have been trained to set behavioural expectations (including with respect to SH)	3
Element 5: Multiple mechanisms can be accessed to seek advice, pursue informal resolution or formally report SH allegations	2
Element 6: The organisation acts in a timely manner on formal complaints of SH allegations	3
Element 7: The organisation transparently reports the number and nature of actions taken in response to SH in annual reporting and feeds into inter-agency mechanisms – e.g., human resources mechanisms	3

MI 4.8 Analysis	Evidence documents
Element 4.8.1: UNFPA has a policy on SH and an Action Plan that contains key action area and targets. In 2018, UNFPA revised its policy titled "Prohibition of Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Abuse of Authority and Discrimination," which had first been introduced in 2013 and is applicable to all UNFPA personnel. This policy includes: • A Policy Statement (Section 1) prohibiting any form of sexual harassment by any individual working for UNFPA. • Definitions of what is considered sexual harassment ("any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offense or humiliation [...]") in Section 3, which are identical to those contained in the UN CEB's Model Policy for Sexual Harassment. • The delineation of responsibilities for UNFPA (e.g., undertaking diligent reference checks of candidates and providing training and awareness programs), managers, and supervisors (acting as role models and monitoring their work units), and personnel (undertaking mandatory training and reporting allegations of prohibited conduct) in Section 4. • Mechanisms for conflict resolution (Section 5). A detailed annual **UNFPA Action Plan** – which includes both SEA and SH - is also in place. In 2024, the Action Plan stated as UNFPA's desired outcome: "An inclusive and safe organisational culture built upon prevention, response, and accountability that ensures effective protection from sexual exploitation, abuse, and sexual harassment, using a victim/survivor-centred approach, and respects the rights and dignity of personnel and populations we serve." It defines four outputs and 20 action areas complete with targets to be accomplished by the end of the year. The Action Plan	3, 96, 91, 44, 136, 143, 55, 66, 65, 99, 137, 14, 240bis

contains actions for both SEA and SH, and the language is clear on which actions concern SEA, SH, or both. Outcome 3 is dedicated to SH – "strengthening efforts to promote a safe, trusted, protective and survivor-centred environment to better address and eradicate SH / misconduct against personnel."

There are only few explicit mentions of SH-specific actions and targets; they are a minority vis-à-vis PSEA-specific actions. One such action is the development of Standard Operating Procedures for SH, foreseen by the end of 2024.

The 2024 Action Plan added a key action area vis-à-vis the previous one:" UNFPA, IASC, and UN Systems-wide evidence-based practice and technical guidance and standards on addressing sexual harassment are embedded in all HQ, regional and country offices efforts to prevent and address sexual harassment" with the following target "SH trends used to inform practice; UNFPA's SH systems updated, per learning".

Prohibitions of SH are also enshrined in the codes of conduct that apply to UNFPA (as outlined in Element 4.7.1). In addition, UNFPA published a "Code of Conduct to prevent harassment, including sexual harassment **at UNFPA events**". The development of a UNFPA-specific Code of Conduct addressing both SEA and SH is among the targets of the 2024 Action Plan.

Element 4.8.2: UNFPA tracks the status of some elements that are part of its policy on SH through an action plan, although it does not report back in an aggregate manner (e.g. there is no annual progress report).

UNFPA has mechanisms and structures in place for monitoring the implementation of the SH policy are identical to the ones on SEA (see Element 4.7.2). They include:

- the informal **Integrity Group,** which is tasked to track and oversee staff wellbeing and promote a culture of accountability on all forms of workplace conduct, although no formal ToR are available. It brings together the PSEAH Unit, OAIS, Ethics, legal affairs, and HR.

- Independent assessments of the policy implementation, such as the "Independent review of UNDP, UNFPA, and UNOPS policies and procedures to tackle sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and sexual harassment (SH)," conducted in 2019, and the JIU review of UNFPA's management and administration (JIU/REP/2023/1).

Concretely, the following requirements of the 2018 policy (see 4.8.1) allow tracking:

(a) Completion of mandatory training on SH, which is done via the corporate ERP system;
(b) Formal complaints of SH and subsequent action taken by UNFPA, which is tracked by OAIS,
(c) Checking records against ClearCheck as part of the hiring process and reporting individuals having perpetrated SH to ClearCheck, which is done by DHR, and
(d) The requirement that all contractors, suppliers and partners adhere to UNFPA's SH policy and take adequate action in case of allegations; which is integrated in UNFPA's General Terms and Conditions of agreements with partners, contractors and suppliers.

The assessment team is not able to confirm that all these are indeed tracked consistently, as no monitoring report exists, but has seen partial evidence.

While there is an Action Plan in place, with targets, one might have expected an annual monitoring report against those actions. It should however be noted that the 2024 Action Plan lists the development of "a PSEAH M&E Framework" among the targets for 2024. For clarity within UNFPA, the Action Plans are part of reports submitted by UNFPA (to OSCSEA and the EB), and the workplan is an internal resource.

Element 4.8.3: UNFPA currently only has thin staff capacity for the protection from sexual harassment, but is making efforts to rectify this situation.

The 2018 policy (see 4.8.1) establishes clear roles and responsibilities for the prevention and response to SH. It identifies support structures, such as the Office of the Ombudsman for UN Funds and Programmes, the UNFPA Ethics Office, the DHR and regional staff counsellors. It assigns the

responsibility for coordinating the response and follow-up with victims to OAIS.

At the global/headquarters level, the Deputy Executive Director for Management serves as the Senior Focal Point for both SEA and SH. In 2023, an "Integrity Group" was formed to facilitate collaboration between all offices working on integrity matters, including SH and other prohibited conduct (see also 4.7.3). It is part of an effort to show organisational commitment to enhanced accountability, build transparency and work jointly on strengthening trust.

However, there is currently no staff dedicated specifically to SH; a fixed-term appointment is currently underway. Additional information from UNFPA clarifies that, as part of the Strategic Plan midterm review, UNFPA has proposed the addition of a P4 FTA position for the PSEAH Unit, although this person will not be dedicated to SH alone (this FTA position has been approved by the EB and is currently under recruitment). This position would be funded through funds from the Institutional Budget.

In terms of dedicated resources for implementing the SH Policy, it is important to emphasise that the responsibilities of the 250 PSEA focal points at the regional and country levels do not cover SH. UNFPA explained that this had been actively discussed but was decided to avoid a conflict of interest.

In terms of support channels, co-ordination of response, and responsibilities for following up with victims, the policy titled "Prohibition of Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Abuse of Authority, and Discrimination" specifies that the OAIS (Office of Audit and Investigation Services) is the body responsible for conducting investigations, following the UNFPA Disciplinary Framework (Section 5.3). Additionally, it has established four support channels for victims: the Office of the Ombudsman for United Nations Funds and Programmes, the UNFPA Ethics Office, the Division for Human Resources ("DHR"), and local staff counsellors (Section 6.1).

Interviewees reported that UNFPA was debating the absence of field-level personnel dealing with SH. Instead, they work with HR local / business partners, and the Ombudsman. In 2021, UNFPA reported to the Board that it was implementing a network of Respectful Workplace Facilitators to assist personnel with early intervention in appropriate cases.

The 2023 JIU review of UNFPA's management and administration (JIU/REP/2023/1) criticised that some of these functions were not working as they should. It stated that that UNFPA staff feedback suggested that senior management often failed to address issues of misconduct effectively, particularly in cases involving abuse of authority and sexual harassment, and suggested that "to build trust and improve the transparency of existing mechanisms, UNFPA should further facilitate information-sharing and swift decision-making by the multiple bodies dealing with misconduct."

In 2023, to ensure support to UNFPA staff and personnel who have either witnessed SH, or have had it perpetrated against them, the Integrity Group established a term of reference for a Sexual Misconduct Support Focal Point within the Organisation. This position is currently maintained by the Global PSEAH Coordinator, who is available to staff and personnel impacted by internal sexual misconduct. The Focal Point position is designed to help facilitate access to information and support with how to report, what services and additional resources are available, and how staff and personnel can access them (UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS EB Background note June 2024).

UNFPA also actively contributed to the work of the CEB Task Force on Sexual Harassment, including on the development of a survey aiming to capture the feedback of victims of sexual harassment on how they experienced the response and support provided by the United Nations (EB UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS first regular session 2023).

Element 4.8.4: Although mandatory training has been put in place for all personnel, it is difficult to measure its effectiveness.

- The SH Policy (see 4.8.1) establishes the need to provide training related to SH specifically targeted at managers on appropriate response actions, as well as training and awareness programs for personnel on the established policies on the subject. These training sessions are mandatory for all personnel (Section 4.3.1 of the Policy). The Background Note to the Board of

June 2024 confirms again that all UNFPA staff and personnel – with a particular emphasis on management – are required to complete the sexual harassment-focused online course 'United to Respect' (an UN system-wide online toolkit). This is also a mandatory stipulation for all new and incoming personnel.

According to the latest ERP records, 84% of UNFPA personnel completed this course; and UNFPA in 2024 reported that 72% of managers completed it.

- Interviewees confirmed that for Managers, matters related to sexual misconduct were part of the Induction training, where the policy framework was presented along with specific responsibilities of Managers (90 minutes).

- In 2023 and 2024, all senior managers participated in the "Impactful Conflict Management for Leaders" course. Interviewees confirmed that it was mandatory for every business unit of UNFPA and that all took that training. They confirmed that it served to enable them to enter early into any situations so that they would not escalate, contained a module on SH, and promoted a victim-centred approach.

However, the Independent review of UNDP, UNFPA, and UNOPS policies and procedures to tackle SEAH (2019) concluded that, at that time, "there might still be some confusion in terms of understanding and distinguishing between SEA and SH" and that "some might be concerned whether the mandatory SEA and SH training, developed at the corporate level, might be too generic and theoretical – i.e., not considering the different local and cultural contexts in which personnel operate".

These findings from the 2019 assessment resonate with our assessment of training on SEA (see element 4.7.4), and the real impact of mandatory PSEA and SH training in place (2023 Action Plan). Here again, like for SEA training, training is but only one aspect of a comprehensive policy to tackle SH. Behavioural change is difficult to measure. One informant reported that UNFPA wanted "to move away from "training" to "effective prevention"; although the team has not yet been able to witness the implementation of this new approach.

Element 4.8.5: Different options to report allegations are in place, but it is difficult to assess to what extent they are used.

Section 5 of the SH Policy (Prohibition of Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Abuse of Authority and Discrimination) details all complaint resolution mechanisms, including informal (5.2) and formal (5.3) avenues.

- All formal complaints must be made to the OAIS. Among the formal options, victims can, even anonymously: file formal complaints with OAIS through three official channels made available to personnel (a hotline, email or webpage), which should then take further action in accordance with the relevant provisions of the UNFPA Disciplinary Framework. Formal complaints can be made anonymously by any individual without a specific deadline. If submitted by a person other than the alleged victim, their views will be considered during the preliminary assessment prior to proceeding with the investigation.

  In interviews, UNFPA staff highlighted that the obligation to report allegations of SH onward was a major challenge, operating on the basis of a principle of formal consent, i.e. UNFPA informs the victim of the process and lets her decide whether she wants to continue. Reporting requirements exist vis-à-vis donors, public facing tracking, and internally, even if the information is anonymous.

- UNFPA writes that "OAIS has established this [Investigations Hotline](#) to provide a confidential mechanism for individuals wishing to report fraud or other types of wrongdoing". This concerns allegations of harassment, sexual harassment as well as abuse of authority. It further states that:" Whistleblowers are expressly protected from retaliation in a policy entitled Protection for Reporting Misconduct or for Cooperating with an Authorised Fact-Finding Activity" (this is the 2014 policy that was later revised in 2019). As per the Ethics

Office's Annual Reports for 2022 and 2023, the Ethics Office received nine requests for protection from retaliation in 2022. Three requests (relating to the same subject) were investigated, and retaliation was established in those cases. For two cases no retaliation was found, another two matters were closed because there was insufficient information to support a prima facie determination of retaliation, and two were withdrawn by the complainants. All recommendations for protective measures were swiftly actioned by the Administration.

Support is available to all UNFPA personnel through the "Office of the Ombudsman for the UN Funds and Programmes, the UNFPA Ethics Office, the Division for Human Resources", as well as local staff counsellors. For those directly affected, the policy specifies that during the informal process the "affected individual and the alleged offender have the right to be accompanied by a staff member or other, reasonably available, third party for emotional support". However, this support is not accepted during the investigative stage. An informant reported that, as regards SH victims' support for UNFPA personnel in the field, "there is a duty of care officer at the regional level and there are also counsellors in UNDSS who are paid with funds from all agencies and support all the agencies. It depends on the size of UN personnel in the country how many counsellors will be available".

In terms of seeking advice, the policy also establishes, in Section 6, that victims have the right to have emotional support during informal resolutions (it does not apply during the investigative stage of the formal process). Additionally, they can also seek support from the Office of the Ombudsman for United Nations Funds and Programmes, the UNFPA Ethics Office, the Division for Human Resources ("DHR"), and local staff counsellors.

UNFPA's approach as regards relations to victims: The policy notes that complaint mechanisms are not mandatory nor required to be undertaken in a priority order. Resolution may be sought by "individuals who believe they are victims" in either informal or formal processes. Informal resolutions include the potential for the "affected individuals" to approach the "alleged offender" "on a voluntary basis" (p.3). This policy is problematic, especially considering the potential for re-traumatisation and the differential power dynamics between the victim and the abuser who might be the direct supervisor. The global "UN system model policy on sexual harassment", from which UNFPA's policy was adapted, adds a note of caution to that informal option that UNFPA should have kept in its own policy: "However, disparity in power or status, fear of retaliation or the nature of the behaviour and instances of possible sexual harassment may make direct confrontation difficult, and there is therefore no requirement for such action to be taken."

Element 4.8.6: UNFPA has a target for investigating sexual misconduct within 12 months and its average is 11.3 months. No detail is known about how the length of SEA and SH investigations differs.

The Independent review of UNDP, UNFPA, and UNOPS policies and procedures to tackle sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment (2019) indicates that "A recurring issue highlighted in a number of the interviews conducted across the three organisations is the lack of ongoing feedback to victims on the investigation progress of their reported allegations. Consequently, victims may potentially lose confidence in the internal system if they feel that the investigations are not conducted with a focus on timeliness and efficiency".

It was not possible to verify the speed at which UNFPA resolves cases through the documents provided. Although UNFPA reports that: "Completed cases of sexual misconduct were closed on average 11.3 months after receipt (slightly faster than the Investigations Manual Guidance standard of the recommended 12-month investigation timeline)" [UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Background Note to the Executive Board on the Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment June 2024].

The assessment team did not find any information on whether/how UNFPA uses the records of potential delays to identify and eliminate remaining bottlenecks in its processes.

Element 4.8.7: The organisation transparently reports allegations of SH to the Board and uses ClearCheck to prevent an offender from being re-hired.

- UNFPA reports on any allegations of SEA or SH it has received, and how it has addressed them, to the Executive Board through the OAIS's annual reports on internal audit and investigation activities. Those are publicly available and provide the numbers of allegations by category, and the status of investigations. Cases reported on involve UNFPA personnel, staff, independent contractors, suppliers, or IP personnel.

- Global confidential reporting mechanisms to report wrongdoing, including SEA and SH, is managed by OAIS.

- A regularly issued report (sometimes annually, sometimes biennially) from the Deputy Executive Director of Management on UNFPA's practices in cases of allegations of wrongdoings, including cases of sexual harassment.

The annual reports of the OAIS include a section on investigation activities and a table indicating the number of new cases and cases carried over. And through the regular reports (annual and biennial) from DED Management on the practice of UNFPA in cases of allegations of wrongdoing, UNFPA transparently publishes/discloses (while safeguarding the anonymity of those involved) the number of cases, as well as the actions taken in response to substantiated cases (Section I of the document "Practice of UNFPA in cases of allegations of staff misconduct").

For example, the Annex 4 of the 2024 report of the OAIS provides a summary of investigation and closure reports issued in 2023, by type of allegation, as of 31 December 2023, that includes sexual harassment cases.

All documents relating to annual sessions of the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS are in the public domain and provide a comprehensive and transparent view of internal audit and investigations, actions taken and reported cases of UNFPA.

In January 2018, a SEA check was included in the basic reference checking package used by the UN Global Service Centre, which handles UNFPA recruitment. Candidates must indicate prior sanctions for SEA in job applications. In addition, UNFPA has been participating in the UN system wide screening database "clear-check" to prevent re/hiring of individuals with a record of SEA or SH since its inception in 2019. UNFPA reported that 7 subjects were added to **ClearCheck** in 2023 and 100% of candidates were vetted for prior misconduct.

The most recent UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Background Note to the Executive Board on the Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (June 2024) highlights that UNFPA has initiated the process of piloting the **Misconduct Disclosure Scheme (MDS)** to supplement the "clear check" system. A concept note has been drafted, and UNFPA has identified focal points from DHR, and the Legal Unit, with the PSEAH Unit leading the pilot and ensuring promising practices are captured. UNFPA is in the process of confirming the pilot locations for the MDS and will identify 2-3 "research questions" which will be used to capture learning and contribute to global efforts to remove perpetrators of SEAH from UN and NGO employment circulation.

The 2023 report on cases of allegations of wrongdoing committed by UNFPA staff notes disciplinary measures for two recorded instances of PSEAH, with perpetrators "separated from service with compensation in lieu of notice" in both instances.

MI 4.8 Evidence confidence	High confidence

RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

KPI 5: Operational planning and intervention design tools support relevance and agility within partnerships	KPI score
Satisfactory	3.27

The assessment has confirmed the alignment of interventions/strategies with needs of beneficiaries and regional/country priorities and intended national/regional results. Notably, CPDs allow to adapt UNFPA's intervention to those specific environments. CPDs are indeed important documents that allow, among others, to take into account countries and partners capacity, the evolving contexts, and accountability framework.

UNFPA's approach to risk and risk management evolved significantly over the period covered by this assessment. Up until 2022, UNFPA only had an Enterprise Risk Management framework, with no comprehensive Risk Appetite Statement. Standard risk factors were applicable to all business units, without possible adaptation of those factors to Business units' specificities. Furthermore, risk assessments were triggered simultaneously for all Business units, complicating the conduct of those assessments due to the significant workload. In order to have an ERM policy that is fit for e purpose and following risk management audit recommendations[2] , significant changes have been made to UNFPA's approach to risk management. In April 2022, a new Enterprise Risk Management policy was adopted, complemented by an ERM calendar, a new Risk Appetite Statement, changes in the risk governance structure and new guidance (ERM Guidebook and Risk and Controls catalogue).

This new approach to risk management has brought greater agility and relevance to operational planning and intervention design. At the programmatic level, the ERM policy notably requires UNFPA country offices to undertake risk identification, assessment, response design, response action and escalation for all components. Thes risk assessments are comprehensive: the assessed risk categories comprise external risk, delivery risk, operational risk, fiduciary risk, reputational risk, and safeguarding risk.

Despite those significant advances, the score of some risk-related micro indicators is still unsatisfactory as of 2024. The reason for this is that MOPAN's risk indicators in MOPAN 3.1 focus solely on the country level, and thus have to **reflect the fact that the ERM policy was adopted in 2022 and that some CPDs adopted pre-2022 are still being implemented and thus have not benefitted from the new approach.** As CPDs are successively renewed, the new ERM policy and its strong practices are expected to take a hold in all countries UNFPA serves.

MI 5.1: [Alignment to priorities and needs] Interventions/strategies aligned with needs of beneficiaries and regional/country priorities and intended national/regional results	Score
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.75**
Element 1: UNFPA country and regional programmes refer to national/regional body priorities and objectives	4
Element 2: Reviewed country and regional programmes refer to the needs of beneficiaries including vulnerable populations	4
Element 3: The organisation's country and regional programmes link targeted results to national or regional goals	3
Element 4: Structures and incentives are in place that allow responsible UNFPA personnel to invest time and effort in ensuring programmatic alignment	4
MI 5.1 Analysis	**Evidence documents**
Element 5.1.1: UNFPA country and regional programmes refer to national/regional body priorities and objectives. All country programs of the 12 sampled countries refer, to some extent, to national priorities and objectives, especially National Development Plans. This alignment is observed in Section II of the CPDs, entitled 'Programme priorities and partnerships,' in its opening paragraphs. It is worth noting that the level of reference to national priorities and objectives varies. In some cases, the alignment is explicitly detailed, pointing out exactly which national plans will be supported and how. For instance, it is the case with Cambodia: "The country program will contribute to national priorities identified in the National Rectangular Strategy: Phase IV, specifically to the priority area on human resource development, focusing on improving public healthcare, nutrition, and the quality of education and strengthening gender equality and social protection".	33, 101

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[2] From the Board of Auditors, a JIU report and the OAIS ERM assessment report.

In other CPDs, the reference to a specific plan is made in a generalised manner, only citing the national plan and its objectives. This is the case with Angola, for example: "It contributes to the priorities of the National Development Plan: (a) promoting human capital development; (b) reducing social inequality; (c) eradicating hunger and extreme poverty; (d) promoting gender equality; and (e) ensuring sustainable and inclusive economic diversification". It is also the case with Turkey: "The program is aligned with the 11th National Development Plan goals on health, women, youth, population and ageing, rural development, and disaster management. It reinforces government action plans on women's empowerment (2018-23) and violence against women (2016-20); the Health Strategic Plan (2019-23), the National HIV/AIDS Control Programme 2019-24; the Istanbul Convention (...)".

However, those variances are either justified by the CPD word limits or by transitions at the country level, where the signing of a new plan may be delayed at the time of CPD approval or may coincide with the CPD's finalisation. The analysis of CPEs show that even though the reference to a specific plan is made in a generalised manner in CPDs, the design of the intervention ensured the alignment with national body priorities and objectives. For instance, although Angola CPD's reference to national priorities were broad, Angola CPE clearly demonstrates that the programme was designed with regards to national priorities, as shown in the table below.

Figure 19 8th Angola CP - UNFPA strategic plan outcome and country programme outputs according to National priorities and UNSDCF outcomes

Outcomes and Results framework for Angola (2020-2022)	UNFPA 8th national Programme 2020-2022		2030 Agenda and SDG correspondence
	Strategic plan outcome	Country programme outputs	

National Priority	Outcome 1: Sexual and reproductive health (SRH)	Output 1: National and provincial institutions have strengthened capacity to provide access to information and integrated SRH services and reproductive rights for young people and marginalized populations, including in humanitarian settings	Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
Axis 1: Human Development and well-being; Axis 2: Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Development; Axis 3: Infrastructure necessary for Development; Axis: 5: Harmonious Development of the Territory; and Axis 6: Ensuring Stability and Integrity Territorial Organization of Angola and Strengthening its role in International and Regional context. **UNSDCF Outcome 1:** By 2022, population in Angola, particularly the most vulnerable, with greater access to quality-integrated social and productive services and a diversified economy generating dignified employment and income, aimed at reducing poverty. **UNSDCF Outcome 3:** By 2022, the vulnerable population is resilient to climate change and disaster risk with sustainable and inclusive production; and the territory, cities, natural resources and environment are planned and managed in an integrated, sustainable, resilient and inclusive way.		Output 2: SRH supply chain management and delivery systems improved to address unmet SRH needs of young and marginalized people.	Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
National Priority Axis 1: Human development and well-being. **UNSDCF Outcome** By 2022, adolescents, young people, women and the most vulnerable prioritized in sectorial policies and programs, mainly in the social, economic, cultural and environmental spheres, including in humanitarian contexts.	Outcome 2: Adolescents and youth (A&Y)	Output 1: Y&A and young women have knowledge and skills to make informed decisions about reproductive health and reproductive rights and to participate fully in development and humanitarian actions.	Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
	Outcome 3: Gender equality and women's Empowerment (GEWE)	Output 1: Strengthened capacities of institutions at the national level and in selected provinces to provide comprehensive and integrated GBV prevention and response services and empower communities	
National Priority Axis 4 and 6: Ensuring Angola's stability and territorial integrity, and reinforcing its role in the international and regional context. **UNSDCF Outcome** By 2022, citizens participate and monitor governance, all people have access to justice and human rights are observed, in an environment of regional peace and security	Outcome 4: Population dynamics	Output 1: Government institutions at both national and provincial levels are better able to generate and use disaggregated data to inform policies and programmes that address developmental inequalities, including in humanitarian settings.	Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Source: United Nations Population Fund - Country Programme Document for Angola, DP/FPA/CPD/AGO/8

Source: UNFPA Angola – Evaluation of UNFPA 8th Country Programme 2020 - 2022 Final Evaluation Report

Moreover, national priorities as well as UNSDCF outcomes and strategic plan outcomes are linked to Country programme outputs and indicators in the Results and Resources Framework, as shown in the table below. Therefore, although CPDs may only make general references to national priorities, UNFPA proves to articulate Country programmes with national priorities.

Figure 20 Results and resources framework for Turkey (2021-25)

RESULTS AND RESOURCES FRAMEWORK FOR TURKEY (2021-2025)

NATIONAL PRIORITY: Turkey 11th National Development Plan Goal 2.3, Qualified people, strong societies

UNSDCF OUTCOME INVOLVING UNFPA: Inclusive and equitable social development. By 2025, people, in particular disadvantaged groups, have better access to quality basic services and opportunities.

RELATED UNFPA STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOME: Sexual and reproductive health and rights

UNSDCF outcome indicator(s), baselines, target(s)	Country programme outputs	Output indicators, baselines and targets	Partner contributions	Indicative resources
UNFPA Strategic Plan Outcome indicator(s): • Indicator: Modern contraceptive prevalence rate *Baseline:*49%; *Target:* 53% • Indicator: Unmet need for family planning *Baseline:* 12%; *Target:* 7% • Indicator: Maternal mortality *Baseline:* 14 per 100,000; *Target: 13 per 100,000*	Output 1.1: Strengthened capacity of vulnerable groups and institutions to increase access to high quality, inclusive and rights based reproductive health services, including in humanitarian setting	• Number of new policies/standard operating procedures/institutionalized training programmes on health services for vulnerable groups *Baseline: 0; Target: 3* • Number of VCTs established: *Baseline: 0 Target 10* • Clinical management of rape mechanism in place *Baseline: No; Target: Yes* • Number of service delivery points (supported by UNFPA) providing health services to refugees *Baseline: 0; Target: 10* • Percentage of refugees joining social cohesion programmes out of those who are reached through UNFPA services *Baseline: 0; Target: 30%*	Health and Social Policies Council of the Presidency, Presidency of Strategy and Budget, Ministry of Health (Departments of Public Health, Health Promotion, Emergency Services, Public Hospitals), Education Council of the Presidency, Ministry of Education (Departments of Life-long Learning, Vocational Training, Secondary Education, Teacher training and development, Special education and counselling), Ministry of Interior (Migration Management, Disaster and Emergency and Civil Society Relations), Parliamentary Commission on Health, Family, Labour and Social Affairs, Commission on National Education, Culture, Youth and Sports, Social Security Institution, Union of Private Hospitals, Union of Municipalities, Universities, NGOs/CSOs working on/serving women, youth, refugees, people with disabilities, key groups and human rights NGOs and volunteers	$6.50 million ($1.50 million from regular resources and $5 million from other resources)
NATIONAL PRIORITY: Turkey 11th National Development Plan Goal 2.3, Qualified people, strong societies, and Goal 2.5, Rule of law, democratization and good governance				
UNSDCF OUTCOME INVOLVING UNFPA: By 2025, women and girls have improved and equal access to resources, opportunities and rights, and enjoy a life without violence and discrimination.				
RELATED UNFPA STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOME: Gender equality and women's empowerment				
UNFPA Strategic Plan Outcome indicator(s): • Proportion of women and girls subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months *Baseline: 39%; Target: 32%*	Output 2.1: Strengthened capacity of vulnerable groups and institutions to increase access to high-quality, inclusive and rights-based protection and social cohesion services.	• Number of new policies/ standard operating procedures/institutionalized training programmes on protection services for vulnerable groups *Baseline: 0; Target: 3* • Private-sector business against domestic violence response mechanism in place: *Baseline: No; Target: Yes*	Health and Social Policies Council of Presidency, Local Administration Council of Presidency, Presidency of Strategy and Budget, Ministry of Family Labour and Social Services (Directorates of Women's Status, Family and Community Services), Ministry of Interior (Security, Special Provincial	$6.50 million ($1.50 million from regular resources and $5 million from other resources)

Source: UNFPA Turkey – 7th Country Programme 2021 - 2025

In relation to regional programs, it has been observed that these have a lower tendency to reference regional body priorities and objectives compared to the CPDs. Most only mention that they will support some specific regional initiatives, while some may not even mention them.
Among the regional programs that more explicitly reference regional body priorities and objectives are:

• East and Southern Africa: "Informed by (...) ESA 'Futures 2" strategy, and priorities of African Union-United Nations Framework for Sustainable Development, and regional economic communities (...)".

• West and Central Africa: "The regional program's vision is to achieve (...) and the African Union Agenda 2063'; 'The program will take advantage of relevant pathways such as scaling up regional initiatives (SWEDD, the French Muskoka Fund, the Spotlight Initiative)".

• Latin America and the Caribbean: "UNFPA will continue to participate in impactful joint initiatives, including the European Union-funded Spotlight Initiative to end violence against women; Every Woman Every Child for Latin America and the Caribbean; the Regional Task Force for Maternal Mortality Reduction; the Regional Statistical Coordination Mechanism; and the Regional Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela, among others".

Element 5.1.2: The reference to the needs of beneficiaries, including vulnerable populations (those at risk of being 'left behind'), is a part of all country programmes documents evaluated in the sample of countries.

The reference to the needs of beneficiaries, including vulnerable populations (those at risk of being

'left behind'), is a part of all country programmes documents evaluated in the sample of countries.

On the one hand, the needs of beneficiaries are included in Section I of each document (Programme rationale), presenting key data related to a range of variables such as unintended pregnancies, unsafe abortions, maternal mortality, early marriage and teen pregnancy, violence against women, and many others. All analysed CPDs contained key data related to these issues.

On the other hand, these needs are often also addressed in Section II (programme priorities), defining the groups that are most at risk in each country. This is the case in Guatemala, for example: "Considering that 34 % of preventable maternal deaths occur among pregnant adolescents and young girls aged 10-29 years, the programme will also address the determinants of adolescent pregnancies". Also in Moldova: "The rights of women and young people left furthest behind will be prioritised (...). The program commits to reducing the adolescent birth rate by one fourth from 27.3 to 20 per 1,000 women aged 15-19". Similarly, in Egypt: "Across all program outputs, the accelerator of 'leaving no one behind' and 'reaching those furthest behind first' is applied by designing strategies, in full coordination with the Government of Egypt".

In relation to regional programs, the same dynamic is observed. In other words, in Section I (Programme rationale), data related to the needs of beneficiaries, including the most vulnerable people, are presented in an aggregated form. This is evident, for example, in the Latin America and the Caribbean regional program: "Maternal deaths are mostly preventable and concentrated among indigenous, Afro-descendants, women living in rural areas and women with disabilities". And in West and Central Africa: "On average, only 55 % of pregnant women are assisted by skilled personnel at birth and 13% of maternity services offering emergency obstetric and neonatal care are operational, with 6% in rural areas".

In Section II of each document (Programme priorities and partnerships), the needs of beneficiaries are referenced in various passages, especially the needs of the most vulnerable people. In the Asia and the Pacific regional program: "It will focus especially on vulnerable, marginalised and disadvantaged populations, including the elderly, people with disabilities, key populations, ethnic minorities, displaced populations, migrants and others". Similarly, in the Arab States: "The regional program accounts for context-specific issues, such as increasing vulnerability and instability, with a focus on the most vulnerable populations, including migrants, people with disabilities, and adolescent girls".

Element 5.1.3: Most of analysed country and regional programmes link targeted results to national or regional goals.

75% of the analysed country programs link their specific results to national goals. This linkage is present in the Results and Resources Framework of each document, where each country program output is linked to national targets. In the vast majority of cases, these national targets refer to the UNSDCF (United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework) - characterised by General Assembly resolution 72/279 as "the most important instrument for planning and implementation of the UN development activities at the country level in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda)".

Some of the most commonly used national targets to link the results of UNFPA country programs are Maternal mortality ratio, unmet needs of family planning, Percentage of births attended by skilled health personnel, and others. In the case of Syria, the country program also linked its results to UNSF (United Nations Strategic Framework) but also included some common indicators, such as Maternal mortality rate and Number of women who marry before the age of 18. The three country programs that did not link their results to national targets are Turkey, Sierra Leone, and Cambodia. In these cases, the results were linked to targets of the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25. UNFPA however specified that this can be explained by the fact that suitable defined baselines at the national level are not available at the time of the CPD development and approval. Hence, UNFPA selects UNFPA's Strategic Plan indicators, with targets either set nationally or defined by the programme.

Overall, conducted interviews allowed to confirm that country and regional programmes link targeted results to national and regional goals, but this alignment to national and regional goals seem more de facto than intentional. While all interviewed country offices claimed to plan interventions as to align their goals to national programs and priorities, most interviewed country offices mainly stressed the importance of aligning interventions with UNFPA's Strategic Plan. All regional programs link their results to regional goals in their Results and Resources Framework.

Element 5.1.4: Several tools and structures are put in place to allow responsible UNFPA personnel to invest time in ensuring programmatic alignment, but the lack of human resources in several Country and Regional offices question whether UNFPA personnel effectively have sufficient time to provide such efforts.

Two main structures/incentives are put in place to allow responsible UNFPA personnel to invest time and effort in ensuring programmatic alignment:

- Dedicated session/theme in Regional Leadership Meetings: Strategic planning is given dedicated sessions or themes in UNFPA's regional leadership meetings. These sessions focus on reviewing strategic alignment, assessing annual progress, and conducting mid-term reviews of the Strategic plan. These meetings ensure that regional leadership remains actively engaged in driving strategic objectives forward.
- Alignment Reviews by PSD: The Programme and Strategy Division (PSD) conducts alignment reviews to inform ongoing communications with country offices and decision-making processes. These reviews help ensure that initiatives and interventions remain aligned with UNFPA's overarching strategic direction.

Additionally, when asked to address this element, interviewees responded that UNFPA has several tools and processes to track and communicate performance and results effectively and thus ensuring that programmatic alignment is a key element of performance measurement, notably Performance Dashboard, Orange Book on Results. CPEs also showed effective use of existing tools and structures to ensure programmatic alignment, notably as CP reporting are linked to UNFPA Strategic Plan outputs. For example, Malawi CPE states that "the UNFPA CO annual reporting (2019-21) was done against the Strategic plan outputs 9 and 11".

Interviews demonstrated that Country and Regional offices do invest time and effort in ensuring programmatic alignment, as all interviewees claimed to continuously seek alignment with UNFPA's Strategic Plan and corporate policies. The analysis of sampled CPEs confirmed these continuous efforts to ensuring programmatic alignment. For instance, Moldova CPE concluded that Moldova CP 2018-22 "is fully aligned with the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2018-21". The CP was revised to include a new output on gender equality following the identification of opportunities and the CP output on data was moved under UNFPA SP Outcome 4 for better alignment.

MI 5.1 Evidence confidence	High confidence
MI 5.2: [Context analysis] Contextual/situational analysis (shared where possible) applied to shape intervention designs and implementation	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**4.00**
Element 1: UNFPA country and regional programme designs contain a clear statement positioning UNFPA interventions within the general operating context (contextual analysis)	4
Element 2: Reflection points with partners and intended beneficiaries take note of any significant changes in the operating context (situational analysis)	4
MI 5.2 Analysis	**Evidence documents**
Element 5.2.1: Elements included in country and regional programme descriptions demonstrate that the designing process of those programme positions UNFPA interventions within the general operating context, as those documents contain a contextual analysis on issues addressed by UNFPA and on issues that could affect	33, 101

UNFPA's interventions.

All 12 evaluated country programmes have, in their Section I (Programme rationale), a clear statement positioning UNFPA interventions within the general operating context of that country. All of them include an analysis of the demographic and social changes the country is undergoing, including the expectation of population increase or decrease by 2050, fertility rate, and the number of refugees in some cases (such as Turkey).

They also provide a contextualisation of the economic and political situation. For example, in the CPD of Angola: "Angola has remained relatively peaceful since the civil war that lasted from 1975 to 2002 (...) there is an urgent need to simultaneously invest in social infrastructure and systems to build the nation's human capital by investing in health". And also in Bangladesh's CPD: "expenditure of the health and education budgets, respectively, has dropped between 2009 to 2016".

Furthermore, the CPDs also feature an analysis of the country's positions on issues such as violence against women, child marriage, and gender equality. In the CPD of Cambodia, for example: "Cambodia ranks low on the global gender inequality index (112 out of 188). The acceptance of violence against women from intimate partners is high (...)". And in the Central African Republic: "gender equality remains elusive in the Central African Republic, which is ranked 159 out of 162 countries with a gender inequality index of 0.680 in 2021".

The CPDs also reference the progress and evaluations of UNFPA's previous interventions in the country, providing more inputs for a contextualised view of the country. In the CPD of Egypt: "previous country programme strengthened engagement with civil society and addressed family planning and youth empowerment as part of a broader strategy". And in Haiti's CPD: "The proposed programme builds on lessons learned and recommendations of the current cycle".

As for the regional programs, all six also have, like the CPDs, a section on Programme rationale, detailing the operating context. Included within this contextual analysis are:

- Some common challenges in the countries of the region. For example, in the Arab States regional program: "Common challenges in the region include the low rate of accessibility to health and social services (...)". Similarly, in the Asia and the Pacific program: "Reducing maternal mortality remains an unfinished agenda in the Asia and the Pacific region (...)".
- Common demographic and population trends and changes. For example, in the Latin America and the Caribbean program: "The region currently has a unique opportunity to benefit from the demographic transition, as the population of 10–24-year-olds is reaching its historical peak". And in the West and Central Africa program: "The fertility rate decreased from 5.2 children per woman in 2016 to 4.9 in 2020. The region has the highest fertility rates in the world".
- Advances in meeting transformative results in recent years, including data on maternal deaths, child marriage, female genital mutilation, HIV/AIDS prevalence, violence against women, and others.
- Political, economic, and climate change-related situations. As in the East and Southern Africa regional program: "The region is further impacted by increased humanitarian emergencies resulting from conflict and climate change, including drought, cyclones, and armed conflict (...)". And in Eastern Europe and Central Asia: "In this political context, the space for progressive civil society is shrinking rapidly across Europe".

Element 5.2.2: Annual reviews of country programmes with partners, including in the context of the annual review of the UNSDCF, allow to take note of any significant changes in the operating context and then make necessary adjustments to the programme.

Annual reviews of country programmes with partners, including in the context of the annual review of the UNSDCF, allow to take note of any significant changes in the operating context and then

make necessary adjustments to the programme.

UNFPA workplan policy is also subject to continuous monitoring and review, which is, among other things, based on UNFPA and partners' reflection on the operating context.

Despite the mechanisms put in place to ensure situational analysis, the interview process raised the question of the difficulty to analyse the context of countries in case of humanitarian crisis. According to those interviewees, it may take time to have all the required information to conduct a proper situational analysis and adapt UNFPA's actions accordingly.

MI 5.2 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 5.3: Capacity analysis informs intervention design and implementation, and strategies to address any weakness found are employed	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.20**
Element 1: UNFPA country programme designs contain a clear statement of capacities of key country partners, especially UNFPA implementing partners	4
Element 2: Capacity analysis, from the perspective of using and building country systems, considers resourcing, staffing, monitoring and operating structure	3
Element 3: Capacity analysis statements are jointly developed and shared with country partners	3
Element 4: Capacity analysis statements include clear strategies for addressing any weaknesses, with a view to sustainability, where applicable developed jointly with country partners	3
Element 5: Reflection points with country partners take note of any significant changes in capacity	3
MI 5.3 Analysis	**Evidence documents**

Element 5.3.1: Although UNFPA has put in place processes to ensure that country partners' capacity analysis informs intervention design.
UNFPA policies ensure that country partners' capacity analysis informs intervention design. The Policy and Procedures for Development and Approval of Country Programme Document (2022) state that the 'Programme and Risk Management' section of CPDs is meant to capture "the roles of national actors and stakeholders as well as country office human resource capacity, strategic and implementing partnerships and resource mobilisation opportunities for programme delivery". UNFPA's Policy and Procedures for Selection, Registration and Assessment of Implementing Partners states that the Fund "selects its implementing partners based on capacity to ensure the highest quality of service, including the ability to apply innovative strategies to meet the priorities, needs and strategic direction of the programme, in the most efficient and cost-effective manner". When selecting partners, UNFPA is expected to assess and score the partner's capacity depending on whether those partners are existing implementing partners or not. Programme documents (CPD, UNDAF, Global/Regional/Country Programme Action Plan) are only expected to make reference to partnership strategies and their role in achieving results.

7, 33, 237, 238

The analysis of sampled CPDs showed different levels of attention paid to partners' capacity analysis. In some cases, the lack of capacity is included in the section on risk and risk mitigation measures (Section III):
* In Guatemala: "high rotation of institutional personnel that may affect national capacities for the institutionalisation and sustainability of strategic processes";
* In Cambodia: "Implementation of the programme may be threatened by (...) limited institutional capacity".

Although these sections of the documents mention capacity, a clear statement about the current capacity of implementing partners was not found.
In some other cases, the CPD only mentions that capacities of key partners will be assessed and taken into consideration, without explaining how. For instance,
* In the CPD of Haiti, partners' capacities are mentioned in the third section 'Programme and

risk management' as follows: "The programme will be implemented through various partners, including national and subnational governments, and multiple stakeholders, facilitating participatory joint planning and implementation of workplans with key partners, using the harmonised approach to cash transfers, following appropriate risk and capacity assessments. […] The country office human resources will be adjusted to the scale of delivery, building on the strengths of the existing structure and addressing key capacity gaps, particularly technical expertise in the empowerment of women and youth; resource mobilisation and SDGs financing; strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation; and humanitarian preparedness and response."

- In the CPD of Moldova, the only mention of partners' capacities is in the 'Programme and risk management' section, as follows: "UNFPA will partner with government institutions, the private sector, academia and civil society, including non-governmental and community-based organisations to deliver the programme outputs. The harmonised approach to cash transfers will be used, following the risk and capacity assessment of each implementing partner. The partners will be selected using competitive and strategic partnership approaches."

However, those variances are explained by the word limit of CPDs. It must also be noted that many implementing partners are not yet selected at the time of CPD development, as they are selected after CPD is approved. Although those partners are selected after CPD development, the process described in UNFPA Policy and Procedures for Selection, Registration and Assessment of Implementing Partners still applies. Additionally, after a partner is selected, the HACT micro-assessment is completed by UNFPA. This assessment is meant to include a site visit to the IP. The scope of this micro-assessment covers, among others, a review of the financial viability and staffing.

In line with the HACT micro-assessment, this capacity analysis only has to be filled out once during the programme cycle. **UNFPA has however put in place a continuous partners' capacity analysis mechanism,** as the Fund declares that a partner's capacity to deliver programme results is undertaken whenever there are substantially different results to be achieved or new activities to be undertaken by the partners.

Element 5.3.2: Capacity analysis, from the perspective of using and building country systems, considers resourcing, staffing, monitoring and operating structure.
UNFPA has put in place mechanisms to ensure that capacity analysis, from the perspective of using and building country systems, considers resourcing, staffing, monitoring and operating structure. Notably, the HACT ToR for partner capacity Micro Assessment enables the analysis of IPs', including governments', governance structures and financial viability, programme management, organisational structure and staffing, accounting policies and procedures, financial reporting and monitoring, and procurement (among others).

Sampled CPD evaluations do demonstrate that a capacity analysis has been done from the perspective of using and building country systems, considering resourcing, staffing, monitoring and operating structures. For instance, the Sierra Leone Country Programme Evaluation (2022) shows that several indicators were taken into account to design the intervention: general service readiness index (a composite measure of the overall capacity of health facilities to provide the essential package of health services), hospital bed densities, training and employing of midwives, nurse anaesthetists, surgical assistants, etc. The evaluation also notes that the intervention had taken into account the potential challenges the government had been facing when implementing policies and programmes ("The execution of the National Population Policy and related programs has been hampered by the capacity (human and institutional) and financial challenges. A few policies and programs to address challenges of gender and reproductive health incorporate population considerations. To help with the integration of population issues into national policies and programs, however, efforts are being made to establish the National Population Commission and fully implement the National Population Policy, International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), and Government commitments.")

The analysis of available documents on sampled CPDs showed that in some cases capacity analysis is done after intervention design. However, as explained in 5.3.2, UNFPA explained that many implementing partners are not yet selected at the time of CPD development, as they are selected after CPD is approved.

Element 5.3.3: The Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers to Implementing Partners allows capacity analysis statements to be jointly developed and shared with country partners.

Under the Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) to Implementing Partners, UN agencies use harmonised tools to assess IP capacities and share the findings with UN agencies and implementing partners. The HACT framework is indeed a common operational framework for transferring cash from UN agencies to government and non-governmental implementing Partners. The framework has allowed UNICEF, UNFPA, and UNDP to shift from undifferentiated controls to a risk management approach. According to publicly available information on HACT, the framework "is designed to support a closer alignment of development aid with national priorities and to strengthen national capacities for management and accountability. The ultimate objective is to gradually shift to national systems". HACT thus allows agencies to conduct assessments of IPs' operational management capacity, and IPs to to develop their operational management and internal controls capacity. Capacity assessments are done in collaboration with IPs.

UNFPA led the revision of this tool and it is now used by 6 + 2 UN agencies. UNFPA also leads the sharing of risk and capacity information on implementing partners in the UN Partner Portal.

Element 5.3.4: Although the country programmes do not have capacity analysis statements, they develop strategies to address some of the gaps (which are not included in the form of a structured analysis but rather scattered throughout the text).

Although the country programmes do not have capacity analysis statements, they develop strategies to address some of the gaps (which are not included in the form of a structured analysis but rather scattered throughout the text). Mostly, the actions addressing partner capacity issues relate to the development of institutional and resource capacities, especially concerning partners' capacity to work with data and statistical tools, the capacity to monitor and evaluate their policies (including local government and NGOs), the capacity to coordinate multisectoral policies with a focus on gender (GBV, teen pregnancy, among others), and the individual capacity of marginalised and excluded people, especially women and girls, to combat discrimination and harmful social norms.

These types of actions were found, to a greater or lesser extent, in all the country programmes analysed in the sample.

Element 5.3.5: Continuous monitoring involving implementing partners is intended to ensure that significant changes in their capacity are taken into account, but changes in partners' capacity are not systematically sufficiently addressed in the implementation of interventions.

UNFPA's Policy and Procedures for Preparation, Management and Monitoring of Workplans requires continuous monitoring and annual review meetings with implementing partners and adjustment of work plans based on partners' capacity. This document also provides guidance on how to conduct analytical evidence-gathering exercises and consultations with governments and implementing partners.
However, it must be noted that, as mentioned in previous MIs, partners' capacity analysis is not mandatorily reviewed after being conducted. Indeed, partners' capacity analysis as required in the Policy and Procedures for Selection, Registration and Assessment of Implementing Partners only

has to be filled out once a programme cycle. The analysis of some sampled CPEs showed that changes in partners' capacity actually did not lead to corrective measures to ensure results. For instance, Syria CPE identified limitations in the implementation of the intervention due to inadequate capacity issues, including high high turnover of staff within governments and IPs.

MI 5.3 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 5.4: Detailed risk management strategies (strategic, political, reputational, operational) ensure the identification, mitigation, monitoring and reporting of risks	Score
Overall MI rating	Unsatisfactory
Overall MI score	2.20
Element 1: UNFPA country programme designs include a detailed analysis of and mitigation strategies for operational risk	3
Element 2: Country programme designs include a detailed analysis of and mitigation strategies for strategic risk	2
Element 3: Country programme designs include a detailed analysis of and mitigation strategies for political risk	2
Element 4: Country programme designs include a detailed analysis of and mitigation strategies for reputational risk	2
Element 5: Country programme designs are based on contextual analysis including of potential risks of sexual abuse and other misconduct with respect to host populations	2
MI 5.4 Analysis	Evidence documents

Evidence documents: 28, 33, 68, 92, 101, 207, 241

The 2021 OAIS assessment, preceding the 2022 ERM policy, had recommended that "as part of developing and implementing the new ERM policy, management should integrate risk management in routine planning, programmatic and operational processes, and link the ERM and the internal control framework." The following indicators speak to how far UNFPA has come on this journey in country-level processes. A broader analysis of ERM (at the corporate level) can be found in Part I of the report.

Element 5.4.1: UNFPA has put in place mechanisms to ensure that country programme designs include an analysis and mitigation strategies for operational risks. The new ERM policy will pave the way for analysing operational risks in more detail, which will be beneficial for some country programmes where such analysis currently lacks detail.

Under the Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) to Implementing Partners, UN agencies use harmonised tools to assess IP capacities and share the findings with UN agencies and IPs. This framework calls for a risk management approach and for conducting assessments of IPs' operational management capacity, and for IPs to develop their operational management and internal controls capacity. The HACT framework thus ensures that UNFPA country programme designs include an analysis of potential operational risks.

The majority of analysed CPDs (Country Program Documents) contain an analysis of the risks involved in UNFPA interventions in the country, and mitigation measures in their Section III (Programme and risk management). The level of detail regarding risks and mitigation measures varies within the sample, which can potentially be explained by the word limit of CPDs.

The majority of CPDs only list associated risks without detailing the context and consequences, briefly introducing some mitigation measures. This is the case for the CPDs for the Central African Republic (paragraph 29), Egypt (paragraph 29), Guatemala (paragraphs 29 and 30), Haiti (paragraphs 32 and 33), Malawi (paragraphs 33 and 34), Moldova (paragraph 48), Cambodia (paragraph 20), Syria (paragraph 30), and Angola (paragraphs 27 and 28). Hence, for instance, Egypt's CPD identifies seven operational/environmental risks:

- "resource constraints to fully implement the programme due to shifts in donors' priorities resulting from external factors such as arising political crises in other countries and their

> potential impact on the Egyptian economy (for example, increased inflation and food prices and their potential effect on the purchasing power of low-income households);
> - increasing pressure of climate change and its effect on sexual and reproductive health, maternal health and gender-based violence against women and girls;
> - the occurrence of health emergencies, including epidemics or pandemics (such as COVID-19);
> - increased pressure on service provision due to potential influx of refugees caused by regional instabilities;
> - continued multidimensional poverty;
> - accelerated population growth;
> - a growing youth population;
> - slow acceptance to address discriminatory norms against women and girls; and
> - a limited enabling environment to engage local actors, including civil society and public-private partnerships, discouraging financing opportunities"

The risks are not categorised by types (strategic, operational, political, reputational, etc.), but rather grouped together in a few paragraphs. Some of the identified risks pertain to the operational level:

- "insufficient financial resources or delays in disbursements" (Guatemala);

- "barriers to provision and access to lifesaving SRH and GBV services in contexts of chronic violence and insecurity" (Haiti);

- "unpredicted financial cuts" (Cambodia).

It must be noted that the Policy and Procedures for Development and Approval of Country Programme Documents mentions that "means of verification and risks and assumptions are not included in the RRF. Instead, after the Executive Board has approved the CPD, the RRF must be further detailed through an operational multi-year programme plan that breaks down the high-level results of the CPD into a lower-level, more manageable results formulation." Additionally, the Policy and Procedures for Development and Approval of Country Programme Documents goes along with a Risk Control Matrix, showing risk factors and proposed mitigation. Furthermore, the SIS/MyRisk application tracks risk assessments, validation and mitigation plans and deadlines. Each risk is identified and rated from high to low.

As the previous MOPAN assessment stated, UNFPA has built and improved its risk management and risk awareness over the last strategic period, showing continuous improvement since 2014. In 2022, a new ERM policy was introduced along with a new Risk Appetite statement. The Risk Appetite Statement applies to donors, programme countries and programme partners. It defines six risk categories, including operational risk. Operational risk encompasses risks arising from the lack of alignment of essential internal operational capabilities (resources, competencies, systems, and processes) to those required to implement UNFPA's programme activities effectively. This category refers primarily to the risks related to essential UNFPA support services, such as (a) human resources; (b) procurement; (c) finance (including treasury management); (d) supply-chain management; (e) information and communications technology, and (f) safety & security. The statement also clarifies how operational risks are mitigated and specified that UNFPA has a low operational risk appetite. To mitigate operational risks, UNFPA requires that "the necessary resources are available or planned to ensure essential capabilities (both at UNFPA and implementing partners) are in place at the onset of programme implementation, aligned to the challenges faced in the contexts in which delivery will take place and the nature and complexity of the programmes implemented."

Although this approach to risk management has brought about significant improvements, it is worth noting that COs have to assess those risk only during the design phase of the intervention and are therefore not obligated to renew it as the context may evolve throughout the implementation of the intervention. Furthermore, as the new ERM was launched in 2022, this new approach had not yet been applied to CPDs covered by this current assessment.

Element 5.4.2: Only a part of UNFPA's CPDs consider strategic risk. Those designed before the 2022 ERM policy was rolled out do not yet contain a detailed analysis of strategic risks.

Country programmes analysed as part of the sample of this assessment did not contain a detailed risk analysis specifically for strategic risks. The risks are not categorised by types (strategic, operational, political, reputational, etc.) but rather grouped together in a few paragraphs.

Some of the identified risks pertain to the strategic level, such as "shifts in donors' priorities" (Egypt), "limited institutional capacity, limited resource mobilisation opportunities in the country, and changes in development priorities of partners and donors" (Cambodia), and "persistent institutional capacity gaps and high government staff turnover" (Angola). However, this represents the minority of country programmes and does not include a detailed analysis, only a list.

As mentioned previously in KPI 5, the new ERM policy brings a more comprehensive and detailed approach to risk management. Notably, the Strategic Dialogues, introduced in 2022, allow a discussion on risks and their implications 10-12 months before the approval of the programme approval. The Strategic Dialogues are a three-way conversation and exchange across the levels of the organisation (country, regional, and headquarters) around the programmatic and political landscape of a given country. This platform ensures that country programme designs are informed by a strategic risk analysis as the Strategic Dialogue covers, among other topics, "the politics of the programme, depending on the complexity of the contexts (e.g., the impact of geopolitics and humanitarian crisis and national posture on ICPD issues)" and an "analysis of socio-cultural, economic prospects, implications of humanitarian crisis and other megatrends, including climate change, displacement, geopolitics and potential sensitivities and risks, transboundary issues, mapping of stakeholders, partners, influencers, and donors, of resource and financing landscape, and positioning efforts within UNSDCF/HRP and UNCT/HCT and other implications of UN Reform, informed by strengthened environmental scanning at different levels of the organizational, and regional and global inter-governmental commitments." Although CPDs do not contain a clear, specific strategic risks analysis, the Strategic Dialogue White Papers provide a synthesized high-level outlook and analysis of the Country office on programme progress and performance, future-casting on the 3 zeroes and associated strategic prioritization, political context and sensitivities, human and financial resource considerations and potential support needs.

Nonetheless, although continuous progress has been made since 2022 with the new ERM policy and the introduction of the Strategic Dialogues, we cannot yet conclude that country programmes include a detailed analysis of and mitigation strategies for strategic risk. Assessed country programmes show that country programmes that were designed before the new ERM policy was rolled out are not yet informed by a specific analysis of strategic risks.

Element 5.4.3: No specific mention of political risks was found in country programme documents. Rather, uncategorised risks are mentioned in analysed documents, but with varying detail.

Up until the latest ERM policy, UNFPA would not categorise risks (into strategic, operational, political, reputational, etc.). The sampled CPDs however demonstrated that political risks had actually been taken into account in the design of the country programmes, but with varying degrees of analysis:

- in the Central African Republic: "political and security instability linked to long-term socio-political conflicts; (...) extreme poverty due to the economic slowdown and external shocks marked by the COVID-19 pandemic; (...) the impact of the global financial crisis; (...) shocks related to climate change".

- in Egypt: "increased pressure on service provision due to the potential influx of refugees caused by regional instabilities; (...) slow acceptance to address discriminatory norms against women and girls".

- in Guatemala: "changes in legislative, policy, regulatory, and/or institutional frameworks

that may limit the advancement of human rights and the right to a life free from violence; (…) socio-political conflict situations affecting the program's territorial focus".

- in Haiti: "political instability".

- in Malawi: "the spillover effects of geo-political dynamics impacting the country (...)".

- in Bangladesh: "social norms that oppose gender equality, women and girls' empowerment, and sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights become more pervasive and reflected in public policy".

It is worth noting that CPDs are word-limited and can only include so much as risks within the document as agreed by the partner Government. The appreciation of whether political risks are taken into account when designing country programmes can therefore not solely be based on CPDs. Some CPEs, and more particularly for Countries which CPDs develop the political risks analysis to a lesser extent, show that political risks have not always been mitigated. For instance,

- in Haiti: " The social and political situation since 2017 has had an impact on the supply chain process for FP products."

- in Malawi: " Although the risks are well stated, there is no reference to a mitigation plan for those risks, which would in one way or another ensure that the programme interventions are achieved maximally."

As mentioned in 5.4.1, the Risk Appetite Statement applies to donors, programme countries and programme partners. It defines six risk categories, including external risk. The external risk category encompasses "those risks related to the context in which the programme implementation and operational activities take place that could affect the achievement of intended results. It includes operating in fragile contexts and/or conflict-affected countries or countries facing economic, political, or environmental instability and high corruption levels. It also includes political and social opposition to UNFPA activities and mandate, as well as country, regional, and global-level policy shifts that might affect programme activities, such as reductions in donor funding or changes to national legislation, as well as corruption levels." UNFPA specified that its risk appetite for external risk was "high", i.e. it is prepared to accept contextual risks considering the environment in which it operates and its commitment to reach the more vulnerable populations. UNFPA's approach to mitigating political risks includes a clear disclosure of the level of risk faced in programme proposals and of the cost of the resources required for risk mitigation.

However, as the new ERM was launched in 2022, this new approach had not yet been applied to CPDs covered by this current assessment.

Element 5.4.4: No references to reputational risks were found in the analysed country programs.

As noted in the previous MIs, before the adoption of the new ERM policy in 2022, UNFPA's approach to risk management did not categorise risks.

Although other categories of risks such as operational and political risks could be found despite UNFPA not categorising risks in its assessments, no references to reputational risks could be found in sampled country programme documents. The assessment team notes that this may be due to the fact that CPDs are negotiated with the host country and that therefore UNFPA can only include so much as risks within the document as agreed by the Government, but the conclusion remains that country programme designs do not include a detailed analysis of and mitigation strategies for reputational risk.

As mentioned in 5.4.1, the new Risk Appetite Statement brings a more comprehensive and detailed approach to risk management. Reputational risk is one of the six categories defined in the statement. The reputational risk category refers to "the risk of damaging UNFPA's standing or credibility in the eyes of relevant stakeholders, such as donors, the interagency community, host-country governments, multilateral institutions, implementing partners, beneficiaries, and the public

at large. Reputational risk can arise from communication failures. It can also arise from inappropriate behaviour and actions of our personnel and implementing partners, misuse of funds, major programme or operational failures, or other issues regarding the successful delivery of programmes. It is one of the most potentially damaging risks faced by UNFPA, as it may undermine the confidence of key stakeholders." UNFPA claims to have a low appetite for reputational risk, i.e. "it will not undertake any activities that are likely to affect the reputation of UNFPA and of its donors, partners, and host countries." The mitigating actions described in the statement are however relatively vague, as the statement reads "UNFPA is committed to protecting its reputation through implementing effective risk management and effectively engaging and communicating with our broad range of stakeholders."

However, as the new ERM was launched in 2022, this new approach had not yet been applied to CPDs covered by this current assessment.

Element 5.4.5: No references to potential risks of sexual abuse and other misconduct with respect to host populations were found in the analysed country programs.

Interviewees at country level confirmed that the ERM policy (2022) and process, with its four indicators for PSEA, was being rolled out at the time of the assessment. Each indicator must be rated and justified. The ERM is accompanied by a toolkit modelled after the UN Secretariat SEA Risk Management toolkit (2018).

While according to HQ Guidance for the ERM (2023), the risk categories will vary by country, PSEA risk is assigned as a priority to every country in which UNFPA works. According to the 2024 Background Note to the EB, "Country Offices are required to develop their PSEA risk registers and identify relevant context-specific risk responses, based on the guidance outlined in the ERM."

At the time of writing, not all country offices had rolled out the ERM yet. One regional office described that the 6 humanitarian situations out of the 9 country offices it oversaw had identified PSEA as a risk. Regional offices review the risks identified at country level, and make sure they are accompanied by mitigating measures. The approval – which is made electronically – triggers this risk report to be sent to HQs. Regional officers said they did not have the capacity to review everything, but that they prioritised areas identified as high-risk.

The assessment team has, however, not been able to see examples of the ERM PSEAH risk entries and mitigation measures, or received concrete examples of implementation of mitigating measures. It may be premature, as this system is still being rolled out.

PSEA Focal Points, according to their ToR, are also expected to assess the capacity of Implementing Partners and undertake risk assessments in that regard, within the conclusion of agreements with them (see Element 4.7.5).

In line with a request from the EB, UNOPS, UNDP and UNFPA were in the process of finalising a Uniform Reporting Template with Shared Indicators on PSEA, against which UNFPA counted reporting for the first time in 2024. The indicators were largely informed by the IASC data framework developed by UNICEF drawing from the IASC Dashboard.

Interviews indicated, however, there is still a long way to go until PSEA risk analysis and mitigation are fully part of the design of programmes, and programme managers fully embrace it. UNFPA's engagement with the "Empowered Aid" initiative that aims to mainstream GBV prevention and reduce SEA and GBV risk in aid distribution and programming, including e.g. in cash distribution programmes, is noteworthy in this regard.

MI 5.4 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 5.5: Intervention designs include an analysis of cross-cutting issues (gender equality, environmental sustainability and climate change, human rights and innovation and digitalisation)	Score
Overall MI rating	Highly satisfactory

Overall MI score	4.00
Element 1: Approval procedures require an assessment of the extent to which cross- cutting issues have been integrated in the design	4
Element 2: Plans for intervention monitoring and evaluation include attention to cross-cutting issues	4

MI 5.5 Analysis	Evidence documents
Element 5.5.1: All UNFA's cross-cutting issues are to be integrated in approval procedures, thus ensuring that cross-cutting issues are integrated in the design process of country programmes. The approval procedures for country programs are outlined in two main documents: the Policy and Procedures for Development and Approval of the Country Programme Document and the UNFPA Country Programme Review and Approval Guidance Note (2022). These documents establish certain requirements related to the integration of cross-cutting issues: • Regarding the environment, the Guidance Note considers it one of the components of the dimensional approach to quality programming called Results-Based Management/Evidence-Based Programming: "This involves an evidence-based description of the country background, context, or environment – political, economic, and sociocultural, including the impact (or potential) of relevant megatrends and the socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic". • Gender equality and human rights are key programming principles established by the Policy for Development and Approval of CPDs. The policy states that: "the program must be guided by, and advance, key programming principles, such as leaving no one behind, the human rights-based approach, gender equality, and women's empowerment". The policy also emphasises that the evidence underlying the analysis of CPDs should be "informed by human rights-based and gender transformative analysis". • Concerning innovation and digitalisation, the Policy refers to them as requirements for constructing the theory of change that underpins the CPD development process: "The program must be developed through a robust theory of change process, including unpacking core problems, identifying root causes, and exploring innovative solutions". In the Guidance Note, innovation is one of the criteria for evaluating the dimensional approach of the Strategic Direction of the CPD: "emphasising a commitment to accelerated progress through transformative and catalytic approaches that build on innovation and learning for an ambitious scale of impact". **Element 5.5.2: Cross-cutting issues are fully integrated in plans for intervention monitoring and evaluations, as assured by UNFPA Evaluation Strategy, procedures related to the design of Country Programmes, and by country programme evaluation quality assessment criteria.** One of the priorities of the Evaluation Strategy 2022-25 is to have a "Human rights approach to evaluation, especially gender, youth, social and environmental standards, and disability inclusion". The Evaluation Policy (2024) also states that "Evaluations adopt inclusive approaches, including meaningful engagement of young people, people with disabilities, as well as indigenous and marginalised communities, and integrate social and environmental dimensions". Additionally, it emphasises that "Evaluations must be conducted with the highest standards of integrity and respect for the beliefs, manners, and customs of all social and cultural environments; human rights, and gender equality". Furthermore, innovation is defined as one of the criteria for establishing an evaluation plan, with the following key questions: "Would an evaluation provide the evidence necessary to identify the factors required for the success of an innovative intervention and determine the feasibility of its replication or scaling-up? Is the intervention a pilot or an innovative initiative?". UNFPA has taken several measures to ensure that plans for intervention monitoring and evaluation include attention to cross-cutting issues. Firstly, the Policy and Procedures for Development and Approval of the CPD Document specifies that "country programme evaluations should be resourced	92, 153, 160, 162, 166.

adequately for overall planning, monitoring, annual progress reviews and programme support that are genuinely cross-cutting". Additionally, commitments made in the Evaluation strategy are translated into practical guidance, notably in the Evaluation Handbook and other elements of the UNFPA Methodological Framework (e.g., Guidance on integrating the principles of leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest behind in UNFPA evaluations; Guidance on disability inclusion in UNFPA evaluations; etc.) and related training workshops.

Furthermore, country programme evaluation quality assessment criteria contain several questions regarding cross-cutting issues:

- Is the design and methodology appropriate for assessing the cross-cutting issues (equity and vulnerability, disability inclusion, gender equality and human rights)?
- Does the analysis elaborate on cross-cutting issues such as equity and vulnerability, disability inclusion, gender equality and human rights?
  Do the conclusions go beyond the findings and provide a thorough understanding of the underlying issues of the programme/initiative/system being evaluated and reflect as appropriate cross-cutting issues such as equality and vulnerability, disability inclusion, gender equality and human rights?

MI 5.5 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 5.6: [Sustainability]: Intervention designs include detailed, realistic measures to ensure sustainability (as defined in KPI 12)	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.00**
Element 1: Country and regional programme designs include statements of critical aspects of sustainability, including institutional frameworks, resources and human capacity, social behaviour, technical developments, as appropriate	2
Element 2: Programme designs define key elements of the enabling policy and legal environment required to sustain the expected benefits of successful implementation	3
Element 3: The critical assumptions that underpin sustainability form part of approved monitoring and evaluation plans	4
Element 4: Where shifts in policy and legislation will be required for sustainability, the programmes directly address these reforms and processes in a time-sensitive manner	4
Element 5: Programme designs define UNFPA's efforts to promote the HDP nexus	2
MI 5.6 Analysis	**Evidence documents**

Element 5.6.1: Although UNFPA has put in place mechanisms to ensure that country and regional programme designs include statements of critical aspects of sustainability, those mechanisms are not systematically sufficiently put in place.

UNFPA Policy and Procedures for CPD Development, Review and Approval requires programme to be "guided by – and advance – key programming principles, such as leaving no one behind, the human rights-based approach, gender equality and women's empowerment, resilience, sustainability, accountability, and an integrated and multidimensional programming approach. It should also be underpinned by three mutually reinforcing modes of implementation, namely results-focused programming, capacity development and policy support." Additionally, as mentioned in KPI 5.4, UNFPA conduct partners' capacity analysis, including for governments, which include a review of resources and human capacity, institutional frameworks, and compliance with policies, procedures, regulations and institutional arrangements that are issued both by the Government and the Implementing Partner.

Keeping in mind that CPDs have a word limit, thus potentially resulting in a limitation of shared elements, the sampled CPDs showed the integration of critical aspects of sustainability in intervention designs. The CPD of Angola explicitly outlines recommendations from the last country programme evaluation related to the sustainability of actions (paragraph 12); Moldova incorporates some sustainability elements among its outputs ("enable the educational system to ensure quality

33,112, 148, 150, 33, 184.

and sustainable life-skills-based comprehensive sexuality education delivered by prepared teachers"); Guatemala details the risks associated with the sustainability of actions, such as "high rotation of institutional personnel that may affect national capacities for the institutionalisation and sustainability of strategic processes."

However, the analysis of sampled CPEs show that country and regional programmes are not necessarily designed with an objective of sustainability regarding institutional frameworks, resources and human capacity, social behaviour, and technical developments as appropriate. For instance,

- the Central African Republic CPE reads "the mechanisms for guaranteeing the sustainability of the program's achievements by the implementing partners were not developed in advance, and this poses a programming problem […]."
- The Philippines CPE also shows that the programme has not been designed with an objective of sustainability regarding resources, as it notes that "sustainability is of concern regarding the availability of future resources, which has not been assured"
- The ESARO CPE also suggests that the design process of UNFPA's intervention on capacity building for quality and timely census data collection in the region did not take into account the objective of sustainability regarding institutional frameworks as it reads "However, there is inadequate supportive infrastructure and data governance systems in the countries that have not been critically addressed that can affect the sustainability of the interventions and investments."

Ensuring a better degree of sustainability is a particular challenge in **humanitarian situations**, as OAIS flagged in its report on internal audit and investigation activities in 2023. It found that "UNFPA policies and standard operating procedures that guide humanitarian response predominantly focused on actions that constitute an immediate response at the start of emergencies. There was no overarching framework to guide country offices in fully integrating and operationalising their humanitarian response interventions in existing country programme documents. As a result, country offices navigated through fragile humanitarian contexts without a structured approach to plan, implement, monitor and report on humanitarian interventions." A structured approach and integration with country programmes would be more likely to help ensure sustainability.

Element 5.6.2: All analysed country programs present elements of the policy and legal environment that can impact the sustainability of implemented actions.

All analysed country programs present elements of the policy and legal environment that can impact the sustainability of implemented actions. These elements are primarily presented in Section I (Programme rationale) and Section III (Programme and risk management).
In Section I, CPDs provide data related to the political, legal, and institutional environment that can impact the outcomes, as shown in the Haiti CPD:

> "Due to the socio-political crises and weak capacities of the Haitian Institute of Statistics and Informatics, the fifth population and housing census has been postponed (...) a law for the reform of the national statistics system was passed, although it is not yet implemented" (Haiti).

In Section III, most CPDs present elements such as high turnover of government, NGO, and community services employees, the impacts of political conflicts and social and economic problems, changes in legislation and the country's institutional framework that may affect the sustainability of interventions. Additionally, there are considerations regarding the environment of patriarchal and authoritarian social norms, which may become even more stringent and reflect in public policies, aiming to neutralise, diminish, or eliminate the positive impacts of interventions.

Element 5.6.3: All analysed country programme evaluations contain an evaluation matrix in which sustainability is one of the criteria assessed, with a series of assumptions to be evaluated.
The evaluation matrix is the backbone of CPEs at UNFPA. It includes: The evaluation questions,

the related evaluation criteria, the associated assumptions for verification, the indicators, the methods and tools for data collection. The evaluation matrix is the repository of all data collected by the evaluators. The primary and secondary data presented in the matrix are of qualitative and quantitative nature and stem from documents review, individual and group interviews, focus group discussions, surveys and, when access restrictions cannot be overcome, other methods to collect data remotely. The Evaluation handbook provides to COs the template for the Evaluation matrix. The evaluation questions must address five evaluation criteria stipulated by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC): relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency as well as sustainability.

Regarding humanitarian contexts, evaluations systematically address the evaluation criterion of "connectedness", which assesses the "extent to which activities of a short term emergency nature are carried out in a context that takes longer-term and interconnected problems into account." Connectedness is an adaptation of the criterion of sustainability to humanitarian contexts.

Evidence of the application of those mechanisms was found in sampled CPDs and CPEs. Following are only a few of those instances:

- The CPD of Angola explicitly outlines recommendations from the last country programme evaluation related to the sustainability of actions (paragraph 12).

- The Malawi CPE answers the following question "To what extent have UNFPA supported interventions contributed to ensure resource commitments/allocations by the government institutions and its partners including NGOs for either continuation or scaling up of the activities?". It also states that "government/partners/NGO stakeholders' capacities and mechanisms are improved for ownership and continuation of resource commitments and/or allocations" (Malawi 8th CPE).

- "The benefits of the Country Programme are sustainable and through UNFPA support, capacities of IPs and beneficiaries have been built for durable solutions to the implementation of the current programme and beyond" (Sierra Leone 7th CPE).

- "Output 4: Institutions, including local institutions, are strengthened through better interministerial coordination, improved monitoring and evaluation systems, digital transformation, enhanced statistical capacities allowing for evidence-based policymaking and implementation, and through implementation of SDG-driven financing mechanism" (Egypt 11th CPD).

Element 5.6.4: Where shifts in policy and legislation will be required for sustainability, the programmes directly address these reforms and processes in a time-sensitive manner.

UNFPA's normative role has been increasingly strengthened since the last MOPAN assessment. Although sampled CPDs do not contain any mention of whether/how programmed would directly address shifts in policy and legislation, evidence has been found that where shifts in policy and legislation will be required for sustainability, the programmes directly address these reforms and processes in a time-sensitive manner.

For instance, Lesotho country programme contributed to strengthening the HIV programming policy framework through supporting both NAC and MoH in development of strategies and guidelines to respond to existing challenges in the response framework. UNFPA normative action in Lesotho has been deployed in a time-sensitive manner during the 7th CP in order to ensure sustainability of achieved results. The CPE confirms this statement as it reads "UNFPA financially and technically supported the government in the development of policies, guidelines and strategies, at the request of the line ministries or agencies. […] With the technical and financial support of the line ministries and agencies in the development, review and amendment of policies, laws and strategies to ensure that they facilitate effectiveness will ensure sustainability beyond the life of the 7CP."

However, in some instances, the programmes are not able to address these reforms and processes

in a time-sensitive manner. It was the case for example in Haiti, as Haiti CPE reads "UNFPA's support did not enable the MCFDF to overcome its internal difficulties and update its sector policy and annual action plans. sector policy and annual action plans. The process was so delayed to the point of failure. MCFDF's internal difficulties handicapped UNFPA's ability to gain ascendancy through sustained policy dialogue and pilot actions."

Nonetheless, such instances are due to external factors. It can thus be concluded that where shifts in policy and legislation will be required for sustainability, the programmes directly address these reforms and processes in a time-sensitive manner.

Element 5.6.5: The spirit of the HDP nexus is insufficiently reflected in UNFPA's programme design process, as OAIS confirmed, and as our examination of CPEs has confirmed.

Three out of the 12 country programme documents analysed for this assessment directly reference the humanitarian, development, and peace nexus: Guatemala, Moldova, and Turkey. They referred to the nexus in the following ways:

- "As Turkey is a country with a large refugee population, to ensure the humanitarian development nexus, interventions that benefit refugees and host communities at the same time will be prioritised" (Turkey).

- "The linkages between sustainable peace and the humanitarian-development nexus need to be addressed by reinforcing the integration of the immediate needs of the most vulnerable populations and strengthening dialogue and social cohesion, including in relation to the Transnistrian conflict and heightened geopolitical tensions" (Moldova).

- "UNFPA will promote interventions aimed to bridge inequalities and strengthen institutions, people, and communities across the development-humanitarian-peace and security nexus, based on its areas of comparative advantages" (Guatemala).

Analysed CPEs however show that the integration of humanitarian, development and peace aspects in the design process of some programmes remains insufficient. This is the case in Central African Republic, as the CPE states that the integration of the HDP nexus remains a challenge to ensure sustainability of results.

OAIS came to a similar conclusion in its 2023 report on internal audit and investigation activities in 2023, mentioned in 5.6.1. It found that "UNFPA policies and standard operating procedures that guide humanitarian response predominantly focused on actions that constitute an immediate response at the start of emergencies. There was no overarching framework to guide country offices in fully integrating and operationalising their humanitarian response interventions in existing country programme documents. As a result, country offices navigated through fragile humanitarian contexts without a structured approach to plan, implement, monitor and report on humanitarian interventions." This seems to indicate that UNFPA still has some way to go to create a stronger nexus between development, humanitarian and peace-related aspects of its work.

MI 5.6 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 5.7: Institutional procedures (including systems for hiring staff, procuring project inputs, disbursing payments, logistical arrangements etc.) positively support speed of implementation and adaptability in line with local contexts and needs	Score
Overall MI rating	Satisfactory
Overall MI score	2.75
Element 1: UNFPA has set internal standards and procedures to track implementation speed	3
Element 2: Institutional procedures are adaptable to local contexts and needs	4
Element 3: UNFPA benchmarks its performance on implementation speed across different operating contexts (internally and externally)	2

Element 4: Evidence that procedural delays have not hindered speed of implementation across reviewed country programmes	2
MI 5.7 Analysis	**Evidence documents**

Element 5.7.1: UNFPA has set internal standards and procedures to track implementation speed, which are yet to be completed by SCMU's upcoming strategy.

Yearly workplans offer specific information regarding the timeframes for delivery. The execution performance, spanning all business units, all regions and divisions and UNFPA, is monitored using consolidated data compiled in Dashboard 2.0. Additionally, Internal Audit reports assess the efficiency of internal systems by tracking the pace of implementation, featuring tables that illustrate the duration taken for programme approval and sign-off. Additionally, SCMU has developed Standard Operating Procedures and Guidance on various procurement, logistics and supply chain functions. Recommended timelines for completion of different processes, such as planning, procurement, inventory certification and last mile assurance are outlined in these documents. According to our interviews, SCMU's upcoming strategy will include performance measurement parameters, including implementation speed.

Element 5.7.2: UNFPA has put in place procedures to ensure the adaptability of its interventions to local contexts and needs.

UNFPA has established Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Humanitarian Settings (2017), which are complemented by the Fast-Track Procedures (FTP) to ensure a timely and efficient response in situations of special concern, including humanitarian settings. The Fast-Track Policies and Procedures have been established to provide eligible UNFPA country offices responding to emergencies with greater delegation of authority and flexibility in specific programme and operational areas for a time-bound period.

The FTP constitutes an alteration to operational protocols within the Policies and Procedures Manual (PPM) across three business components, namely (i) financial management, (ii) human resources, and (iii) procurement. This modification aims to expedite a swift response to the requirements of countries when addressing situations of humanitarian crisis.

29, 33, 112, 148, 150.

Element 5.7.3: Although UNFPA benchmarks its performance on implementation speed across different operating contexts internally, but not externally.

Documents and interviews for this assessment show that UNFPA benchmarks its performance on implementation speed across different operating contexts internally. OAIS's regular assessments to monitor the implementation speed of country programmes illustrate this well. One such example is the Audit of the UNFPA Fast Track Policy and Procedures for the Procurement of Humanitarian Supplies (2023). In this audit, a risk-based approach and data analytics were employed to select activities and transactions for review, ensuring alignment with UNFPA policies and procedures. A survey was conducted to gather feedback from business units regarding the utilisation of FTP in their humanitarian response activities. The survey, encompassing questions on governance, FTP activation and reporting, and emergency procurement processes, and four regional and three country offices participated in the survey.

However, we have not found any evidence that UNFPA uses these benchmarks externally, such as in any managerial and accountability systems, information portals or dashboards.

Element 5.7.4: Country Programme Evaluations indicate that in some contexts, delays have affected the timeliness and quality of some of its interventions.

The Evaluations note instances, such as the Cambodia programme, where no delays have slowed down implementation: "IPs received resources that were planned, to the levels foreseen in a timely

manner and there were no reported delays in the process of fund transfers". However, more often than not, our sample revealed barriers to timely delivery. The 8th Country Programme Evaluation (CPE) in Malawi indicates that "there were reports of too much bureaucracy within the financial management system which gave rise to delays in the disbursement of funds to IPs"; "constant delays between requisition of funds by IPs and disbursement by UNFPA, low absorptive capacity of IPs and all this affected timely and quality implementation of interventions". Similar obstacles were mentioned for Sierra Leone where "the IPs reported that there were delays in the disbursement of funds which also affected planning of the activities"; and "delays in the disbursement of funds and limited times for spending per plans is also affecting the results of the CP". And in Syria: "Delays in payments from UNFPA and signing of the AWPs to the IPs were mentioned as affecting efficiency"; "UNFPA's capacity to improve efficiency of the procurement of consultancy services and recruitment of personnel was impeded by insufficient human resources and inadequate technical capacity in human resource management, as well as a lack of flexibility in the application procedures and the need for government authorisations and approvals, which resulted in significant delays".

In 2024, UNFPA has launched a new IP reporting system, as part of the ERP Transformation Project, which is anticipated to improve disbursement speed through key automations introduced.

MI 5.7 Evidence confidence	High confidence

KPI 6: Working in coherent partnerships to leverage and catalyse the use of resources	KPI score
Satisfactory	3.42

UNFPA has suitable procedures in place to ensure efficiency: ones that support joint planning, programming or collaboration with other partners, others notably the workplans (WPs) to allow programmatic changes and adjustments when conditions change at various levels (mainly decentralised). In practice, UNFPA is involved in several joint UN funding platforms at country, regional and global levels. It remains among one of the UN entities which engages in most UN joint programmes (USD233.6 million received in 2023 from UN-to-UN transfers). UNFPA is part of thematic funds such as the Joint Programme on Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation, the Global Programme to End Child Marriage and the Spotlight Initiative, 2gether 4 SRHR, regional joint programme between UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO and UNAIDs aiming to improve SHRR of all people in East and Southern Africa and joint Programme on Accelerating the Reduction of Adolescent **Pregnancy** in Philippines (jointly with UNICEF and WHO). At field level, several examples were highlighted in interviews with UNFPA's staff (e.g.: UNFPA is part of Health Donors Groups, Youth Group, UN Data Group in Malawi). Workplans are adapted to allow programmatic changes and adjustments when conditions change.

UNFPA's comparative advantage is reflected in its strategic priorities but the collaborative advantages in contributing to partnerships are only partially reflected in these priorities. The comparative advantages according to the review of CPDs include notably the humanitarian-development continuum, SRHR for family planning, comprehensive maternal health and prevention of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), adolescent and youth development/ empowerment to support harnessing of the demographic dividend, GBV prevention, strengthening data and national statistical system as a strategic partner for the census. These references are part of a broader strategy that draws on UNFPA's global expertise and strategic assets.

Still, UNFPA must reflect on its comparative strengths within the larger UN development system, including in terms of partnerships. Its strategic plan does not adequately articulate its comparative advantages relative to other UN agencies, which leads to operational challenges in the division of labour. This is particularly evident in the relationship with UN Women, where the lack of a formal agreement on the division of labour has led to coordination issues and missed opportunities for collaborating at the country level and in terms of synergies and efficiency.

UNFPA has actively embraced UN reforms and participates in the greatest number of UN joint programmes of all UN agencies. The reforms come with significant drawbacks, however. These include high transaction and monetary costs, including substantial financial contributions to the resident coordinator system and the management of a 1% coordination levy on earmarked contributions.

UNFPA emphasises principles of country ownership, and development effectiveness, notably through its Strategic Plan 2022-25 which mentioned the 2030 SDG Agenda. South-South and triangular cooperation is one the key strategic shifts and one of the six accelerators established by this SP.

UNFPA identifies possible synergies and complementarities with development and humanitarian partners through its work strategies (SP, Strategic Partnership Framework) and policies (Policy for CPD), High 5s Agenda, sectoral strategies, and most of the time through CSPs/RISPs). Interviewees provided examples of UNFPA's co-ordination with international donors, notably humanitarian, including OCHA (e.g.: in Moldova), UNHCR (in Bangladesh) and OHCHR, as well as through multi-donors' co-ordination mechanism (e.g.: Angola) However, there is room for improvement to better identify the benefits of partnerships and division of labour with partners. The Integrated Partnerships Plan which will be developed in the next round of CPD elaboration in 2025 is an opportunity to improve on this aspect.

UNFPA plays a leadership role in joint initiatives within the UNDS and inter-agency mechanisms and is active in multi-stakeholder dialogue. It has contributed significantly to UN system-wide effectiveness by strengthening coordination, collaboration, and generating knowledge. UNFPA is the co-chair of the UNSDG Business Innovation Group. Currently, it is leading the Gender-Based Violence Information management System (GBVIMS), takes an active part in the UN gender Quality Network, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Population and Development. In addition to its participation in many joint programmes including with other UN sister entities such as UN Women[3], UNFPA is actively engaged with other actors, including a partnership with the Global Financing Facility for Women, Children and Adolescents (GFF) aimed at transforming the financing landscape for SRHR, as well as with vertical funds such as GAVI and the Global Fund. Several of UNFPA's staff at field level provided examples of joint work locally. UNFPA is a coordinating agency in Bangladesh for humanitarian aspects and is part of multi-donors co-ordination and dialogue mechanisms in Angola and Malawi (chair of the Health Donors group) for instance. It is also part of a task force on digital development with ITU and Unesco. Additionally, it leads a regional collaborative platform on data and statistics.

UNFPA has clear corporate statement on information transparency and adheres to the standards set by the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI). UNFPA has been a signatory to the International Aid Transparency Initiative since 2012 and complies with its standards. The level and format of public data disclosure by UNFPA align with the guidelines set forth by IATI. Several interviewees (management, staff, Board members) raised the engagement of UNFPA regarding accountability and transparency. In addition, two indicators (timeliness and comprehensiveness) to assess the progress in implementing the SP are related to IATI publishing statistics core. UNFPA performed well in 2023. The target for timeliness was exceeded (88% in 2022 versus a target of 50%), it was also the case for the comprehensiveness indicator (95% versus a target of 75%). However, UNFPA lacks a general guidance and framework for accountability to affected populations (AAP) which is still under development. The policy for CPD does not establish approval mechanisms related to accountability to beneficiaries, but this is the case of the UNFPA Social and Environmental Standards Policies. Interviews with UNFPA stakeholders highlighted a need to emphasise accountability for affected population, including notably through workshops.

UNFPA has updated its knowledge management strategy in 2024 and produced material generally well perceived by partners. However, the strategic plan mid-term review found that KM in UNFPA needs to be improved to better support the application of the key shifts. There is potential for improvement in the use of analytics, documenting and sharing evidence, as well as in the use of new information technology (notably AI).

MI 6.1: [Agility] Planning, programming and approval procedures make partnerships more agile when conditions change	Score
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**4.00**
Element 1: Procedures are in place to encourage joint planning and programming	4
Element 2: Mechanisms, including budgetary, are in place to allow programmatic changes and adjustments to partnerships when conditions change	4
Element 3: Institutional procedures permit changes to partnerships to be made at the appropriate level to ensure efficiency	4
MI 6.1 Analysis	**Evidence documents**

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[3] For instance, through the EU 4 Gender Equality: Together against gender stereotypes and gender-based violence.

Element 6.1.1: UNFPA has procedures in place that support joint planning, programming or collaboration with other UN Agencies.

At strategic level, UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25 emphasises the objective to build alliances with a range of international, regional and national development organisations and financial institutions. In addition, some positive developments can be underlined. In 2022, the previous formative evaluation of the UNFPA engagement in the reform of the UNDS (2022) concluded that UNFPA country offices often face challenges to operationalising the UNDS reform through collaborative efforts, notably in engaging in joint programmes which was made more difficult then through the lack of appropriate guidance (the previous note was from 2014). In this context, UNFPA has played an active role in the development and issuance of key system-wide programming guidance, including in 2022 the revamped guidance on Joint Programmes, to catalyse joint work for the SDGs, and a system-wide Output Indicator Framework to enable more effective monitoring of the SDGs. In addition, the work plan (WP) policy and procedures, in its Section IV.C, establishes a series of procedures and guidelines to operationalise the creation of joint workplans under the "Delivering as One" principle of the UNDG Standard Operating Procedures. For example, it specifies that it is possible to develop a single workplan instead of having multiple agency-specific ones. This format aims to strengthen the spirit of integration, practicality, and system-wide coherence.

Country strategies programs also include UNFPA's engagement at field level with other United Nations organisations through the UNCT operations management team to promote adapted common services and operational excellence, as well as UNFPA's inputs to relevant UNSDCF plans and joint programmes.

In practice, UNFPA is involved in several joint UN funding platforms at country, regional and global level. UNFPA remains among the UN entities participating in the largest number of UN joint programmes. In 2023 UNFPA received a total of USD 233.6 million from UN-to-UN transfers, which represents one of the largest sources of funding to UNFPA. Interviews provided several examples that UNFPA has mechanisms in place for joint planning and programming with other UN Agencies as part of the UNDS. It includes thematic funds, such as the Joint Programme on Elimination of female genital mutilation through interventions in 17 countries, the Global Programme to End Child Marriage, the EU and the UN Spotlight Initiative aimed at addressing all forms of violence against women and girls, and harmful practice, "2gether 4 SRHR", regional joint programme between UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO and UNAIDs aiming to improve SHRR of all people in East and Southern Africa and joint Programme on Accelerating the Reduction of Adolescent Pregnancy in Philippines (jointly with UNICEF and WHO), EU 4 Gender Equality (jointly with UN Women), among others. At field level, UNFPA is participating for instance in Malawi in joint bodies for dialogue, such as Health Donors groups, Youth Group, UN Data Group, subcluster on GBV. In Angola, UNFPA has joint programme/ interventions with other UN Agencies such as UNHCR (supply with refugees), UNCDF (Women Leaders) and UNICEF (Youth participation and engagement). Finally, UNFPA is involved in the system-wide gender equality acceleration plan, launched in April 2024.

Element 6.1.2: UNFPA has suitable mechanisms in place to allow programmatic changes and adjustments when conditions change.

The work plan (WP) policy and procedures allows flexibility to revise the work plan based on changing circumstances (detailed in the section 5 "Workplan and Budget Revisions"). It includes changes in activity (amount, removal or additional, revision of sub-activities), monitoring framework, budget (switching funds between activities), timeline (extension changing activities, budgets, etc). It also includes spot checks of implementing partners, annual review meeting with them and the right for UNFPA to suspend support to the implementing partner.

UNFPA's guidance note on programming in humanitarian situations shows also the flexibility when a humanitarian situation occurs. It includes procedures for selecting, registering and assessing implementing partners.

1, 7, 92, 23
7, 39, 45, 37,
8, 47, 152,
165, 183.

UNFPA's response to programming during COVID is also an example of flexibility. The changes, adjustment in programming lead to adjustment of detailed work plan, activities, and budget. Country examples include Sri Lanka (non-humanitarian) and Ukraine (humanitarian).

Element 6.1.3: Existing policies and guidance documents allow change to partnerships with implementing partners at the adequate level to ensure efficiency.

The Policy and Procedures for Selection, Registration, and Assessment of Implementing Partners (2021) guides the step-by-step assessment of a partner's institutional, technical and managerial capacity to deliver the interventions. This assessment is done at the time of selection and valid for the duration of the workplan (it can be annual or multi-annual). Ensuring the partner maintains these capacities is part of the continuous monitoring undertaken during the lifespan of the workplan. If the partner is to be engaged to undertake different activities, the office must assess the partner accordingly by either launching a new selection process or by assessing its capacity via a non-competitive process.

Changes to partnerships are largely decentralised decisions made at country office level. As raised during interviews, country offices have flexibility in engaging with partners, depending on programmatic needs.

The General Terms and Conditions for the IP Agreement state, in Article 23, that any changes in conditions that may impact the performance of the implementing partner and the fulfilment of the agreement between both parties must be immediately communicated by the implementing partner to UNFPA. UNFPA, in turn, has the freedom to choose how to address the situation, which may include granting an extension of the deadline for the implementing partner to fulfil its obligations under the agreement or terminating the contract. Section 5.5 of the Manual for Implementing Partners addresses Workplan Revisions, stating that revisions can naturally lead to changes in the workplan and the corresponding budget.

The Guidance Note on Programme Flexibility in Humanitarian Situations (2020) allow changes in partnerships (engage in new partnership, suspend or terminate activities, etc.).

MI 6.1 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 6.2: [Comparative advantages] Partnerships are based on an explicit statement of comparative or collaborative advantage – e.g., technical knowledge, convening power/partnerships, policy dialogue/advocacy	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.40**
Element 1: Corporate documentation contains a clear and explicit statement (or statements) on the collaborative advantage(s) that UNFPA intends to contribute to partnerships	3
Element 2: Statement(s) of UNFPA comparative advantage(s) is/are linked to clear evidence of available organisational capacities and competencies	3
Element 3: Resources/competencies needed for intervention area(s) are aligned to the perceived comparative or collaborative advantage	4
Element 4: Comparative advantage(s) is/are reflected in the resources (people, information, knowledge, physical resources, networks) that UNFPA commits (and is willing) to bring to partnerships	4
Element 5: [UN] Internal guidance on implementing the Management and Accountability Framework exists and is being applied	3
MI 6.2 Analysis	**Evidence documents**
Element 6.2.1: UNFPA's comparative advantage is reflected in its strategic priorities, but the	205, 202,

collaborative advantages to contribute to partnerships are partially reflected in these priorities.

33, 94, 92, 173, 243.

UNFPA's comparative advantage relates to areas where the Fund has better technical capacity to deliver.

At the global level, the organisation's strategic plan does not adequately articulate its comparative advantages relative to other UN agencies, which leads to operational challenges in the division of labour. This is particularly evident in the relationship with UN Women, where the lack of a formal agreement on the division of labour has led to coordination issues and missed opportunities for collaborating at the country level and in terms of synergies and efficiency.

While the Strategic Plan 2022-25 describes general comparative advantages (its presence in over 150 countries, its expert knowledge and experience, its unique expertise in providing innovative, evidence-informed and right-based solutions covering normative and operational dimensions), each CPD are supposed to detail UNFPA comparative advantage in the country.

The partnership strategy which is a supplement to the country programme document focuses other agencies that can be involved to collaborate with as identified in country discussion/analysis.

UNFPA's Strategic Partnership Framework 2022-25 supports the scaling up of successful partnerships, by identifying and deepening existing high-value partnerships. It positions UNFPA more firmly in Covid-19 recovery efforts and emphasising the comparative advantage of having country presence and close partnerships in the health sector, proactively influencing the strategic approaches and operations of partners.

As established by the Policy and Procedures for Development and Approval of Country Programme Documents, one of the principles for the development of CPDs is to "reflect the UNFPA comparative advantage in the country". Most of the analysed CPDs address UNFPA's comparative advantages in the country, except CPDs for Egypt, Malawi, Sierra Leone, and Turkey. These comparative advantages according to the review of CPDs include, in particular, the humanitarian-development continuum, SRHR for family planning, comprehensive maternal health and prevention of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), adolescent and youth development/ empowerment to support harnessing of the demographic dividend, GBV prevention, strengthening the data and national statistical system as a strategic partner for the census. As indicated in interview, an internal due diligence exists to support the selectivity in terms of partnerships and alignment with UNFPA's mandate.

In addition, according to the survey, most respondents agree (224) with stating that UNFPA's work with partners in countries is based on a clear understanding of comparative advantages (responses ranging from "somewhat" to "strongly"). A few respondents (8) disagree with this statement (responses ranging from "somewhat" to "strongly").

However, the aforementioned advantages mostly pertain to UNFPA's general comparative advantages rather than specifically focusing on the comparative advantages that UNFPA intends to contribute to partnerships themselves. UNFPA's (self) collaborative advantage is better studied in partnership documents of other agencies.

Regarding implementing partners, the Policy and Procedures for Selection, Registration, and Assessment of Implementing Partners define in its section 3b that the selection panel, in the case of partner selection through Competitive Selection (Invitation for Proposal/Call for Expression of Interest), should assess the comparative advantages of the potential implementing partner. However, no mention is done about the comparative advantages of UNFPA itself.

Figure 21: UNFPA's work with partners is based on a clear understanding of comparative advantages
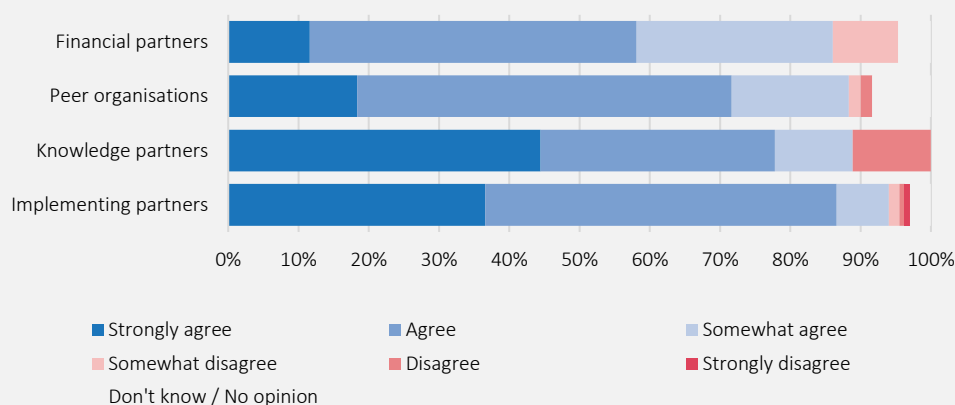
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

Element 6.2.2: General comparative advantages are mentioned in the global competency framework, but the organisation's capacities and competencies are not put in relation with its partnerships, nor do they build the basis of country programme documents (CPDs).

At global level, the comparative advantages established in the Strategic Plan 2022-25 are based on the organisation's capacities and competencies. In addition, UNFPA has its own competency framework that defines the most important skills and abilities that the organisation values. This approach ensures that UNFPA's comparative advantage is not limited to its local capacity but reflects the full scope of the organisation's global expertise and strategic assets.

However, this framework raises general comparative advantages rather specifically focusing on the comparative advantages that UNFPA intends to contribute to partnerships based on the organisation's capacities and competencies.

At the country level, several CPDs (Angola, Cambodia, Guatemala, and Haiti) highlight UNFPA's capacity to support the gathering and analysis of population data (statistics) as a comparative advantage. This aspect was also highlighted in the last MOPAN assessment: "A key element of UNFPA's comparative advantage is the incorporation of population data into development and humanitarian planning".
 A significant portion of the comparative advantages cited in the CPDs is primarily based on UNFPA's mission and strategic objectives themselves, not necessarily linked to evidence of organisational capacities and competencies. For example, comparative advantages mentioned include:

- In the CPD for Angola: "adolescent and youth development/empowerment", "integrated SRHR for family planning, comprehensive maternal health, and prevention of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV".
- In the CPD for Cambodia: "comprehensive sexuality education", "sexual and reproductive health".
- In the CPD for Moldova: "empowering young people to fulfil their potential".

Two CPDs that present comparative advantages based on concrete evidence of the organisation's capacities and competencies are those of Guatemala and Haiti focusing in particular on data and statistics, strategic partner for the census, expertise on gender equality/GBV, innovative sexual and reproductive health strategies/ provision of reproductive health commodities.

Element 6.2.3: UNFPA aligns its resources and competencies to its comparative and

collaborative advantage areas.

This is reflected in the types of programmes UNFPA undertakes both at HQ-level and at country level. At strategic level, it is reflected in the Integrated Resource and Results Framework and the Integrated Budget.

A dedicated note provides guidance for performing a "Due diligence process for UNFPA Strategic Partnership". UNFPA carries out regular due diligence reviews of all organisations listed below prior to partnering or accepting contributions from them:

- Business enterprises and corporate foundations, including all types of business enterprises, small and medium-sized enterprises, national and multinational corporations, foundations; business associations, coalitions, and alliances as well as other private sector groups;

- International and national non-governmental organisations; community-based organisations; philanthropic foundations; faith-based organisations; advocacy groups; trade unions; professional voluntary associations; grassroots movements / organisations;

- Academia and scientific institutions;

- High Net Worth Individuals (HNWIs).

The due diligence review is managed within the corporate Client Relationship Management system (Salesforce-based). Regarding IPs, after selecting a partner and conducting the basic and essential due diligence that makes the partner eligible to work with UNFPA, it conducts an extensive IP capacity assessment (harmonised assessment with 6+ UN agencies, also called micro assessment for HACT agencies). This assessment reviews the partner's resources in terms of structure, policies, internal controls and human resources to ensure it aligns to the expected implementation of activities. Where gaps are identified, these are mitigated and addressed.

Element 6.2.4: Comparative or collaborative advantages are reflected in the resources that each partner commits to bring to the partnership. At a strategic level, UNFPA's Strategic Partnership Framework 2022-25 aims at reaching partnerships focusing on building "flagship platforms" that involve multiple and diverse partners to ensure the visibility, prioritisation and adequate resource allocation for themes at the core of the UNFPA mandate. This approach encourages partners to commit resources that enhance UNFPA's strengths. At the country level, the CPD document includes a section on Programme Priorities and Partnerships. This is the main section, which presents the vision of the proposed programme, its strategic direction, level of ambition and the concrete priorities towards the accelerated achievement of the transformative results in the country context. This section states the critical partnerships and roles of partners towards realising national priorities, SDGs and the UNSDCF, in which UNFPA's comparative advantages (expertise, experience, human resource, knowledge and information, networks) are mentioned, but not necessary systematically and in detail considering there is a strict word limit for CPDs. ⅰⅰThe eight representation offices of UNFPA's Division of Communications and Strategic Partnerships have each one a regional resource mobilisation and partnership advisor (RRMPA) at P5 level. In addition to them, almost all regional offices have additional personnel supporting the RRMPAs (e.g. ESARO has a Resource Mobilisation and Partnership Specialist, at P3, EECARO has a Resource Mobilisation and Partnerships Analyst, at P2, etc).

Element 6.2.5: UNFPA developed an internal guidance note for country and regional offices which endorses the updated Management and Accountability Framework (MAF). This guidance note updates UNFPA field offices on changes to the MAF and reinforces the Fund's corporate commitment to the principle of mutual accountability between Resident Coordinators and UNFPA Country Representatives, aiming to further engage Resident Coordinators in the work of UNFPA. According to the formative evaluation of the UNFPA engagement in the UNDS Reform, 90% of UNFPA representatives/ heads of office is familiar with the Management and Accountability Framework. 88% of UNFPA's respondents agree with the fact that UNFPA's policies and procedures are aligned with the MAF. The analysis of CPDs reveals that this guideline has been followed, as 75% of the analysed CPDs have effectively done so. Efforts to implement fully the

MAF are being complemented by the on-going development of an orientation package for Resident Coordinators and a corporate approach for more effectively engaging Resident Coordinators in the work of UNFPA.

MI 6.2 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 6.3: [Use of country systems] Demonstrated commitment to furthering development partnerships for countries (i.e., support for South-South collaboration, triangular arrangements, and use of country systems)	Score
Overall MI rating	Satisfactory
Overall MI score	3.25
Element 1: Clear statement on how UNFPA supports principles of collaboration with countries on their development agenda (Nairobi Principles, 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda)	4
Element 2: Clear statement/guidelines for how UNFPA supports partnerships between programme countries	4
Element 3: Clear statement/guidelines for how UNFPA uses country systems	2
Element 4: Internal structures and incentives are supportive of collaboration/cooperation with and between programme countries, and use of country systems where appropriate	3

| MI 6.3 Analysis	Evidence documents
Element 6.3.1: Clear statement exists on how UNFPA supports principles of collaboration with countries on their development agenda, especially the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. The Strategic Plan 2022-25 emphasised, in various passages, its alignment with the principles of the 2030 SDG Agenda, including the centrality of partnerships in its strategy (paragraph 6). The document also points out, in its Section II (Context), that it is a global moment that offers opportunities to strengthen collaborations with countries, stemming from agreements signed in recent years, including ICPD25 and the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Platform of Action in 2020. This statement is even more explicit in paragraph 81 of the Strategic Plan: "This means retaining its global presence through 119 country programmes, two multi-country programmes, six regional programmes, and one global programme to support programme countries in completing the 'unfinished business' of the ICPD Programme of Action and contributing to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". **Element 6.3.2: Clear statement exists to explicit UNFPA's support to partnerships between programme countries.** South-South and triangular cooperation is one of the key strategic shifts, one of the six accelerators established by the Strategic Plan 2022-25 and one of the five modes of engagement of the business model. Among the actions to enhance programming for results is: "UNFPA will build staff capacity in field offices on South-South and triangular cooperation and will improve the mechanisms used to measure such cooperation". In 2022, UNFPA launched the UNFPA Corporate Strategy on South-South and Triangular Cooperation, which more explicitly outlines the guidelines for UNFPA's support to partnerships between programme countries. This includes the following dimensions in the operational framework: Mainstreaming SSTC in the programming processes and plans; SSTC Advocacy and Communication; SSTC Capacity Development of UNFPA and Partners; Documentation and Sharing SSTC Solutions; SSTC Partnerships and Centres of Excellence; and mobilisation of SSTC Resources, which focuses on UNFPA's use of domestic resource mobilisation. UNFPA is involved in the creation of a UN system-wide strategy on SS Cooperation and of a guidance note on how to mainstream such cooperation in the UNSDCF processes. A specific section in CPDs is related to partnerships, resource mobilisation and South-South Cooperation.	205, 202, 33, 94, 92, 81, 125, 151 46, 207.

The Policy and Procedures for Development and Approval of the Country Programme Document also establishes the need for a South-South cooperation plan.

Interviewees raised that UNFPA has significantly increased its support to South-South Cooperation. In addition to the Strategic Plan and the Corporate Strategy, S-S Cooperation is supported notably through normative guides, guiding strategies, t good practices on knowledge-management and support to capacities.

Overall respondents to the survey were positive (ie. from somewhat to strongly agree) about the fact that UNFPA seizes opportunities to support countries in furthering their development partnerships through South-South triangular cooperation. A few respondents (somewhat) disagree, in particular implementing partners (six respondents).

Figure 22: UNFPA seizes opportunities to support countries in furthering their development partnerships through South-South triangular cooperation
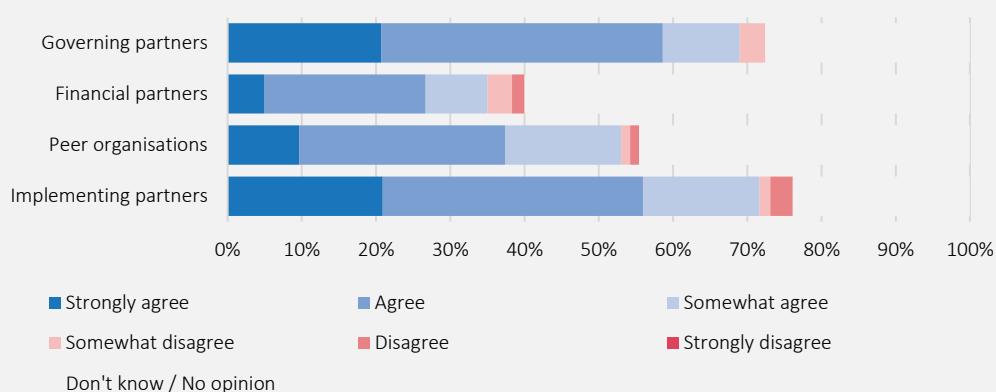
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

Element 6.3.3: There is no clear statement how UNFPA uses country systems.

The Strategic Plan 2022-25 does not establish any clear statement or guideline on how UNFPA uses country systems. The language used in the Plan primarily focuses on how UNFPA will contribute to the strengthening, development, and capacity-building of country systems, rather than how it will utilise it. Few sections in the SP that address this topic, albeit to a lesser extent, are contained in the monitoring and evaluation section (Section VII), which sets the guideline: "Sourcing data from existing national systems as much as possible", as well as in the Annex 3-Business model which includes capacity development of one of the five modes of engagement ("this involves a set of interventions by which (…) national systems (…) are strengthened, created, adapted, mobilised, deployed and sustained over time to achieve results").

Element 6.3.4: Internal structures and incentives support collaboration/cooperation with and between programme countries, but there is lack of follow-up on exchanges between countries and a monitoring and evaluation of these practices.

The evaluation conducted in 2020 on UNFPA's support and approach regarding South-South and triangular cooperation concluded that "Mechanisms are in place to coordinate SSC initiatives, both internal and external to UNFPA, but there are opportunities to strengthen these further" (Conclusion 3). These mechanisms include the establishment of a dedicated (the Inter-Country Cooperation Office within the Policy and Strategy Division (PSD/ICCO)) at the global level and focal point structures at regional and country levels. However, the primary actions of cooperation between

countries were carried out by individuals rather than by these institutional instances.

The evaluation also concluded that "There are processes and mechanisms in place to manage and facilitate SSC initiatives, but these can be further developed and systematised" (Conclusion 6). Specifically, the evaluators noted good practices, such as the UNFPA South-South Cooperation Good Practice Competition, but institutionally, there is a lack of follow-up on exchanges between countries and a monitoring and evaluation of these practices. During interviews, it was mentioned that UNFPA put in place several measures and incentive to support South-South Cooperation such as publication of good practices on the website, communication within UN System, showcasing good practices, training programmes. Resources are also dedicated to promote technical cooperation (knowledge sharing activities, training programs).

MI 6.3 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 6.4: [Synergies] Strategies or programme designs identify and address synergies with development partners to encourage leverage/catalytic use of resources and avoid fragmentation in relation to 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda implementation	Score
Overall MI rating	Satisfactory
Overall MI score	3.00
Element 1: Strategies or programme designs clearly identify possible synergies with development and humanitarian partners and leverage of resources/catalytic use of resources and results	3
Element 2: Strategies or programme designs clearly articulate responsibilities and scope of the partnerships	4
Element 3: Strategies or programme designs are based on a clear assessment of external coherence	2
Element 4: Strategies or programme designs contain a clear statement of how leverage of resources will be ensured	3
MI 6.4 Analysis	Evidence documents
Element 6.4.1: The Strategic Plan 2022-25 identifies in various parts a series of possible synergies with development and humanitarian partners. However, there is not a holistic mapping underlining the comparative advantage of UNFPA and the division of labour with other partners. It includes several United Nations partners (paragraphs 34, 38, 40, and 44 of the SP, which mention WHO, UNICEF, UN-Women, UNDP, OHCHR, UNAIDS, OCHA, UNHCR, WFP, IOM, ILO, the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office, and the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth), and international financial institutions, including the World Bank Group (paragraph 57). Overall, respondents from the survey agree (from "somewhat" to "strongly") with the fact that UNFPA coordinates its strategies with partners to ensure coherence and avoid fragmentation/ duplication. A few respondents disagree (from "somewhat" to "strongly") especially financial partners, peer organisations and implementing partners (7 respondents for each category). Interviewees provided examples of UNFPA's coordination with international donors, particularly humanitarian stakeholders, including OCHA (e.g.: in Moldova), UNHCR (in Bangladesh) and OHCHR, as well as through multi-donors' co-ordination mechanism (e.g.: in Angola) The UNFPA Strategic Partnership Framework 2022-25 also supports complementary partnerships. However, there is not a holistic mapping underlining the comparative advantage of UNFPA and the division of labour with other partners, which would be useful especially to better understand the role of UNFPA in the global development and humanitarian agenda (e.g.: gender). The Policy and Procedures for Development and Approval of the Country Programme Document establish the need for an integrated partnership and resource mobilisation and South-South	205, 92, 33, 63, 202,117, 151, 244, 246, 247.

cooperation plan, a document that should include an analysis of the current national climate and potential for partnership and outlining how proposed partnerships will directly contribute to achieving programme results.

Figure 23: UNFPA co-ordinates its strategies with partners to ensure coherence and avoid fragmentation/ duplication.
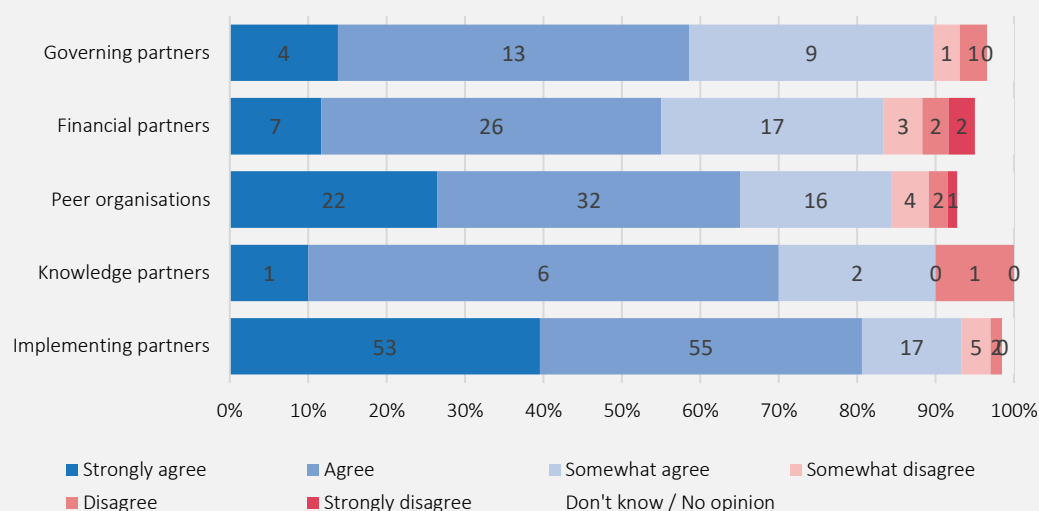
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

Element 6.4.2: The Integrated Partnership and Resource Mobilisation Plans clearly outlines the responsibilities and scope of each partner.

It includes the expected contributions of each partner, as well as the expected results, actions, performance key indicators, and a "why this partner" section, which aims to identify how each partner will help achieve the CPD's expected results. The IPRMPs (Integrated Partnership and Resource Mobilisation Plans) are developed alongside, and are informed by the direction and needs set out in the CPD. In addition, many offices choose to supplement IPRMPs with much more detailed resource mobilisation strategies (examples from Mozambique and Botswana)

As the evaluated CPDs were developed before the need for these integrated partnership plans, they articulate responsibilities and scope not in such detail, but generally: for each CPD outcome, established in their Results and Resources Frameworks, a series of partners are listed who will support its achievement but without detailing how.

Additionally, in some of the CPDs, partnerships are also mentioned in the body of the document, providing more detailed information on what is expected from each partner, such as paragraph 21 of the Central African Republic CPD: "with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), UNHCR, and WFP for assistance to internally displaced persons, logistics support, refugees, and returnees". However, in most of the analysed CPDs, partners are mentioned in general statements that resemble UNFPA's mission in many cases. For example: "In partnership with government institutions (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Ministry of Planning, and Ministry of Women's Affairs), United Nations agencies, and non-government partners, the programme will implement, under three integrated outcomes, mainly upstream interventions focused on policy dialogue, advocacy, capacity development, partnerships, co-ordination, and evidence generation" (Cambodia CPD).

Element 6.4.3: Strategies or programme designs are not based on a clear assessment of external coherence.

The Template for Integrated Partnership Plan establishes that the plan should be built from an "analysis of the current national climate and potential for partnership." The CPDs for 2022-25 explain the partnership approach in different ways. Many of them do not mention the word "coherence" at any point. The two that do (Moldova and Bangladesh) do so in a very general manner and are not based on an analysis of external coherence.

Beyond the IPRMP, the analyses that underpin the country programme designs are extensively informed by the Common Country Analysis (CCA), a process to which UNFPA contributes and that is coordinated by the RC office and UNCT (the Global Guidance on CCA is managed by UNDCO). However, these CCA don't include systematically an assessment of the external environment, stakeholder and partner mapping, and the external financial and funding landscape (e.g. the CCA for Angola, Central African Republic).

Element 6.4.4: Strategies or programme designs contain a clear statement of how leverage of resources will be ensured, but none of the analysed CPDs established specific indicators regarding "Resources leveraged through SSTC".
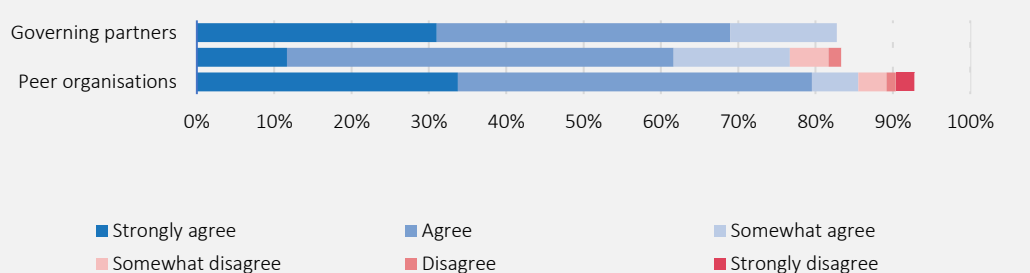
Both the Strategic Partnership Framework and the Resource Mobilisation Strategy, as well as the UNFPA Corporate Strategy on South-South and Triangular Cooperation, establish a series of guidelines and objectives related to resource leverage.

The first mentioned document states: "UNFPA is cultivating complementary partnerships, financial approaches, and instruments in order to explore innovative financing opportunities, leverage additional funding sources for health, and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of existing external and domestic resources". Additionally, the Strategic Partnership Framework also highlights some considerations that UNFPA actors need to be mindful of, especially when engaging with non-traditional donors such as the private sector, in terms of building long-term partnerships: "At this level, sectoral approaches by subregion could be considered to engage key actors from the private sector as long-term partners. Depending on the organisations selected in some countries, these could lead to a quick leverage of funds, but that can hinder a long-term partnership approach".

On the other hand, the Resource Mobilisation Strategy is entirely focused on how the leverage of funds will be executed: "The strategy highlights the importance of leveraging quality, multi-year funding via the various instruments in UNFPA's funding architecture and portfolio, as well as through other platforms and partnerships." The policy establishes principles, the architecture, prongs, and accelerators of the resource mobilisation policy.

The Corporate Strategy on South-South and Triangular Cooperation established "Resources leveraged through SSTC" as one of its key results indicators, to be defined more specifically by the CPDs. However, this requirement was defined with the launch of this strategy in June 2022, after the elaboration of the CPDs for the current management cycle. Therefore, none of the analysed CPDs established specific indicators regarding "Resources leveraged through SSTC".

MI 6.4 Evidence confidence	High confidence
MI 6.5: [Co-ordination] Key business practices (planning, design, implementation, monitoring and reporting) co-ordinated with other relevant partners	**Score**
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.67**
Element 1: Active engagement in joint exercises/mechanisms (planning, co-ordination, monitoring, evaluation) to support external coherence, especially within the United Nations development system	4
Element 2: Participation in joint monitoring and reporting processes with key development and humanitarian partners	3
Element 3: Identification of shared information or efficiency gaps with development and humanitarian partners and developing strategies to address them	4

MI 6.5 Analysis	Evidence documents
Element 6.5.1: There is substantial documentation indicating that UNFPA is involved in collaborative programming initiatives, especially within the United Nations development system. The Strategic Plan 2022-25 envisions: "UNFPA will develop and participate in more joint initiatives with United Nations organisations", "UNFPA will support joint monitoring and evaluation approaches and efforts with partner United Nations organisations". Additionally, one of the key strategic shifts identified is "increasing the focus on joint accountability". Among the indicators used to monitor the plan, two are related to joint initiatives: OE3.3 (Proportion of UNFPA co-financing funded through pooled funds and thematic funding mechanisms) and OE3.6 (Number of countries in which UNFPA is contributing to joint initiatives). Additionally, the Review of management and administration in UNFPA (2023) indicates that: "At the country level, UNFPA works with United Nations system entities to develop and implement cooperation frameworks through coordinated and coherent United Nations country team action and is engaged in many joint programming efforts and in the joint implementation of programmes, including humanitarian response efforts". As identified through interviews and desktop review, at the global level, UNFPA continued to play an active role in inter-agency mechanisms, including the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG). As the co-chair of the UNSDG Business Innovation Group, UNFPA played a key role in driving the efficiency agenda within the United Nations system, particularly as the system rolled out the first common back office in Kenya. UNFPA is also leading the Gender-Based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS), which is an inter-agency initiative. UNFPA is also part of the UN gender Quality Network, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Population and Development. UNFPA is also an active participant in many joint programmes, including through its role as the Administrative Agent. For instance, UNFPA is part of the Joint Programme on Elimination of female genital mutilation. In addition, UNFPA has an active engagement with other actors, including a partnership with the Global Financing Facility for Women, Children and Adolescents (GFF) aimed at transforming the financing landscape for SRHR, as well as with vertical funds such as GAVI and the Global Fund. The formative evaluation of UNFPA's engagement in United Nations development system reform recommended that UNFPA provide stronger strategic direction for its workforce within the framework of its strategic plan for its engagement with the United Nations development system reform. In direct response, UNFPA included inter-agency collaboration among its organisational culture principles, conducted a series of internal discussions in 2023, including "Change Dialogues" on UNDS reform for all staff and a strategic global learning initiative, to develop a dedicated UNDS reform strategy 2024-25, titled "Leveraging the reformed UN development system for the achievement of the ICPD Programme of Action and the SDGs." UNFPA's level of engagement in co-ordination mechanisms is shared by most of the survey's respondents.	205, 46, 174, 46, 119, 120, 202, 80.

Figure 24: UNFPA is actively engaged, appropriate to its role, in inter-agency co-ordination mechanisms for planning, implementation, monitoring and context analysis

Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

Element 6.5.2: UNFPA participates in several joint monitoring and reporting processes with key partners.

According to the Review of management and administration in UNFPA, a joint field visit, to observe the results delivered by programmes, is undertaken each year with the Executive Boards of UNFPA, UNICEF, UN-Women, and WFP. In addition to the annual meeting of the Executive Boards, UNFPA also participates in joint monitoring with its implementing partners and other UN agencies. UNFPA systematically participates and sometimes leads UN inter-agency groups at HQ and field level that are concerned with monitoring and reporting on programme implementation and performance, for example UN INFO, HACT working groups, UN Partner Portal etc. UNFPA participates and often initiates joint audits of implementing partners with other UN agencies and leads several enhancements in the UN Partner Portal that are aimed at harmonisation of processes and sharing of critical risk and capacity information.

UNFPA actively participates in joint monitoring and reporting and aligns its reporting systems with UN-wide databases. UNFPA is involved in IASC, lead agency for Gender-based Violence Area of Responsibility (GBV AoR), co-chairs the Sexual and Reproductive Health Task Team (SRH-TT).

On the other hand, the review of the management of implementing partners in United Nations system organisations, conducted in 2021, indicated that the joint monitoring and auditing of implementing partners by United Nations agencies that finance the same implementing partner is still a gap in the management of agencies (including UNFPA).

Element 6.5.3: UNFPA is engaged in UN Reform initiatives aimed at sharing of information and addressing the efficiency gaps at all levels.

List of UN Sustainable Development Group structures and respective level of representation by UNFPA in each of them is summarised below:

- Business Innovations Group (BIG) - UNFPA participation is at DED(M) - level
- DCO Reference Group - Director DMS, Chief FASB
- Task Team BOS (chaired by UNFPA) - Chief FASB
- Task Team Common Premises - Chief Facilities Section (FASB)
- Task Team Efficiencies - Chief Services Section (FASB)
- Task Team CBO - Chief FASB
- Sustainable UN - Environmental Efficiency Specialist (FASB)

All those levels work on improving efficiencies within the UN system and as a result also within UNFPA. UNFPA is also participating in all Global Shared Services offered so far and is actually the anchor client for some of those. In addition, UNFPA was the first client of the innovative fleet Leasing initiative offered by UNFleet.
UNFPA shares information on operational gaps and areas that need to be strengthened in both a formal and informal way at the country level. UNFPA coordinates with sister NY-based funds to ensure harmonised approaches when developing strategic plans

MI 6.5 Evidence confidence	High confidence

| MI 6.6: [Information sharing] Key information (analysis, budgeting, management, results etc.) shared with strategic/implementation partners on an on-going basis	Score
Overall MI rating	Highly satisfactory
Overall MI score	3.67
Element 1: Clear corporate statement on transparency of information exists that is aligned to the International Aid Transparency Initiative	4
Element 2: Information is available on analysis, budgeting, management in line with the guidance provided by the International Aid Transparency Initiative	4

Element 3: Responses to partner queries on analysis, budgeting, management and results are of good quality and responded to in a timely fashion	3
MI 6.6 Analysis	**Evidence documents**
Element 6.6.1: The UNFPA Information Disclosure Policy establishes clear guidelines, principles, and procedures regarding the active transparency of the agency's data with the public. The policy asserts that information transparency is the rule, and confidentiality is the exception (only established in the case of certain types of sensitive data). Data made freely accessible to anyone interested includes information about UNFPA Country Programme Management (CPDs, Action Plans, Evaluations, and others), as well as information about UNFPA Operations (Executive Board minutes, financial information, staffing, procurement, policies, procedures, and others). Restricted access data includes, among other things, information that may endanger individuals or is private, data that "prejudice the security or proper conduct of any operation or activity of the organisation" internal inter-office or intra-office documents, and commercial information. In terms of procedures, the policy stipulates that freely accessible data should be made available on the websites (official UNFPA global and country offices). Anyone can request access to unpublished data through an email request, which will be processed centrally at the Headquarters. The maximum response time is 30 days. This policy adheres to the standards set by the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), both regarding data about the organisation and specific activities. Concerning the former, IATI defines public data for general access, including the total spent by the organisation, the total annual planned budget for the organisation in each of the next three years, planned budgets broken down by individual recipient countries or regions, country action plans, and annual reports. For specific activity data, some of the most relevant ones defined by IATI include incoming funds, disbursements, expenditures, and results data on the impact or outcome of the activity. **Element 6.6.2: Information is available in line with the guidance provided by IATI.** UNFPA has been a signatory to the International Aid Transparency Initiative since 2012 and complies with its standards. The level and format of public data disclosure by UNFPA align with the guidelines set forth by IATI. The data related to analysis, budgeting, and management, defined in the Information Disclosure Policy as freely accessible, are indeed available on the global UNFPA website. Several interviewees (management, staff, Board members) raised the engagement of UNFPA regarding accountability and transparency. Data concerning Programme Expenses, Results, and Donor Contributions at the global, regional, and country levels are accessible in annual reports, as well as in annual statistical and financial reviews and the Transparency Portal. Most management documents (Executive Board minutes, CPDs, Action Plans, Evaluations, and others) are largely accessible on the central UNFPA website, under the documents section. A significant portion of the data is also spatialised on interactive maps, facilitating visualisation and analysis, as well as provided in XML format for individual data processing. In addition to the annual report, information on annual results can also be found in the annual Orange Book, which presents key results by country. Two indicators (timeliness and comprehensiveness) to assess the progress in implementing the	172, 52, 185, 215.

SP are related to IATI publishing statistics core. UNFPA performed well regarding these two indicators in 2023. The target for timeliness was exceeded (88% in 2022 versus a target of 50%). It was also the case for the comprehensiveness indicator (95% versus a target of 75%).

Element 6.6.3: Overall, respondents from the survey agree that UNFPA shares key information with partners on an ongoing basis.
However, some respondents of different categories (financial partners, peer organisations, implementing partners) disagreed with the fact that UNFPA shares key information with partners on an ongoing basis.

Figure 25: UNFPA shares key information (analysis, budgeting, management, results) with partners on an ongoing basis.
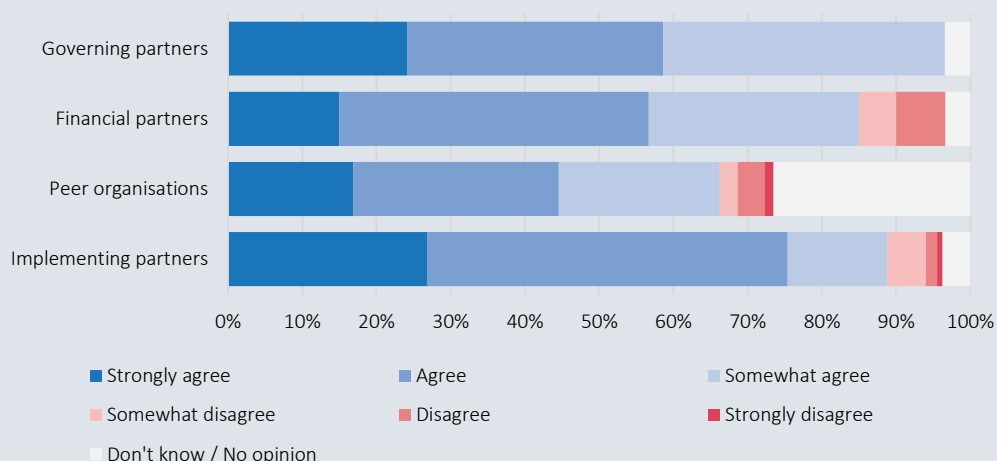
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

MI 6.6 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 6.7: [Accountability to beneficiaries] Clear standards and procedures for accountability to beneficiaries implemented	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.00**
Element 1: Explicit statement is available on standards and procedures for accountability to beneficiary populations - i.e., Accountability to Affected Populations	3
Element 2: Guidance for UNFPA personnel is available on the implementation of the procedures for accountability to beneficiaries	3
Element 3: Training has been conducted for UNFPA personnel on the implementation of procedures for accountability to beneficiaries	4
Element 4: Programming tools explicitly contain the requirement to implement procedures for accountability to beneficiaries	3
Element 5: Approval mechanisms explicitly include the requirement to assess the extent to which procedures for accountability to beneficiaries will be addressed in UNFPA programmes and interventions, including its humanitarian assistance	2
MI 6.7 Analysis	**Evidence documents**

Element 6.7.1: UNFPA has developed general principles and operational guidelines on AAP in 2021, but an explicit statement on standards and procedures for accountability to beneficiary populations by UNFPA has not yet been published.

93, 84, 51, 92, 160, 92, 2.

UNFPA's Evaluation of the UNFPA Capacity in Humanitarian Action (2012-19) found that "[AAP] mechanisms have not been systematically incorporated within UNFPA programming", and MOPAN's stated in 2017-18 that UNFPA "does not have an explicit statement […] on standards and procedures for AAP", apart from its manual for applying a Human Rights Based Approach to Programming.

Since then, an Accountability for Affected Populations (AAP) and Inclusion Framework is now "under development", according to the Policies and Procedures Manual for the Implementation of Social and Environmental Standards (SES) in Programming, released in June 2022, (footnote 23 on page 7). In absence of a larger framework, the Manual already establishes some general principles related to AAP in section 4.4. (Stakeholder engagement and accountability), determining, for example:

- "the head of the unit must engage with stakeholders and key affected populations throughout programming cycles, including during decision-making processes";

- defines that "key affected populations include adolescents and young people, older persons, Afro-descendant and indigenous people, persons with disabilities, and migrants and refugees".

This indicates that the stakeholder engagement and accountability function is mainly intended for country offices that implement programmes with stakeholders on the ground.

In terms of procedures, the Manual stipulates that throughout the programming cycle, decision-making phase, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, the heads of units must take into account the **Operational Guideline on Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)** developed by the Asia and the Pacific Regional Office in 2021, which interviewees referred to during our interview. This guide is based on IASC principles for AAP, and provides operational guidance, checklists, and outlines key tools and resources to ensure that communities are continuously involved in decisions that directly affect their lives.

(The Guideline also mentions efforts to protect from SEA as part of AAP. We have assessed those separately in this MOPAN assessment under MIs 4.7 and 4.8. and element 5.4.5)

According to the MOPAN survey, respondents are overall positive regarding the fact that UNFPA has clear standards and procedures for accountability to its partners. Most importantly, implementing partners seemed well aware.

Figure 26: UNFPA has clear standards and procedures for accountability to its partners.
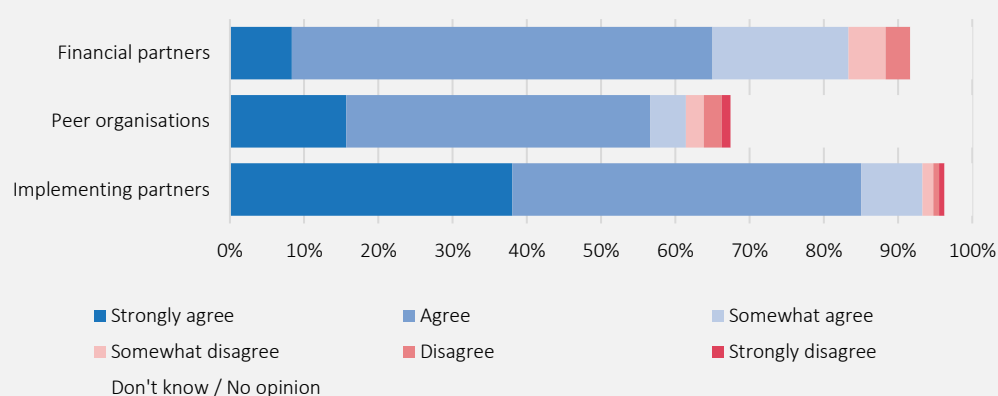
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

Element 6.7.2: Although a general guidance and framework established by UNFPA Headquarters is still under development, the Social and Environmental Standards in Programming Policy states that heads of units must take into consideration the Operational Guideline on AAP, developed in 2021 by the Asia and the Pacific Regional Office.

It is also the responsibility of heads of units to ensure that these commitments are understood and prioritised by all personnel and partners.The UNFPA SES Policy requires that the SES focal point ensure "completion of the SES checklist", which serves as a screening tool to ensure that social and environmental sustainability issues are considered and integrated throughout the programming cycle and all available mitigation measures are applied in UNFPA programming.

The 2021 Operational Guideline outlines step-by-step procedures and checklists to be used to ensure Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) within the project cycle. This includes an AAP preparedness and readiness checklist (for programme documents, community engagement, internal capacity, and others), an AAP project design and implementation checklist (including M&E-related actions and co-ordination), as well as AAP activities per thematic area (Sexual and reproductive health and rights and GBV).

Although established by the Asia and the Pacific Regional Office and containing practical cases of guideline utilisation for this specific region, the SES in Programming Policy indicates that they can be used "for UNFPA staff", not being restricted to a specific region.

Element 6.7.3: Training has been conducted for UNFPA personnel on the implementation of procedures for accountability to beneficiaries.

UNFPA measures to ensure accountability to affected populations are continuously evolving and growing. Some examples include:
- The SES framework requires UNFPA country offices to engage with stakeholders and affected populations through programming cycles, including during decision making processes and for obtaining and resolving grievances.
- PSEA training is available for UNFPA personnel and IPs.
- UNFPA/HRD supports country offices to ensure Accountability to the Affected population by providing direct technical support to countries. Based on the experiences from different countries, HRD is currently developing a Guide on Accountability to the Affected Population to standardise the practices across different country offices.
- In co-ordination with the in-country PSEA Network, UNFPA's network of CO PSEA Focal Points organise targeted and topic specific awareness raising campaigns for local communities on PSEA, rights of community members, obligations of UN staff and personnel, where and how to report, actions that can be taken after a report is made, and availability of support to survivors.
- Outreach and engagement with community members on PSEA and accountability is implemented through various modalities, including focus groups with community members (particularly women and girls), consultations with other community members, or through the distribution of language and context-specific information materials. It was confirmed through some interviews which highlighted UNFPA wanted to put a lot more energy into the accountability for affected population, including engaging more with them through workshops. Some of them put emphasis on AAP to strengthen PSEA efforts.

Element 6.7.4: Although the "AAP and Inclusion Framework" is still under development, there are some programming tools that independently establish certain requirements and obligations related to procedures for accountability to beneficiaries.

The Human Rights Based Approach to Programming, which covers accountability to rights holders, establishes that "Accountability is a fundamental human rights principle that is instrumental to the process of applying a HRBA". But procedures to ensure AAP itself are not established in this

document.

Other programming documents, such as the "Policy for Development and Approval of the Country Programme Document" and the Evaluation Policy (2024), align with the AAP principle in a rather general manner. For example: "In humanitarian situations, evaluations are conducted in full respect of the UNFPA commitment to accountability to affected populations" (Evaluation Policy, 2024).

Although not a programming tool in itself, the AAP Operational Guidelines developed in 2021 by the Asia and the Pacific Regional Office is the document that provides the most explicit list of procedures to implement accountability to beneficiaries in UNFPA programming, especially in its section 2.2 (AAP project design and implementation checklist).

While the AAP and Inclusion Framework is still under development, **there are SES checklists and action plans which integrate accountability to affected populations.** As previously mentioned UNFPA SES Policy requires that the SES focal point ensure "completion of the SES checklist". Country Offices can use the Social and Environmental Action Plan Template for developing appropriate risk response action plans specifically for social and environmental risks, which can later be integrated in the ERM system. This checklist includes an explicit focus on accountability to local communities and beneficiaries, including elements related to:

- **Accountability: Stakeholder Engagement and Accountability**

- **Grievance mechanism** Is there a local grievance mechanism in place or an entity-level Independent Accountability Mechanism for the programme in case of negative impact on people or the environment?

- **Participation, access to information and accountability - Does** your programme involve communities and ensure effective remedy for any adverse impacts?

Element 6.7.5: While the UNFPA Social and Environmental Standards Policies establishes procedures for the Development and Approval of the Country Programme Document Programme, it does not establish approval mechanisms related to accountability to beneficiaries.

The UNFPA Social and Environmental Standards Policy including the SES checklist establishes policy and procedures for stakeholder engagement and accountability to beneficiaries.

However, CPD guidance could offer more clarity on the requirements in practice. In its Section IV (CPD Development and Approval – Key Steps), the document for Development and Approval of the Country Programme Document only stipulates that CPDs must include a Programme and Risk Management section, which establishes accountability arrangements and "articulates clear statements of accountability".

MI 6.7 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 6.8: [Joint progress assessments] Participation with national and other partners in mutual assessments of progress in implementing agreed commitments	Score
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	4.00
Element 1: Participation in joint performance reviews of development and humanitarian interventions - e.g., joint assessments	4
Element 2: Participation in multi-stakeholder dialogue around joint sectoral or normative commitments	4
Element 3: Use of surveys or other methods to understand how partners are experiencing working together on implementing mutually agreed commitments	4
MI 6.8 Analysis	Evidence documents

Element 6.8.1: UNFPA is participating in joint performance reviews of development and humanitarian interventions.

The Strategic Plan 2022-25 emphasises UNFPA's involvement in joint performance reviews and evaluations. One of the key strategic shifts outlined in the plan is "increasing the focus on joint accountability, in line with United Nations reforms, principles, and practices". In its Section VII (Tracking progress), the agency states, "UNFPA will support joint monitoring and evaluation approaches and efforts with partner United Nations organisations with whom it shares collective outcome-level and impact-level indicators". As highlighted in Element 6.5.2., a joint field visit, to observe the results delivered by programmes is undertaken each year with the Executive Boards of UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women. Other examples of joint performance reviews include the annual meeting of the Executive Boards, UNFPA's joint monitoring with its implementing partners and other UN agencies, including IASC, GBV AoR, SRH-TT. Additional examples were raised during interviews such as joint monitoring and evaluations of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on the Evaluation of Female Genital Mutilation and of UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage.

The Independent Peer Review of UNFPA's Evaluation Function (2023) positively assessed UNFPA's participation in system-wide, inter-agency, and joint evaluations. According to the report, "indications are that the joint evaluations led by UNFPA are more likely to be used than those led by other agencies. System-wide and inter-agency evaluations (...) however, appear not to be promoted or used widely within UNFPA". In quantitative terms, between 2019 and 2021, more than 50 percent of its centralised evaluations were either system-wide or joint. According to the Formative evaluation of the UNFPA engagement in the reform of the United Nations development system (2022), UNFPA commitment to system-wide and joint evaluations is demonstrated by the fact that more than 50 % of its centralised evaluations are either system-wide or joint. UNFPA is also member of the inter-agency humanitarian evaluation group.

These findings were shared by survey respondents overall, despite some implementing partners disagreed with the fact that UNFPA jointly monitor progress on shared goals with partners.

Figure 27: UNFPA jointly monitors progress on shared goals with partners.

Legend:
■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree
■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree
□ Don't know / No opinion
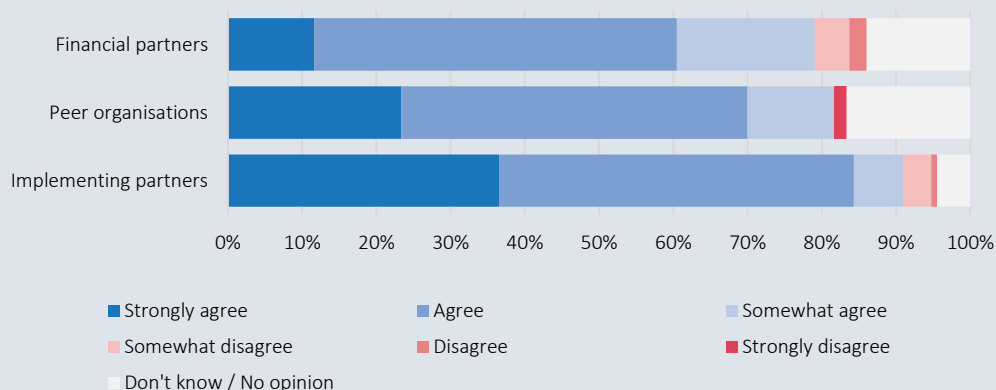
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

Element 6.8.2: UNFPA participates in multi-stakeholder dialogue around joint sectoral or normative commitments both at global and field levels.

At global level, it is part for instance of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee for Co-ordination of Humanitarian Assistance (IASC). UNFPA participates in various joint programmes, including joint programmes with UNICEF to end child marriage and female genital mutilation, as well as the Spotlight Initiative, which seeks to eliminate all forms of violence against women.

At field level, UNFPA has supported inter-agency co-ordination and coherence for the achievement

205, 54, 1, 80, 174,31, 89.

of development results. The design and implementation of United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs) has provided UNFPA with the opportunity to expand its partnerships with other United Nations entities to deliver effective results.

According to an information note presented to the Board in 2014, UNFPA remains among the United Nations entities participating in the largest number of UN joint programmes. In 2023, UNFPA received USD233 million from the UN-to-UN transfers, which is the largest source of non-core funding to UNFPA.

UNFPA and UNICEF continued to lead the largest global programme to accelerate the elimination of female genital mutilation in 17 countries. As of 2022, 14 of the 17 countries supported by the UNFPA and UNICEF Joint Programme have legal and policy frameworks banning female genital mutilation.

Several UNFPA's staff at field level provided examples of joint work locally. For instance, in Angola, there is a multi-sectoral co-ordination and dialogue mechanism. UNFPA is a coordinating agency in Bangladesh in humanitarian aspects and is part of multi-donors co-ordination and dialogue mechanisms in Angola and Malawi (chair of the Health Donors group) for instance. It is also part of a task force on digital with ITU and Unesco. It also leads a regional collaborative platform on data and statistics.

Element 6.8.3: UNFPA uses different methods to gather feedback from its partners.

At global level, UNFPA reaches out to donors through the EB Annual Session to consult when devising strategies. At country level, UNFPA involves partners at all stage of a CPD (design, mid-term review, final report). Cooperation with the Resident Coordinator is a mandatory output in the performance appraisals of all UNFPA country representatives. In accordance with the MAF, UNFPA consults Resident Coordinators at key stages of country-level entry-specific planning processes, while ensuring that UNFPA programming documents and strategies align with corporate priorities articulated in its Strategic Plan.

At the onset of every planning for the 4-year Strategic Plan, UNFPA solicits partners' inputs (including CSOs) through global and regional consultations and interviews. Consultations proved more effective for feedback than surveys, with high response rates. As part of its continuous monitoring, particularly the annual review meeting, UNFPA gathers feedback from its partners and integrates feedback into the programme design.

MI 6.8 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 6.9: [Knowledge] Use of knowledge base to support policy dialogue and advocacy	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**2.83**
Element 1: Statement in corporate documentation explicitly recognises the UNFPA's role in knowledge production	3
Element 2: UNFPA knowledge products are produced and utilised by partners to inform action	2
Element 3: Knowledge products are produced and utilised by partners to inform advocacy, where relevant, at country, regional, or global levels	3
Element 4: Knowledge products are timely/perceived as timely by partners	3
Element 5: Knowledge products are perceived as high quality by partners	3
Element 6: Knowledge products are produced in a format that supports their utility to partners	3
MI 6.9 Analysis	**Evidence documents**
Element 6.9.1: UNFPA's role in knowledge production is clearly recognised by corporate documentation but KM needs to be better exploited. Knowledge management is defined by the Strategic Plan 2022-25 as one of the five modes of	205, 180, 181,1, 80, 46, 131, 247, 248.

engagement used to fulfil its mandate.

Following a previous strategy in Knowledge Management defined in 2018, a new strategy was updated more recently in 2024. The strategy has four specific objectives:

- To enhance knowledge availability and accessibility.

- To boost knowledge generation and dissemination.

- To strengthen internal institutional arrangements; and

- To leverage technological advancements, such as artificial intelligence, to transform the world for women and girls.

Several interviewees put emphasis on knowledge management as a priority of UNFPA. Policy and procedural documents have been remapped to include technical documents, enhancing access to core knowledge. Efforts have been made to integrate KM into communication strategies. Future plans involve embedding KM tools within existing platforms like MyUNFPA to improve accessibility. Some interviewees raised opportunities to improve KM through AI and at field level considering the approach is more decentralised. Now, regional offices have dedicated positions for KM.

In addition, the midterm review stated that knowledge management in UNFPA needs to be improved to better support the application of the key shifts. The use of analytics, and documenting and sharing evidence internally and externally must be improved. In addition, the knowledge management platform should be upgraded to keep abreast of rapidly changing information technology. This review recommended to optimise and systematise innovation and knowledge management to improve creating, capturing, documenting and sharing innovative and successful solutions by: (i) building staff capacity in knowledge generation and dissemination, as per UNFPA knowledge management strategy 2024-30; (ii) leveraging the power of innovation and technology through innovations by women, for women and with women, to equalise opportunities for women and girls and ensure rights and choices for all; (iii) harnessing innovation to meet tomorrow's challenges and boost its impact, especially in addressing the populations furthest left behind, and leverage opportunities, social capital, funding and technology by strengthening the corporate innovation architecture and capabilities and scaling up innovations that have proven to be effective and impactful; forming new partnerships and connecting with relevant innovation ecosystems; expanding communities and the culture for innovation; and strengthening and leveraging financing for innovation, as articulated in the UNFPA innovation strategy being developed; and (iv) leveraging information technology advancements, including artificial intelligence, machine learning and big data. Ongoing efforts on KM are undertaken to use Intelligence Artificial notably in Evaluation.

The formative evaluation of UNFPA's engagement in the reform of the United Nations development system also noticed that the previous Knowledge Management Strategy (2018-21), although it notes the broader UNDS reform, is less explicitly aligned with this reform (the UN reform is mentioned very briefly). For instance, it makes no reference to the regional knowledge management hubs.

Element 6.9.2: The recent KM strategy defines UNFPA's primary role as a knowledge broker that can bridge knowledge gaps by linking demand and supply of expertise, experience, and technology. This role does not exploit its full potential in practice.

The Knowledge Management Strategy (2018) advances the use of KM products primarily in its goal 3 (Accelerate knowledge acquisition and use by UNFPA staff and key stakeholders). The recent KM strategy (2024) included the objective to enhance knowledge availability and accessibility of knowledge products, as well as to ensure a people-centered approach with a strong emphasis in customising knowledge products and services to meet individual needs. A strategy to enhance evaluation use through knowledge management was also defined (2022-25).

The partner survey suggest that knowledge products are useful to partners. Around 80% of partners at least somewhat agreeing to some extent that knowledge products are useful for their work. A

few respondents disagreed, especially implementing partners (4 respondents).

However, the use of UNFPA knowledge products is not evidenced through the review of the national development plans of the sampled countries. Formative evaluation of UNFPA's approach to South-South and triangular cooperation conducted in 2020 identified challenges in the area of knowledge harnessing, documentation, and sharing, such as limited corporate outlets to access existing knowledge and limited utilisation of the available knowledge. Some of the existing platforms include, for example, the South-South Galaxy, where UNFPA is the largest contributor of good practices on this platform. At regional level, there is a wide perception within UNFPA staff that regional offices could be more proactive in brokering SSC exchanges intra-regionally. The regional office is perceived by respondents as uniquely placed to perform a knowledge-broker role, but currently at regional level, processes to facilitate and broker SSC initiatives are mainly through sharing information on good practices in an ad hoc and case-by-case manner. More proactive and systematic broker role would require a closer and more sustained dialogue on SSC between regional and country offices, including not only SSC focal points but also thematic advisors.

More broadly, there is no dedicated UNFPA website page dedicated to knowledge and knowledge products.

Figure 28: UNFPA knowledge products are useful for my work.
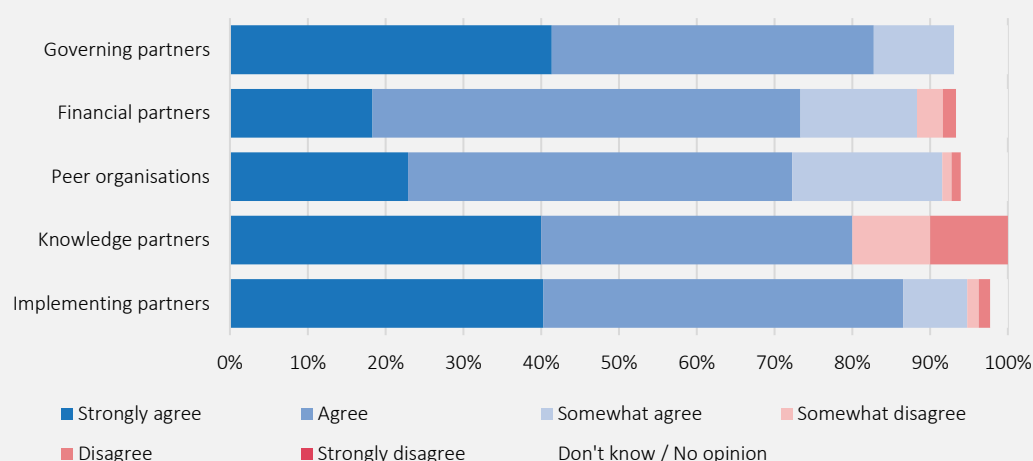
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

Element 6.9.3: Partners have overall feedback regarding their use of UNFPA's knowledge products, but evidence is lacking in this area.

The results of survey underlined overall positive perceptions from partners regarding their use of knowledge products to inform global policy dialogue.

However, a few respondents disagreed with the above statement, among which implementing and financial partners. At that time, UNFPA had not conducted an evaluation of its knowledge management strategy to better explore this area.

Figure 29: UNFPA provides high-quality inputs to the global policy dialogue.
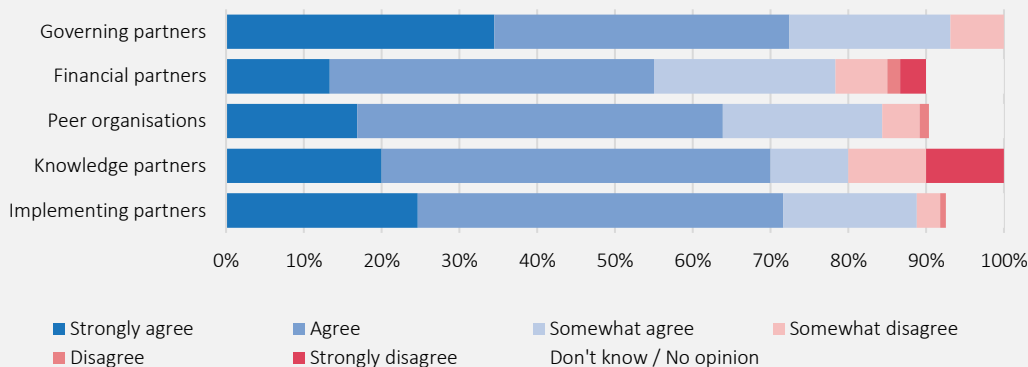
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

Element 6.9.4: There is little evidence to assess if knowledge products are perceived as timely by partners. However, the results of the MOPAN survey highlighted overall positive perceptions from partners; only few respondents (mostly implementing partners) disagreed. At the time of the assessment, UNFPA had not conducted any evaluation of its knowledge management strategy to understand how its knowledge products are perceived.

Figure 30: UNFPA's knowledge products are timely
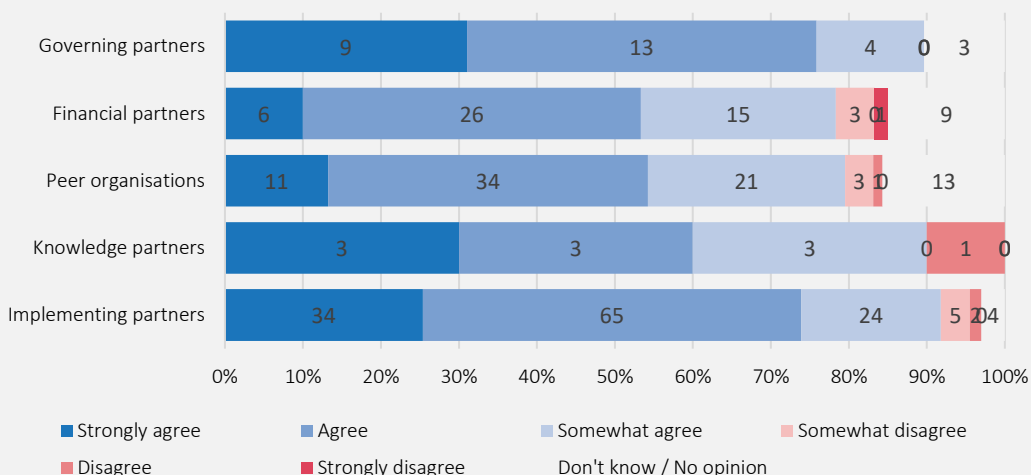
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

Element 6.9.5: Overall, partners have a positive perception of the quality of UNPFA's knowledge products.

There are however fewer respondents which disagree, among which implementing and financial partners. The mid-term review also underlined challenges regarding knowledge management within UNFPA, such as the availability and use of high-quality population data.

Interviewees highlighted the heterogeneity in UNFPA's regions in generating quality data due to contextual factors and multiple development issues (West and Central Africa), meanwhile some regions are more advanced in data generation and absorption (Asia and the Pacific, Eastern and Southern Africa). It should be noted that, at HQ level, a specific knowledge management workstream is integrated to the Quality Programming Branch of the Programme Division.

Element 6.9.6: The knowledge products produced by UNFPA are relatively easy to use, as

reported by the survey respondents, but can be streamlined.

Among the different categories of partners surveyed, governing partners are the most satisfied, with more than 90% of them agreeing to some extent that the knowledge products are easy to use. However, the information received by Board members seems too dense ("not digestible") and can be streamlined.

Figure 31: UNFPA knowledge products are provided in a format that makes them easy to use.
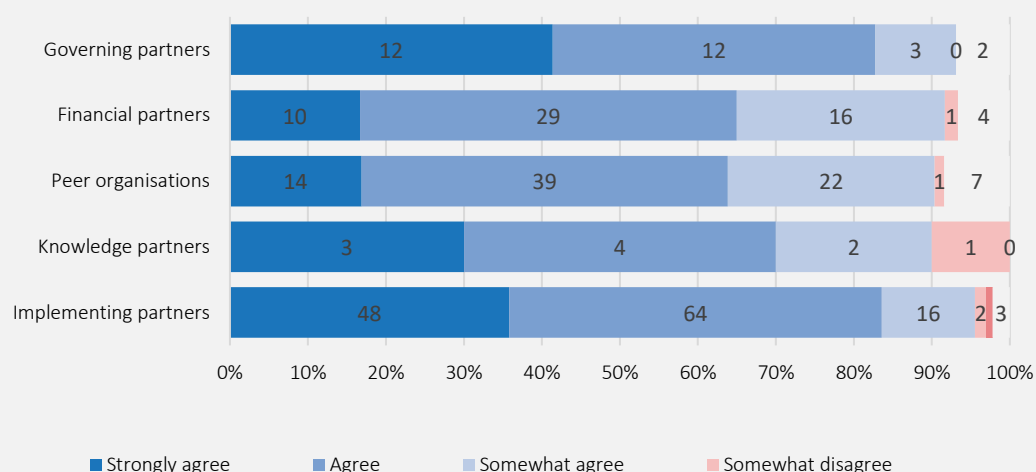
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

MI 6.9 Evidence confidence Lack of evidence (e.g.: evaluation of knowledge management strategy) which allows to better explore the area of KM.	**Medium confidence**

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

KPI 7: Strong and transparent results focus explicitly geared towards function	KPI score
Satisfactory	**3.28**

UNFPA has strengthened its results culture. UNFPA is aware that the quality of programmes determines its capacity to achieve development results and that results should be the main yardstick to measure its performance. Results based management (RBM) has been integrated into their operating model beginning with the first Strategic Plan 2018-21 and continued through to the Strategic Plan 2022-25. The new strategic-level results framework structured around the TRs at the outcome level with outputs considered to a have a multidimensional "many-to-many" relationship with the outcomes, is an improvement over the 2018-21 results framework in terms of clarity of intent and facilitating bottom-up RBM. UNFPA also developed principles and standards in its 3+5 Framework for Self-Assessment. The mid-term of the review found during the first two years of the SP's implementation, UNFPA aligned its systems, policies, practices and culture towards the achievement of the 3TRs. Throughout interviews, it was also clear that the Fund has undergone a "shift towards an RBM approach to strategic planning". This was made evident by the demonstrated the use of RBM systems to support decision making. A clear incentive has also been put in place at a country level, with RBM certification ("RBM Seal") available for country offices, however this largely helps to address gaps with the development of a roadmap, rather than recognise high performance.

Room for improvement remains though, such as the ability to demonstrate results attributed to UNFPA, more discernible links in the causal pathway between the outputs and the achievement of UNFPA's outcome-level targets and the contribution to

higher-level objectives, all these factors are derived from similar decisions taken by several UN Organisations. To overcome these challenges, it will require a broader effort of measurement within the UN system or more independent evaluations. Other margins for progress exist such as better attention to deviations between planned and actual results, the availability of data to measure the progress (e.g.: at outcome level and on specific themes such as GBV, climate, reduction of harmful practices), the finalisation of a new RBM handbook, as well as the need to have clearly dedicated resources to RBM within the Fund and a greater use of data and analytics.

MI 7.1: Leadership ensures application of an organisation-wide RBM approach	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.50**
Element 1: Corporate commitment to a result culture is made clear in strategic planning documents	4
Element 2: Clear requirements/incentives are in place for the use of an RBM approach in planning and programming	3
Element 3: Guidance for setting results targets and developing indicators is clear and accessible to UNFPA personnel	3
Element 4: Tools and methods for measuring and managing results are available	4
Element 5: Adequate resources are allocated to the RBM system	3
Element 6: All relevant personnel are trained in RBM approaches and methods	4

MI 7.1 Analysis	Evidence documents
Element 7.1.1: UNFPA expresses a clear corporate commitment to a result culture in its Strategic Planning documents with strategic-level outcomes structured around the transformative results.	
Interviews showed that UNFPA staff are committed to a results culture and keenly aware that the quality of operations determines the Organisation's capacity to achieve development results, and that those should be the main yardstick to measure performance. The new strategic-level results framework, structured around the TRs at the outcome level, with outputs considered to have a multidimensional "many-to-many" relationship with the outcomes, is an improvement over the 2018-21 results framework in terms of clarity of intent and facilitating bottom-up results-based management. UNFPA has a long history of developing an RBM-based approach, which has already been acknowledged in the two previous MOPAN assessments (2014 and 2017-18) and confirmed by the mid-term review of the SP. The latter of these reviews found that, during the first two years of the implementation of the strategic plan, UNFPA has aligned its systems, policies, practices and culture towards the achievement of the three transformative results.	
The Developmental evaluation of results-based management at UNFPA (2019) underlines this long history: UNFPA's 2000 RBM Policy Statement, introduction in 2004 of the results-oriented country office annual reports and of the i-Track system (online reporting), introduction of UNFPA's first RBM Policy in 2011, and ad-hoc action plans in 2013, leading to the setting up of information systems for programming (GPS, 2014), managing risks (ERM, 2015), and visualisation (dashboard, 2017), as well as the first Integrated Resource and Results Framework (IRFF), theories of change and improved country-level monitoring and evaluation.	208, 128, 117, 36, 144, 81, 64.
In line with this process, the Strategic Plan 2018-21 demonstrated the integration of a results culture in its Strategic Planning, recognising the importance of its model and reaffirming its intention to foster its application and develop its mainstreaming at operational level (part III-point 12, part V Organisational effectiveness and efficiency-points 60, 63, 65, 70, part VIII Monitoring and evaluating the SP-point 90).	
Annex 5 of the SP 2018-21 specifies the definitions and guiding principles related to programme accountability, one of the key principles of RBM: "The UNFPA programme accountability framework, presented in this document, underscores the commitment of the Fund to achieving results, managing for results and a shared culture of accountability." The expectations are set for country level, defining the country programme documents (CPD) as the accountability reference for the outcome.	

The Strategic Plan 2022-25 confirmed this approach, most notably in 'Part V Organisational effectiveness and efficiency (points 94, 118, 122 d).

Interviews highlighted a "shift towards an RBM approach to strategic planning" within the Fund, demonstrating progress towards a focus on results. Reporting systems and key resources are also aligned to support an RBM approach to planning, ensuring performance results underpin the planning process. Interviewees also attested to the presence of the results-focus in the implementation of the strategic plan, with a dashboard of key performance indicators used to monitor the implementation based on data from 150 countries. As a result of the RBM approach, staff consider the strategic plan to be more concrete, demonstrating "substantive" results achieved by UNFPA.

Element 7.1.2: Clear requirements and incentives are in place for the use of an RBM approach in planning and programming.

The Developmental evaluation of results-based management at UNFPA (2019) stressed the intentionality of the RBM approach as a result of donor, Executive Board and external evaluations demands, which were tackled and addressed.

Evidence-generating functions are meant to seek strong linkages with other functions in a 'whole-of-organisation' approach. UNFPA Evaluation Policy 2024 states that "Collaboration with the results-based management function is central to development effectiveness and accountability. Evaluation-generated insights support programme leaders in establishing theories of change, assessing programme evaluability, validating results and assessing programme efficiency".

It reiterates the Policy and Strategy Division's mandate 'to strengthen results-based management and improve organisational effectiveness and efficiency, by promoting and supporting the evaluability of programmes; providing the necessary capacity building on results-based management; and facilitating the use and follow-up of evaluations.'

Produced in 2019, the Results-based management principles and standards is a Framework that 'UNFPA offices are requested to use'.

In terms of incentives, an RBM Seal has also been introduced to recognise efforts towards a results culture. This incentive-based approach promotes the use of RBM principles and standards. The initiative will extend to the IPs at a later stage, as UNFPA is still in the inward-looking phase of the initiative.

Regarding clear requirements, interviews demonstrated the use of RBM systems to support decision making, however the specific requirement to use these tools, including monitoring, follow up and enforcement, was not clearly detailed. A dashboard of key performance indicators is used to monitor the implementation across country programmes based on data from 150 countries. This data is then used to create scorecard detailing performance trends and challenges based on thematic, aggregated analysis. These are in turn used to support decision-making on bottlenecks and performance by country. Moreover, the interviewees noted the effort the branch has made to fine-tuned systems to be results-oriented, including the programme costing and the ERP system.

Element 7.1.3: Guidance for setting results targets and developing indicators is clear and accessible to UNFPA personnel.

Annex 5 of the SP 2018-21 specifies the framework for monitoring and reporting results at global, regional and country level:
At global and regional levels: results include outcome indicators (including context) and progress towards these outcomes.
At country level, results are based on outcomes and outputs defined in the CPD performance

summary.
The Annex 1 of the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25 "Integrated results and resources framework" defines targets related to RBM in OEE 1 "Improved programming for results":

- OE1.1 "Proportion of new country programmes that meet organisational quality standards, including for [..] (b) Results-Based management and evidence-based programming quality".
- OE1.13 "Number of country offices certified in results-based management".

However, targets are not defined in the SP 2022-25.

Produced in 2019, the results-based management principles and standards includes results questions for managers as well as the 3+5 framework. This framework consists of three core RBM principles and 5 supporting principles to help UNFPA and its partners assess their status in terms of results-based management and identify areas for improvement. A four-point scale enables to assess whether the RBM standards have been met.

The Development evaluation of results-based management at UNFPA (2019) highlighted the need to enhance RBM system requirements, procedures and tools. The Management response to this evaluation announced the following actions to be taken:

- By 31/12/2022: integration and incorporation of the functionalities of the existing UNFPA RMB systems (myResults and Global Programming System) into the new enterprise resource planning (ERP) system, as well as the incorporation into the ERP system of features that support learning and adaptive management.
- By 30 December 2023: rolling out of the RBM Seal Initiative to cover all country offices by December 2023, with the inclusion of a module on adaptive management continuous participation in the United Nations Strategic Planning Network (UNSPN) to network and harmonise approaches, share experiences, and explore innovative approaches for strengthening RBM.

The "RBM Seal" is a performance-based RBM certification of UNFPA country offices, which aims at helping UNFPA country offices to improve their RBM, by seeing operational and programming issues through the RBM lens and then defining a roadmap for the office to improve its performance.

In March 2024, UNFPA published its Adaptive evaluation Guidance, which is claimed to be part of the capacity development for RBM. This guidance is meant to help UNFPA personnel adapting a systematic and structured approach to adaptation throughout the programme cycle, including evaluation.

Throughout interviews it was understood that the RBM approach is clearly reflected in the systems and resources implemented across the Fund. As previously mentioned, interviewees did attest to the existence of a dashboard of key performance indicators to monitor the implementation across country programmes and develop scorecards based on data from 150 countries. Despite mention of the development of RBM principles, specific guidelines on the setting of results targets and developing indicators was not evident during the interviews. It was noted that a new RBM handbook is being developed to provide a guide on implementation of the RBM approach, introducing concepts like managing for high-level results and adaptive management. Still, this does not specifically address the development of targets and indicators.

Element 7.1.4: Tools and methods for measuring and managing results are available.
Reference documents are available to track performance at all levels (IRRF, global, regional and country programmes).

- According to the Results Based Management Policy, Staff responsible for specific programme areas report to the management of the Country Office on the performance of the interventions based on the Annual Work Plans (AWPs), Office Management Plans (OMPs) and Standard

Progress Reports by implementing partners.
- Country offices report to regional offices and the headquarters/Executive Director on the performance of the country programme through the Country Office Annual Report (COAR).
- Regional offices report on the performance of regional programmes to headquarters/Executive Director through the Regional office Annual Report (ROAR).
- Headquarters divisions report on the performance of global and other programmes and services to the Executive Director through the division's Annual Report (HQAR).
- The Executive Director reports on UNFPA overall performance to the Executive Board through the Annual Report to the Executive Board.

As stated in the Management Response to the Developmental evaluation of results-based management at UNFPA (2019), the new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system should integrate functionalities of the existing UNFPA RBM systems (myResults and Global Programming System) and incorporate features that support learning and adaptive management. The rolling out of the RBM Seal initiative should also help all UNFPA country offices to improve their RBM, by seeing operational and programming issues through the RBM lens and then defining a roadmap for the office to improve its performance. Additionally, the tool Impact 40, a publicly available tool on UNFPA website, is a tool to measure impact and cost to inform planning and reporting.

Also, throughout interviews staff attested to the availability of systems and tools in place for measuring and managing results. As previously mentioned, interviewees also noted improvements to RBM systems to support results-orientated approach, with a dashboard of key performance indicators used to monitor the implementation. Specifically, the branch has fine-tuned systems to align with an RBM approach to both strategic planning and performance monitoring and reporting, program costing and ERP. Interviewees also attested to training programmes which are regularly conducted to "enhance staff capacity in adaptive management and higher-level results". According to the recent mid-term review of the SP, by 2023, UNFPA had trained at least one staff member from each UNFPA country office on results-based management.

Element 7.1.5: Adequate resources are allocated to the RBM system.

The previous MOPAN Assessment of UNFPA stated that the organisation had made considerable investment (financial and human investments) into the RBM system, including setting up systems such as GPS and rolling out training to staff. However, the Developmental evaluation of results-based management at UNFPA (2019) cautioned that these efforts and resources were stretched. Interviewees noted the significant shift towards an RBM approach across systems, although they did not refer to any clearly dedicated resources for RBM. They did, however, confirm that training programmes are run regularly on the topic of adaptive management and high-level results in line with an RBM approach.

The Developmental evaluation of results-based management at UNFPA (2019) suggests to 'review existing human resources frameworks in light of the findings brought forward by the evaluation', regarding staff job descriptions, the competency framework, the human resources strategy, staff learning and career development and current managerial certification programmes. The Management Response to this evaluation plans to "Mainstream RBM in UNFPA human resources frameworks such as job descriptions, competency framework, human resources strategy, staff learning and career development and current managerial certification programs». Additionally, the rolling out of the RBM Seal Initiative to all country offices should allow to establish a network of "RBM champions".

Element 7.1.6: All relevant personnel are trained in RBM approaches and methods.

The Strategic Plan 2018-21 plans for the training of staff in RBM approaches and methods: "Point 63: Results-based management will be a core skill of all programme and operations staff"; point 70. "UNFPA will adequately staff key management posts and will build staff capacity in results-based programme management".

The UNFPA results-based management principles and standards – The 3+5 Framework for Self-Assessment published in 2019 gives clear guidance on how to adopt a RBM lens to all phases of programming.

Between 2021 and 2024 UNFPA organised the following RBM training initiatives developed by subject matter experts (list not exhaustive): 2021 RBM Champions for Quality Country Programmes, 2022 RBM Training Workshops in ESA and WCA regions, 2023 RBM Management eLearning Modules launched in September 2024.

Furthermore, interviewees highlighted the regular training programs run on adaptive management and higher-level results. These programmes aim to enhance staff capacity and were mentioned as a demonstrable indication of the Fund's increasing integration of an RBM approach. Interviewees also noted the efforts aimed at "shifting the mindset of country offices towards higher-level thinking and outcomes". As noted above, relevant interviewees confirmed that they had undergone such training.

MI 7.1 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 7.2: Corporate strategies, including country strategies, based on a sound RBM focus and logic	Score
Overall MI rating	Satisfactory
Overall MI score	3.50
Element 1: Corporate strategies and UNFPA programmes include results frameworks	4
Element 2: Clear linkages exist between the different layers of the results frameworks, from project to country and corporate level	4
Element 3: Annual reports on performance against expected results (outputs and outcomes) are discussed with the governing bodies Executive Board	4
Element 4: Corporate strategies and UNFPA programmes, including their results frameworks, are updated regularly	4
Element 5: The annual corporate reports show progress over time and note areas of strong performance as well as deviations between planned and actual results (outputs and outcomes)	3
Element 6: UNFPA corporate reports clearly demonstrate the contributions of UNFPA results (outputs and outcomes) to achieving the transformative results by 2030	2
MI 7.2 Analysis	Evidence documents

Element 7.2.1: Corporate strategies and UNFPA programmes include results frameworks.

Both Strategic Programmes 2018-21 and 2022-25 feature theories of change geared towards results as well as integrated resources and results frameworks (IRRF). The 2022-25 IRRF measures for the first time the integration principle of the three transformative results and their acceleration. The IRRF includes three levels of results: concrete operational outputs, institutional and behavioural changes constituting outputs, and their contribution to the strategic goals.

All regional, country and thematic programmes include results frameworks which ensure alignment to UNFPA's global strategy and IRRF at output and outcome levels.

Throughout interviews the monitoring of progress over time, including outcomes, outputs, and challenges, was clearly indicated as a core component of the RBM approach applied across the Fund.

The results and resources frameworks are the main basis for tracking the performance of the programmes. The 2022-25 IRRF guarantees the establishment of reference baselines for indicator measurement. It includes detailed matrixes to track and report the results at all levels: goal (6 IMs), outcomes (21 OCs), outputs (6 OPs with sub-indicators), programmatic risks (5 PR) and Organisational effectiveness and efficiency (3 OEE with sub-indicators).

Interviews highlighted the RBM approach used throughout both corporate and country programmes, which in turn ensures alignment with the strategic plan results framework. However, more specific strategies are based on individualised frameworks. This is the case for instance as part of the Gender

5, 6, 16 79, 70, 71, 24, 208-209, 207, 129

Equality Strategy who defined a specific framework (Agency, Choice, and Access-ACA), including pathways, enablers and linkages.

Element 7.2.2: Clear linkages exist between the different layers of the results frameworks, from project to country and corporate level.

SP 2022-25 Annex 4.1 Global and regional programmes: The 2022-25 SP is translated into global and regional programmes with specific results and resources frameworks, aligned with the integrated results and results framework of the Strategic Plan. The outputs from regional programmes contributing to the achievement of the three transformative results are aligned with the SP for the global programme.

As previously mentioned, the interviews attested to the use of a RBM approach throughout both corporate and country programmes. This also enables alignment with the strategic plan results framework. Also as mentioned, the use of monitoring systems based on an RBM approach for country programmes and strategic planning aids in this harmonisation and integration.

Element 7.2.3: Annual Reports on performance against expected results (outputs and outcomes) are discussed with the Executive Board.

The Annual reports of the Executive Director on the implementation of the UNFPA Strategic Plan are made publicly available on the Executive Board's website. These reports include Output scorecard and indicator updates and a results and resources framework of the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25. Furthermore, the recent "Integrated midterm review and progress report on the implementation of the UNFPA strategic plan, 2022-25" demonstrates the key results across UNFPA programme countries (see below).

Figure 32: Key results achieved during 2022-23 in UNFPA programme countries

Figure 1
Key results achieved during 2022-2023 in UNFPA programme countries

31.2 million
Unintended pregnancies averted*

64,730
Maternal deaths averted*

145 million
Couple years of protection for contraceptives procured by UNFPA*

9.5 million
Unsafe abortions averted*

2.4 million
Safe deliveries assisted in humanitarian-affected countries

273,500
Girls saved from female genital mutilation

200,000
Midwives empowered through competency-based training in 2023

18,600
Women and girls with obstetric fistula received treatment

117,000
New HIV infections averted*

11.5 million
New sexually transmitted infections averted*

347,000
Women and young people with disabilities benefited from services related to sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence and harmful practices

68.7%
of the population that was scheduled to be counted in the 2020 census round was counted

*Estimated results modeled on UNFPA procurement of family planning commodities

Source: Integrated midterm review and progress report on the implementation of the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2022-25

The midterm review focused on outcomes and progress, as well as outputs and changes made to programmes.

Element 7.2.4: Corporate strategies and UNFPA programmes, including their results

frameworks, are updated regularly.

Updates to UNFPA programmes were noted within interviews, with staff highlighting that changes are made based on outputs, progress, and challenges to ensure programmes are fit for purpose. This can be demonstrated in the recent Midterm Review of the Strategic Plan 2022-25, where adjustments were clearly noted (see below).

Figure 33: Mid-term review adjustments

2. Mid term review adjustments

UNFPA has made a few minor adjustments to the integrated results and resources framework (IRRF) of the strategic plan as part of the midterm review of the strategic plan, 2022-2025. In general, UNFPA found that the results and resources framework remained relevant for measuring the overall acceleration towards achieving the three transformative results and ICPD Programme of Action. These minor adjustments are:

(a) Introducing one additional indicator to measure the financing of sexual and reproductive health programmes and the ICPD Programme of Action. This indicator will also track the operationalization of the new financing of the ICPD agenda strategy of UNFPA, which is going to be launched by June 2024.

> *"OE1.26: Proportion of UNFPA offices that have implemented initiatives to enhance financial accessibility to sexual and reproductive health, as well as the implementation fund of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action."*

(b) Replacing or rephasing the indicators to improve the measurement (for OC09 and OE 2.8) and capture the new country programming revamping priorities (OE 1.1a)

> *OC09: Proportion of births occurring in health facilities* rephrased to *proportion of countries where at least 60% of births occurring in health facilities.*
>
> *OE 1.1a: Proportion of new country programmes that meet organizational quality standards, including for technical functions and results-based management* replaced with *Proportion of new country programmes that meet organizational quality standards for the criteria of strategic direction.*
>
> *OE 2.8: Proportion of non-core contribution agreements expiring in a given year that have cumulative disbursements of at least 95 per cent of the original agreement amount by the end of the original agreement period* replaced with *Implementation rate for other resources.*

(c) Removing one indicator from the humanitarian response output, as there is no data available to report for the remaining years:

> *"Proportion of collective outcomes between humanitarian, development and peace actors at the national level that address (a) sexual and reproductive health; (b) reproductive rights; (c) gender equality (d) the needs of adolescents and youth; and (e) population dynamics."*

(d) Adjusting targets for around 47 indicators based on an analysis of the historical trends from 2021 and 2022. These adjustments reflect both increases and decreases in the ambition of the targets. These adjustments are reflected as footnotes under the respective indicator.

There were no changes introduced to the goal, outcome and output statements of the integrated results and resources framework.

Source: Mid-term Review of UNFPA strategic plan, 2022-25, Annex 1: Output scorecard and indicator updates, 2023

The SP 2022-25 Annex 4.1 Global and regional programmes describes management and governance mechanisms, which appear to use a RBM approach, adjusting global and regional programmes based on live monitoring: "The global and regional programmes are designed to be a dynamic mechanism, with regular reviews and systematic reporting on progress to the Executive Committee, to more

effectively monitor progress and decide on adjustments, if needed". Global and regional programmes include otherwise workplans/ activities change, following a "thorough review".

Element 7.2.5: The annual corporate reports show progress over time and note areas of strong performance but could focus more on explaining deviations.
The continued delivery of results and trends in progress can be seen within the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2022-25, Annex 1: Integrated results and resources framework (below).

Figure 34: Output scorecard.

	Output	Performance against 2023 targets	Total expenses (in millions of dollars)	
			Regular	Other
1	Policy and Accountability	117%	61.1	37.7
2	Quality of care and services	154%	86.8	476.0
3	Gender and social norms	96%	41.4	175.8
4	Population change and data	89%	40.6	30.9
5	Humanitarian action	93%	24.7	201.2
6	Adolescents and youth	120%	30.2	74.9

Green: Fully achieved   Orange: Partially achieved

Source: UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2022-25, Annex I: Integrated results and resources framework

Furthermore, progress is demonstrated over time, including noting areas of strong improvement, within the annual reports and their related documentation from 2019 to 2022. Challenges, deviations and their subsequent lessons learned are also documented. Specifically, the Annual Reports for both 2020 and 2021 show demonstrated improvements and cumulative progress towards targets set by the first Strategic Plan (2020 Annual Report) and the first reporting period for the second Strategic Plan (2021 Annual Report). Both reports also note that progress has been made despite the significant disruption brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the 2020 Annual Report, only five out of 14 targets set by the strategic plan saw a decrease in progress from 2019 (see below).

Figure 35: Strategic plan output scorecard, 2019 and 2020

	Development output	2019 target achievement	2020 target achievement	Trend
1	Sexual and reproductive health policies for those furthest behind	65%	70%	Positive
2	Provision of integrated sexual and reproductive health services	89%	73%	Negative
3	Health workforce capacity	61%	85%	Positive
4	Delivery of sexual and reproductive health commodities	102%	52%	Negative
5	Accountability for sexual and reproductive health	85%	96%	Positive
6	Adolescent and youth skills and capabilities	66%	85%	Positive
7	Adolescent and youth policies	108%	52%	Negative
8	Youth leadership and participation	96%	103%	Positive
9	Gender equality laws and policies	60%	58%	Negative
10	Gender and sociocultural norms	76%	79%	Positive
11	Preventing and addressing gender-based violence	82%	133%	Positive
12	Elimination of harmful practices	80%	94%	Positive
13	Population data systems	87%	85%	Negative
14	Demographic intelligence	107%	113%	Positive

Source: Implementation of the UNFPA strategic plan, 2018-2021

A dedicated section also explained progress in achieving the outcomes of the UNFPA Strategic plan 2018-21. In the 2021 Annual Report, continued progress can be seen in key areas when compared to 2020, such as cases of female genital mutilation avoided and the aversion of unsafe abortions, new HIV infections, unintended pregnancies, and maternal deaths. Comparatively, less progress was made against fistula treatment and percentage inclusion within census data declined (see below).

Figure 36: Key results achieved in 2018-20
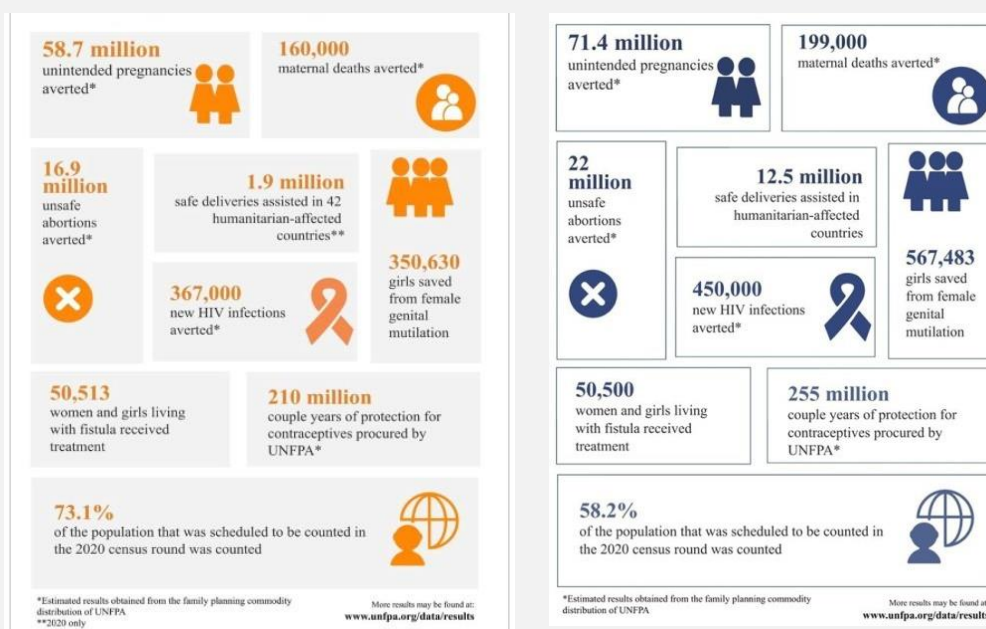
Source: 2021 Annual Report

However, the attention drawn to deviations could be strengthened with more explicit follow-up, explanations of these deviations and mitigations measures.

Element 7.2.6: UNFPA corporate reports do not clearly demonstrate the contributions of UNFPA to results (outputs and outcomes) to achieving the transformative results by 2030. According to UNFPA, this is in line with an agreement across UN agencies and due to ethical reasons and to avoid any bias. It would however require more evaluations at UNFPA or more wide UN-system levels to report on contributions to 3TRs and SDGs.

UNFPA defines six interconnected outputs and six accelerators as the pathways to acceleration. Regarding the ability to achieve the transformative results by 2030, recent Annual Reports and the Mid-Term Review noted that despite accelerated progress against key target areas between 2010 and 2020, the current rate of progress is not sufficient to achieve the targets by 2030.

Room for improvement remains, including the ability to demonstrate results attributed to UNFPA and more discernible links in the causal pathway between outputs and the achievement of UNFPA's outcome-level targets. UNFPA could consider additional outcomes. These could be immediate between the outputs and the 3TRs, while maintaining alignment with SDGs 3 and 5 at the impact level.

An even greater increase in progress is needed if the results are to be achieved. Annex 1 of the Midterm Review 2023 clearly demonstrates the baselines, targets for 2025 and 2030 and progress towards targets for each indicator as of 2023.

Still, the specific contributions of UNFPA towards the transformative results are not clearly identified within the overall measurements of progress within key areas identified by the Strategic Plan. This is somewhat demonstrated in the country-level results, where clear results from UNFPA programmes are listed, however the link to targets may be further developed. Still, there appears to be a need to improve evidence of demonstrable causal relationships between UNFPA programmes and the results against targets reported.

While UNFPA has established the need for an additional USD 58.7 billion and committed to allocate 25% of its funding for ending GBV and harmful practices during 2022-25, the Fund is unable to demonstrate how its outputs have contributed to a reduction in GBV and harmful practices other than child marriage and female genital mutilation due to insufficient timely and disaggregated data (GBV) (for which it is a custodian agency) and the absence of outcome-level indicators in the UNFPA Strategic Plan (other harmful practices).

The fact that the annual report does not specify the share of results attributed to UNFPA (contribution analysis) is explained by a common agreement across UN agencies that this would not be an ethical way of reporting. Because of their higher-level nature, these results are a product of efforts of multiple actors, including UNFPA - so self-attribution of these results to UNFPA may appear, biased and need to rely on external independent assessments. Overcoming this challenge will require a broader effort of measurement within the UN system or more UNFPA's theory-based independent evaluations.

MI 7.2 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 7.3: Results targets set on a foundation of sound evidence and logic	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.40**
Element 1: Targets and indicators are adequate to capture causal pathways between interventions and expected results (outputs and outcomes) that contribute to higher order objectives	3
Element 2: Indicators are relevant to expected results to enable the measurement of the degree of goal achievement	3
Element 3: Development of baselines is mandatory for new strategies, programmes and interventions	4
Element 4: Results targets are regularly reviewed and adjusted when needed	4
Element 5: Results targets are set through a process that includes consultation with beneficiaries	3
MI 7.3 Analysis	**Evidence documents**

Element 7.3.1: While targets and indicators exist to capture causal pathways between interventions and expected results, it needs to be improved to better explicit the contribution to higher-level objectives.

To support its 3TRs vision by 2030, UNFPA relies on a results-based management approach. UNFPA developed an integrated results and resources framework for its 2022-25 Strategic Plan. It includes a causal pathway highlighted by the "six-plus-six frameworks with output performance" at three levels between outputs, outcomes and impact. It also defines the metrics – the indicators, baselines and targets – that are used to measure progress towards those results and assess the strategic plan's effectiveness and impact.

In addition, UNFPA developed principles and standards in its 3+5 Framework for Self-Assessment including three core principles and five supporting principles. This document targets country offices as primary audience, and also implementing partners. Its supporting principle #3 aims at building and maintaining results-based based strategic plans, operations plans and frameworks. This requires specific indicators and targets to capture causal pathways between outputs, outcomes and impacts. A theory of change is needed to formalise this causal pathway. A clear articulation is also sought between the country programme and the contribution of projects to national priorities and alignment to the UNFPA Strategic Plan.

This causal pathway represents a positive evolution of UNFPA towards a more result-oriented approach, in addition to the fact that indicators in the Strategic Plan have an indicator metadata document that includes the UNFPA contributions and criteria for measurement.

However, this causal pathway needs to be further developed (as is the case in other UN agencies) so as to provide a discernible link between the outputs and the achievement of UNFPA's outcome-level targets and the contribution to higher-level objectives (acceleration of the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action, SDGs).

15,16, 5, 6, 6, 7, 35.

This is somewhat demonstrated in the country-level results, where clear output results from UNFPA programmes are listed, however the link to higher-level targets (such as SDGs) may be further developed. In addition, a better link between the achievements of the SP at outcome level presented in the mid-term review report and the indicators at outcome level listed in Annex A could be strengthened.

The Policy Strategic Information and Planning Branch is supporting field offices towards this results culture. Efforts are still needed, according to interviews, to shift the mindset of country offices towards higher-level results thinking.

A new RBM handbook is under development to emphasise developing programmes based on future scenarios and focusing on managing for higher-level results according to interview.

Element 7.3.2: Indicators used to measure progress against targets are generally broad and generalised at impact and outcome levels, with some failing to specifically highlight UNFPA's contributions in specific areas.

The impact and outcome indicators in the integrated results and resources framework are either the same or closely related to the Sustainable Development Goal indicators.
Indicators are overall focused on measuring progress against the core thematic areas of the Fund, such as the adoption of rights-based population policies and their impact on human rights, particularly on women and girls' reproductive health and rights.

While this is to the benefit of ensuring standardised measurement across time and context, a greater number of indicators per topic could lead to more in-depth analysis and more meaningful measurement of progress for often complex topics. Specific indicators are lacking to assess the progress in climate change at intervention level (the ESS is paying more attention to the reduction of the carbon footprint). Only few are focusing on this area (such as tracking the integration of SRH in climate policies).

Indicators are also lacking to appreciate UNFPA's contributions to the reduction of harmful practices. In addition, some interviewees raised challenges in defining quantitative indicators, with a need to reflect on more qualitative indicators, such as those related to populations and development. Initiatives are underway to address these challenges with the development of new indicators aligning with evolving priorities, such as measuring female autonomy and agency in reproductive health and rights. To do so, the Fund is collaborating with partners and technical advisory groups to formulate frameworks for future indicators to ensure these reflect current demographic trends and needs.

Element 7.3.3: The baselines and targets for the indicators of the strategic plan are mandatory.

They were presented for the current 2022-25 Strategic Plan in the 2022 Annual Report of the Executive Director. Baselines and targets are also required for UNFPA's contributions to the Cooperation Framework, national priorities and the Strategic Plan for all CPD as highlighted in the Policy and Procedures for Development and Approval of the Country Programme Document (CPD).

Element 7.3.4: Results targets are regularly reviewed and adjusted when needed.

The Strategic Plan targets are reviewed through a Mid-Term Review (as demonstrated in the last MTR in June 2024); this process for both the Strategic Plan and budget is used to draw lessons at mid-term and make any necessary adjustments including regarding results targets.

At country level, targets are reviewed at annual reviews with Implementing Partners. There is also a quarterly monitoring and programme cycle implementation Throughout the interviews conducted it was clear that country programmes are regularly reviewed through spot checks and following issues flagged or demonstrated in standard reporting mechanisms, with changes implemented as needed. Changes or adjustments to programmes are often decentralised, with decisions taken at the country office level. Key results achieved at the country level are highlighted annually in the Orange Book of results.

Overall, there appears to be a satisfactory level of flexibility to ensure targets are regularly reviewed and adjusted as needed.

Element 7.3.5: Results targets are set through an inclusive process overall well perceived by beneficiaries.

UNFPA applied both "top-bottom" and "bottom-top" approaches in setting the baselines and targets for the indicators of the Strategic Plan, 2022-25. For the former, UNFPA conducted a baseline survey to understand the needs, priorities and targets at country and regional levels for the baselines and targets contributing to the strategic plan results. For the latter, UNFPA analysed those targets and incorporated global thinking to set ambitious but realistic targets.

At field levels, Policy and Procedures for Development and Approval of the Country Programme Document (CPD) stresses that the CPD is the result of consultations with different stakeholders at national and international level. One of the supporting principles standards of the 3+5 Framework for Self-Assessment aims at ensuring strategic and implementation partners, managers and staff take ownership of plans and results frameworks that are relevant and useful notably through a consultation with partners and staff.

This theorical process for the development of CPD including results targets is confirmed in practice through consultation with governments, donors, implementation partners and other partners, as highlighted during interviews with UNFPA's field staff and according to the overall positive view of respondents to the survey.

However, some respondents from implementing, financial, and peer organisations disagree with the claim that UNFPA consults with stakeholders when setting results targets at a country level. In addition,

the extent and nature of their inclusion in the definition of result targets remains unclear in policies at this stage.

Figure 37: UNFPA consults with stakeholders on the setting of results targets at a country level
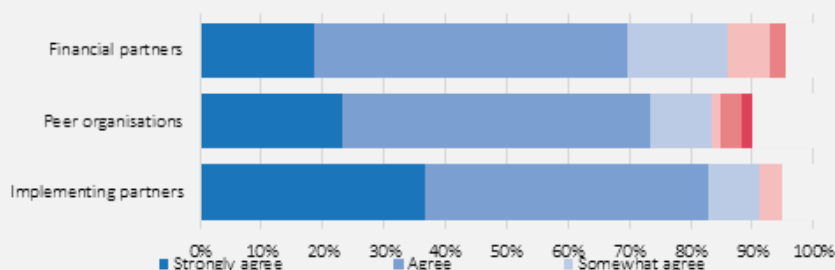
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

MI 7.3 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 7.4: Monitoring systems generate high-quality, useful performance data in response to strategic priorities	Score
Overall MI rating	Unsatisfactory
Overall MI score	2.50
Element 1: The corporate monitoring system is adequately resourced	2
Element 2: Monitoring systems generate performance data at output and outcome levels of the results chain	2
Element 3: Reporting processes ensure data is available for key corporate reporting and planning, including for internal change processes	4
Element 4: A system for ensuring data quality exists	2

MI 7.4 Analysis	Evidence documents
Element 7.4.1: Overall, UNFPA's corporate monitoring system has improved but there is still room for further refinement to ensure it is adequately resourced. On the aggregate, 100% of country offices were staffed with either a M&E officer (58%) or (part-time) focal point (52%). The proportion of country offices with M&E offices increased by 10%, compared to a 48% coverage in 2018. RBM capacities have been also strengthened through the development of RBM principles and standards, the introduction of an Adaptive Management framework for learning and adaptation, as well as toolkits and trainings. In 2023, the IEO set up a Decentralised Evaluation Team (DET - 1 P5 lead + 2 staff: P4 and P2) with the purpose of accelerating the operationalisation of the UNFPA Evaluation Strategy Area 2, where effective decentralised evaluation systems are implemented for greater accountability, improved programming, and a stronger culture of results. The DET provides methodological backstopping to M&E staff in decentralised units (COs and ROs), notably through delivery of workshops and webinars. The DET acts as a focal point for ROs and organises quarterly meetings with regional M&E advisers to address issues they face and provide the guidance they may need. However, the staffing profile differs substantially across regions in terms of their level and seniority. There is a concentration of dedicated M&E officers in regions with larger country offices, such as Africa and Asia and the Pacific, while focal points arrangements are in place primarily in regions where country offices had relatively smaller budgets (e.g. Latin America and the Caribbean and Eastern Europe and Central Asia). In	2, 10, 74,75, 76, 71, 7.

addition, a high turnover affected staffing in the regional offices covered by six regional monitoring and evaluation advisors. It was noted by interviews and through the peer review of the evaluation function that these regional M&E advisors do not work exclusively on monitoring, despite it being their primary activity. While the job descriptions of country-level staff are weighted heavily towards planning and programming, monitoring and reporting on performance, they also include other activities such as evaluation, resource mobilisation and quality assurance of implementation of field activities. Regional advisors appear stretched in providing technical evaluation support (estimated at 20% of their time in theory, according to interviews) as a large portion of their time is spent on supporting regional programming and planning, monitoring and reporting. More broadly, the Human Resources branch has launched an initiative to ensure staff can spend a sufficient time on M&E, but the details and impact of this initiative remain unclear to date. An exercise to review the Job Descriptions of M&E staff working at different levels was concluded in early July 2024 (after the cut-off of this assessment). DHR and IEO sent a joint memo to all Regional and Sub-regional Office Directors and all Reps/CDs/Heads of Office to clarity the expected roles, responsibilities and reporting lines for M&E personnel at decentralised levels. Direct and functional reporting lines were clarified and all offices were asked to update the JDs of their respective M&E staff in accordance with these new standards.

Element 7.4.2: Monitoring systems generate performance data, but are focused mainly on outputs and less on outcome level of the results chains.

UNFPA has improved its monitoring systems. It launched the Integrated Results and Resources Management platform (QuantumPlus) in December 2023 to strengthen the results planning, reporting, and accountability processes. QuantumPlus includes notably a Results and Resources Plan module, which manages results. It is expected that integrating the results, resources and activity/implementation planning in one system will help strengthen the consistency and quality of planning for results.

The monitoring system is designed to produce data at output and outcome levels, but data gathering on outcomes is limited. Internal evaluations often point to a lack of outcome-level monitoring, despite efforts to strengthen the monitoring. For example, the 2021 Evaluation of UNFPA support to gender equality and women's empowerment notes broad inadequacies in monitoring and reporting systems (beyond specific reporting on gender results) which suggest it is not possible to report on outcome-level contributions. Country programme evaluations also tend to focus on the achievement of outputs during the programme cycle. As previously mentioned, efforts are aimed at shifting the mindset of country offices towards higher-level thinking and outcomes.

Element 7.4.3: UNFPA's Reporting processes ensures data informs key corporate decisions.

The RBM principles and standards state that results information should be used to inform planning and reporting (core principle 2). As previously mentioned, tracking and accountability is facilitated by the use of comprehensive, centralised monitoring systems such as the Quantum Plus system and myResults, as mentioned throughout KPI 7, to enable a centralised tool for collection of data used in annual and quarterly reporting. This reporting process enables access to necessary data from country programmes and central bodies. Reporting is closely aligned with the strategic plan results frameworks, however there is some flexibility in the reporting of country programmes which allow for project specific indicators.

Element 7.4.4: While progress have been noted to improve the quality of monitoring system, areas of improvement persist in terms of data quality.

Challenges with data quality were raised during the interview phase, including issues with accessing current and usable data. However, mitigation actions are in place to address these issues.

A layered validation process involves country offices and regional advisors to ensure data accuracy and reliability with a final quality check by the Executive Board Branch. Still, interviewees expressed concern with the extent of quality checks by the functions that manage the data. This is despite a marked improvement in the quality of monitoring system and the use of metadata systems to ensure that data quality requirements are met, and countries are accountable for the accuracy of their data submissions.

Collaboration with national statistics offices, UN statistics division, World Bank, and other agencies also helps to ensure quality data collection and analysis in both settings.

Specific areas for improvement were identified through interviews and desktop review related to data quality, including:

- Difficulties in obtaining data within the context of humanitarian interventions.

- Difficulties in obtaining quantitative data on behavioural change, with heavy reliance on qualitative data such as interviews, focus groups, and surveys.

- Comparability issues related to data on varying populations, especially in the case of different data sources or conflicting frameworks for data collection across countries. The Mid-Term Review also raised some challenges regarding the availability and use of high-quality population data.

The capacity to collect quality data also varies across regional offices, despite efforts by UNFPA to implement robust systems for data collection, validation, and analysis. For example:

- Western and Central Africa regional offices face challenges in generating quality data due to contextual factors and multiple development issues.

- Asia and the Pacific, as well as Eastern and Southern Africa regional offices, are more advanced in data generation and absorption. For instance, in GBV, a partnership between UNFPA and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Government of Australia has supported the Asia-Pacific region to increase statistical capacity and the availability of data on the prevalence of gender-based violence. However, the Regional Director publicly called in UNFPA for stronger investments in ethically collected data to guide policies and actions across Asia and the Pacific in combating gender-based violence.

MI 7.4 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 7.5: Performance data transparently applied in planning and decision-making	Score
Overall MI rating	Satisfactory
Overall MI score	3.50
Element 1: Planning documents are clearly based on performance data	3
Element 2: Adjustments to interventions are clearly informed by performance data	4
Element 3: At corporate level, Management regularly reviews corporate performance data and makes adjustments as appropriate	3
Element 4: Performance data support dialogue in partnerships at global, regional and country levels	4
MI 7.5 Analysis	Evidence documents

Element 7.5.1: Planning documents are based on lessons learned and performance data collected from 150 countries.

This is the case at the level of UNFPA's Strategic Plan 2022-25 which incorporates lessons learned from implementing the previous strategic plan. At field level, the RBM principles (3.5.) states UNFPA's offices should have a strategic approach for reporting and identifying which aspects of performance will be reported. Policy for the design of CPD states their development should rely on evidence of progress, performance and lessons of the previous cycle.

74, 75, 76, 77, 7, 8.

As previously mentioned, data collection occurs through centralised monitoring systems based on an integrated RBM approach. As highlighted during interviews, data are analysed thematically and aggregated into scorecards to identify performance trends and challenges as well as dashboards that provide real-time insights into performance and bottlenecks at the country level to inform decision-making. Lessons learned are also incorporated into annual planning.

Element 7.5.2: Adjustments to interventions are clearly informed by performance data.

The Mid-Term Review on the implementation of the Strategic Plan includes adjustments based on performance data (presented in the output scorecard and indicator updates document). These adjustments are done at several levels (IRRF, resources) following the review.

Adjustments to allocation for global and regional programmes can be made any time, depending on resources available, while ensuring that the overall ceilings approved by the EB are not exceeded. Changes in the results framework of the global and regional programmes can be introduced during the Mid-Term Review process. This process includes a thorough review of performance data (ie. results' targets), emerging needs, and financial resources to introduce required adjustments.

Finally, the interview phase clearly demonstrated adjustments to CPD at field level are informed by performance data. Following the implementation of the approved workplan, an annual review is conducted based on the monitoring, reporting and assurance cycles to demonstrate progress against targets. Following annual review, workplans are either revised or continued.

Element 7.5.3: At corporate level, management regularly reviews corporate performance data and makes adjustments as appropriate.

Management reviews, validates, and presents performance data to governing bodies through notably the output scorecard and indicator update document.

Based on this review, Management can request adjustments when deviations from targets are identified or when events hinder implementation of the Strategic Plan or the CPD.

While there exists a process for review, the interview phase suggests that there is room for improvement to ensure thorough quality checks. The Strategic Planning Branch also plays a key role in overseeing monitoring and reporting within the strategic planning process. The branch uses a dashboard with key performance indicators to monitor the implementation of the Strategic Plan, as well as the progress of different departments within the organisation. The Policy Strategic Information and Planning Branch's core workstreams include strategic planning, results management, and strategic information, however policy has been removed from the branch's responsibilities (despite remaining in the branch's title).

Element 7.5.4: Performance data support dialogue in partnerships at global, regional and country levels.

Performance data are used in dialogue between UNFPA and its partners, though there is no specific reporting on this. At the global level, performance data inform discussions with EB members. At field level, performance data inform discussions with local stakeholders, notably as part of the Mid-Term Review, or processes inform the next cycle of CPD.

MI 7.5 Evidence confidence	**High confidence**

KPI 8: [Evidence-based planning and programming applied] The MO applies evidence-based planning and programming	**KPI score**
Satisfactory	**3.45**

The UNFPA Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) has been recognised for its operational and financial independence, as well as its professional contributions to decision making. Despite this, concerns about behavioural independence persist, particularly regarding the lack of job rotation within the evaluation team and the decentralised evaluation function which is not organisationally independent.

The office has discretion over its evaluation programme, but there is a need to focus on improving the evaluation of humanitarian action and the quality of decentralised evaluations as a continuation of positive recent developments[4]. Recommendations for improvement include the need to address poor performance, as well as minor improvements for addressing behavioural independence[5], enhancing humanitarian evaluation, strengthening decentralised evaluations, and ensuring adequate funding.

The UNFPA has made progress in evaluation coverage and quality, with 97.3% of offices conducting evaluations within two cycles, up from 80% in 2017. The Evaluation Policy mandates systematic evaluations, and the organisation has performed well in this area. However, the gradual submission of all typologies of decentralised evaluations (including project level and humanitarian evaluations) in the revamped evaluation quality assurance[6] and assessment system will require attention. A prioritised and funded evaluation plan is in place, reflecting a commitment to strategic evaluation and Results-Based Management. Despite this, there is a need for a more consistent approach to ensuring the quality of decentralised evaluations.

UNFPA has established formal mechanisms to incorporate lessons from past interventions into new program designs, enhancing results-based management and organisational effectiveness. More needs to be done to ensure feedback loops feed lessons from past interventions into the design of new programmes and interventions. While there is a commitment to learning and adapting, the organisation needs to further systematise the response to evidence and ensure transparent sharing of information. Additionally, the evaluation process has revealed areas for improvement in rapidly responding to humanitarian crises, managing complex indicators, and enhancing data management systems. There is a structured approach to performance management, but there is a need for better integration of evaluation findings into decision-making processes.

MI 8.1: [Independent evaluation function] A corporate independent evaluation function exists	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.33**
Element 1: The UNFPA evaluation function is independent from other management functions (operational and financial independence)	3
Element 2: The Director of the Evaluation Office reports directly to the Executive Board (structural independence)	4
Element 3: The Evaluation Office has full discretion in deciding the evaluation programme	3
Element 4: The UNFPA evaluation function and plan are fully funded by core resources	4
Element 5: Evaluations are submitted directly for consideration at the appropriate level of decision-making for the subject of evaluation	3
Element 6: Evaluators are able to conduct their work during the evaluation without undue interference by those involved in implementing the unit of analysis being evaluated (behavioural independence)	3

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[4] To support to ROs and COs in the conduct of decentralised evaluations (notably, CPEs) the creation (2023) of the IEO Decentralised Evaluation Team was created with the purpose of accelerating the operationalisation of the UNFPA Evaluation Strategy Area 2, namely, effective decentralised evaluation systems are implemented for greater accountability, improved programming, and a stronger culture of results. A new EQAA system (grid and guidance) has also been introduced in 2023. It is expected it will lead to a more accurate and credible assessment of evaluation reports.

[5] As of July 2024, with a view to strengthening the reporting line of M&E staff at the regional and country office levels, the Evaluation Policy defines the following reporting lines: (a) Regional M&E Advisors report directly to the Regional Director on evaluation matters, with a functional reporting line to the IEO. (b) Country Office M&E Officers report directly to the Head of Office/Representative on evaluation matters, with a functional reporting line to the Regional M&E Advisor. The Evaluation policy foresees that the Office of Audit and Investigation Services (OAIS) will assess compliance with the Policy's requirements, including alignment to the revised standard JDs and reporting lines.

[6] Whereas all decentralised evaluations, including project evaluations, will progressively be included in the EQAA system as of 2024, only CPEs and RPEs were submitted for EQA in the past.

MI 8.1 Analysis	Evidence documents
Element 8.1.1: The UNFPA central evaluation function is independent from other management functions (operational and financial independence), but the decentralised evaluation function is not organisationally independent. In 2022, the evaluation function of UNFPA was peer-reviewed by UNEG and the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD-DAC). The peer review found that the evaluation function had continued to strengthen since the approval of the 2019 Evaluation Policy, was highly valued in UNFPA and by the Executive Board, and that the Evaluation Office was respected across the organisation for its professionalism and its added value in providing evaluative evidence to inform decision-making. Importantly, the review found that the "**structural independence of the centralised evaluation function is firmly established".** The evaluation office, re-branded "Independent Evaluation Office (IEO)" in 2024, is responsible for managing the evaluation function within UNFPA. The office is independent from the operational, management and decision-making functions in the organisation, and is impartial, objective, and free from undue influence. To enhance its independence, positioning and visibility, IEO has its own logo and brand. In 2024, a rebranding of the Evaluation Office to the Independent Evaluation Office occurred, recognising the independent position and function of the Evaluation Office. IEO directly manages and decides on the allocation of resources that are attributed to it – human (including consultants) and financial – to conduct centralised evaluations and implement its work plan, consistent with the UNFPA financial regulations and rules. Interviews confirmed that the UNFPA evaluation function maintains its independence from other management functions, ensuring operational and financial autonomy. This independence is evident in the Evaluation Office's freedom to innovate and propose new ideas. All evaluations within UNFPA are carried out by independent evaluators. Furthermore, the introduction of the new Strategic Plan 2022-25 has sharpened the focus on the topics of evaluations, identifying evaluation gaps and risks, with the goal of covering the main areas of UNFPA's intervention by 2025. The evaluation function supports this aim by complementing the independent evaluative body and aligning with the SP through a global evaluation strategy, which includes accelerators, game changers, and pathways, as well as conducting an evidence gap analysis. Although the evaluation team operates independently from programme teams, it engages with them through consultations and interdivisional working groups. The team provides advisory input but does not directly participate in the development of programmes or their evaluation frameworks to maintain objectivity for future assessments. Still, several evaluation functions occur outside of the central organisation at country level, indicating full independence is not yet operationalised. The peer review found that the **decentralised evaluation function was not organisationally independent.** This presents a challenge to behavioural independence of the decentralised evaluation function. Indeed, the Regional M&E Advisers report to the regional office management structure, and M&E Officers and focal points report into the country office management structure. Moreover, there is no 'dotted' reporting line between the Regional M&E Advisers and the Evaluation Office (only a functional relationship on evaluation matters or indirectly as a "second level" of supervision as highlighted during interview), nor is there a reporting line from country-level staff to the Regional M&E Adviser or Evaluation Office. In addition, peer review also highlighted that the **evaluation of humanitarian action** needs more attention. Finally, a "potential risk to behavioural independence" was noted due to the lack of rotation within the evaluation job group. Following these findings of the Peer Review, IEO published a revised evaluation policy in 2024. It	54, 100, 159, 160, 82, 161, 162, 18.

also restructured its existing human resources into three specialised teams on:

(a) decentralised evaluation, focusing on strengthening effective decentralised evaluation systems;

(b) humanitarian evaluation, to enhance the management of evaluations in complex humanitarian settings; and

(c) communication, knowledge management and artificial intelligence.

Finally, the 2024 evaluation policy stated that rotation within the monitoring and evaluation job group (at headquarters and in regional offices) was encouraged, together with other mobility modalities, for example, inter-agency loans and stretch-assignments, aimed at strengthening staff learning and career pathways.

Element 8.1.2: The Director of the Independent Evaluation Office reports directly to the Executive Board (structural independence).

The Independent Evaluation Office is independent of the operational, management and decision-making functions of UNFPA, with the Director of the Independent Evaluation Office reporting directly to the Executive Board through an annual report for the performance of the evaluation function. This is in in line with Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG) guidelines for best practices which recommends that the Director of the Independent Evaluation Office is located organisationally outside the line and staff management function.

This structural and organisational independence is set out in the UNFPA Evaluation Policy (2019), confirmed by the Independent Peer Review of UNFPA (2022) and reassessed in the revised Evaluation Policy (2024).

The peer review found that the Evaluation Policy is "unambiguous" about the independence of the Director of the Independent Evaluation Office, and the institutional arrangements and lines of accountability support this independence.

The Oversight Policy accords the Director free and unrestricted access to the Board, the Oversight and Audit Committee, the UN Board of Auditors, and any other entity with fiduciary oversight or governing function relevant to UNFPA. The potential implications of the IEO move to Nairobi on structural independence will deserve attention.

Element 8.1.3: The Central Independent Evaluation Office has to a large extent discretion in deciding the evaluation programme, but not fully for decentralised evaluations.

According to the 2024 Evaluation Policy, the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) has the authority to determine the scope, design, conduct, commissioning, dissemination, publication and communication of centralised evaluations and to submit reports directly to the appropriate decision makers, including the Executive Board. Management cannot impose any restrictions on language, content or the publication of evaluation reports. The main functions of the IEO are indicated in Annex 1 (below) of the revised evaluation policy (2024).

The interviews attest to the key role of the Evaluation Office, however they do not have full discretion to dictate the programme of evaluations given the decentralised nature of the current evaluation process where Country Programmes have the ability to decide evaluations. Some evaluations are also conducted in line with donor funding requirements for specific programmes. Nevertheless, the Evaluation Office is actively involved in setting standards and expectations for evaluations, which is a key aspect of having the authority to decide on the evaluation programme. Overall, the Evaluation Office provides support, manages knowledge, engages in evaluation processes, and participates in reference groups, capturing and incorporating lessons learned, ensuring quality, and building capacity collectively across the Fund. The Evaluation Office also plays a central role in learning and improvement across the organisation. This central role justifies the discretion given to the office, as it must align evaluation activities with the broader organisational goals of knowledge sharing and

continuous improvement.

Figure 38: Independent Evaluation Office Responsibilities

Annex 1: Independent Evaluation Office responsibilities

Responsibility	Tasks
Policy development	• Prepare, update and present the evaluation policy to the Executive Board for its approval
Planning	• Develop and present to the Executive Board for its approval, the multi-year costed evaluation plan, based on inputs from and consultations with the Executive Board, the Executive Committee, decentralized business units and other stakeholders • Directly manage and decide upon the resources – human (including consultants) and financial – required for centralized evaluations and the implementation of the IEO workplan
Technical guidance	• Develop evaluation standards, criteria and methodological guidance and maintain evaluation quality assessment mechanisms
Evaluation conduct	• Conduct or commission centralized evaluations, including selected country programme and regional programme evaluations, selected major country-level humanitarian evaluations, as well as other types of evaluations
Reporting	• Report directly, on an annual basis, to the Executive Board on the evaluation function • Report directly to the Executive Board or relevant stakeholders on centralized evaluations
Capacity development	• Provide the necessary capacity development on issues related to evaluation
Promote the use of evaluative evidence t	• Publish, actively disseminate, share knowledge and facilitate the use of evaluations • Maintain a publicly accessible database of evaluations
Partnerships	• Engage in partnerships with professional evaluation networks, such as the United Nations Evaluation Group and the Interagency Humanitarian Evaluation Group, and support the harmonization of the evaluation function in the United Nations system • Promote multistakeholder and intergenerational partnerships to strengthen national evaluation capacities, including meaningful involvement of young evaluators

Source: Revised evaluation policy (2024)

In 2024, the IEO has produced and released a detailed "Costed Evaluation Plan: Guidance and template" to assist country and regional offices as they develop a costed evaluation plan (CEP) as part of their country or regional programme document (the CEP is multi-year and aligned with the programme cycle; it is annexed to the programme document submitted for Executive Board approval). With the new guidance, the objective of the IEO is to ensure that the planned evaluations in COs and ROs are strategic, feasible, prioritised and cost-effective with a view to generating useful evaluative evidence for UNFPA and its partners. The guidance outlines the respective roles and responsibilities of the country offices, regional offices, and the IEO in the development, monitoring and revision of CEPs. It includes the CEP core components, budget considerations, and effective management practices, as well as a template.

Element 8.1.4: The UNFPA evaluation function and plan are primarily funded by core resources. This ensures a stable and predictable source of funding, essential for central functions.

Element 8.1.5. Evaluations are submitted directly for consideration at the appropriate level of decision-making for the subject of evaluation.

The Evaluation Office Director participates in senior management meetings which provides him with the opportunity to share evaluation evidence to inform decision-making. It also provides an opportunity for the Director (and Evaluation Office) to hear first-hand the issues identified by UNFPA senior management. Senior management feedback to the independent Peer Review (2022) indicates that the Director is highly visible in his engagement at this level of the organisation. The process for management response to evaluation is described in the Evaluation Policy (section VII). It includes the preparation of formal responses to all evaluations by the Policy and Strategy Divisions, the discussion of this responses with stakeholders and the publication in the evaluation database along with the reports. Management responses are presented to the Board for centralised evaluations, but not for decentralised evaluations.

Element 8.1.6. Evaluators can conduct their work during centralised evaluations without undue interference by those involved in implementing the unit of analysis being evaluated (behavioural independence). This is not ensured yet for decentralised evaluations, despite recent clarifications.

According to the independent Peer Review of UNFPA's Evaluation Function, the central evaluation function assigned to the Evaluation Office is independent in terms of behavioural independence. However, the decentralised evaluation function is not organisationally independent, and this presents a challenge to behavioural independence of the decentralised evaluation function.

The independent peer review (2022) underlines that the institutional arrangements for the decentralised evaluation function are not satisfactory. The lines of accountability of M&E staff in UNFPA field offices do not support the behavioural independence of the decentralised evaluation function. Advisers/officers/focal points do not work exclusively on the management of evaluations (independent evaluators conduct the evaluations), but also perform planning, programming, monitoring and reporting functions, and any other work, which their superiors request of them. The extent to which Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) staff at the decentralised level can devote time to manage evaluations is dictated by the priorities of the decentralised office and by agreements with donors. The independent peer review highlighted that the proportion of time spent on evaluation activities varied, and on average ranged from only 5 % to 25 % of the time of a Regional M&E Adviser. The situation is worse in country offices that do not have full-time M&E officers and where staff may not have all the necessary evaluation competencies. Furthermore, without a direct reporting line from the country office M&E officer/focal point to the Regional M&E Adviser, the latter can only provide guidance and quality assurance to country office evaluations.

The independent peer review also underlined some anecdotal information about the country office M&E officers being pressured by managers and government partners (deliberately and sometimes through lack of understanding of the evaluation process) when they disagree with evaluation findings. Officers managing country level evaluations have little protection against undue influence. An added complication that M&E focal points often end up managing evaluations of the programmes they are responsible for implementing. Evaluation reference groups which include external partners are a safeguard for independence. However, while they are established for CPEs, as required by the UNFPA CPE Handbook, the composition of these groups is not reflected in the CPE reports.

According to interviewees, UNFPA has structures and processes in place that could support the behavioural independence of evaluators. However, the potential for undue influence by programme implementers during stakeholder engagement and strategic dialogue stages requires careful management to ensure that evaluators can conduct their work without interference. The commitment to quality assurance and the ethical and responsible use of innovative tools like AI are positive steps towards reinforcing the independence and credibility of the evaluation function. In early 2023, IEO developed and rolled out a pioneering strategy for a generative AI-powered evaluation function, including ethical principles to leverage AI in evaluation in a responsible way, as well as approaches to minimise the risks and harms of using AI in evaluation. Several key factors contribute to this, including the decentralisation of evaluations within country offices, having dedicated M&E officers, ensuring stakeholder engagement in recommendations, the commitment to knowledge use and independent/quality review, as well as AI innovation. Still, the interview phase and the last 2023 Annual Report of the evaluation function did not clearly specify the actions taken by UNFPA either in central or country office functions to ensure behavioural interference does not occur.

However, the new Evaluation Policy endorsed by the Executive Board in 2024 clarifies expected roles, responsibilities, and reporting lines for M&E personnel at decentralised levels. To ensure consistency and clarity, the IEO and DHR, in consultation with PSD, have revised the standard job description for M&E personnel at decentralised levels. As of July 2024 (after the cut-off of this assessment), with a view to strengthening the reporting line of M&E staff at the regional and country office levels, the Evaluation Policy defines the following reporting lines: (a) Regional M&E Advisors

report directly to the Regional Director on evaluation matters, with a functional reporting line to the IEO. (b) Country Office M&E Officers report directly to the Head of Office/Representative on evaluation matters, with a functional reporting line to the Regional M&E Advisor. The Evaluation policy foresees that the Office of Audit and Investigation Services (OAIS) will assess compliance with the Policy's requirements, including alignment to the revised standard JDs and reporting lines.

MI 8.1 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 8.2: [Evaluation coverage] Consistent, independent evaluation of results (coverage)	Score
Overall MI rating	Satisfactory
Overall MI score	3.40
Element 1: An evaluation policy describes the principles to ensure the coverage, quality and use of findings, including in decentralise evaluations	4
Element 2: The policy/an evaluation manual guides the implementation of corporate-level and decentralised evaluations	4
Element 3: A prioritised and funded evaluation plan covering UNFPA's planning and budgeting cycle is available	3
Element 4: The evaluation plan presents a systematic and periodic coverage of UNFPA's interventions, reflecting key development and humanitarian priorities	3
Element 5: Evidence demonstrates that the evaluation policy is being implemented at headquarter, regional and country-levels	3

MI 8.2 Analysis	Evidence documents
Element 8.2.1: UNFPA's evaluation policy describes the principles to ensure the coverage, quality and use of findings, including in decentralised evaluations. The evaluation policy (2024) outlines several evaluation principles and norms and relevant sections including evaluation coverage (section 5.2. and Annex 5), quality assurance (section 6) and use of evaluative evidence (section 8), covering decentralised and decentralised evaluations. Quality standards of evaluations are also described in the Evaluation Handbook (2024), a comprehensive guide to support high-quality decentralised evaluations, and in the Guidance on evaluation quality assurance and assessment (2024). Evaluation plans ensure a large coverage and enable a response to the critical challenges in the delivery of programmes. The Annex 5 of the Evaluation Policy details all types of evaluation at centralised and decentralised levels. It now includes some types of evaluations which were previously missing as evidenced by the peer review, such as humanitarian, country-level project and organisational evaluations. The IEO conducted a series of actions to further enhance and consolidate the systems, processes and capacities for evaluations according to the desktop review (2023 Annual report on evaluation, Evaluation handbook 2023) and interviews. The steady and continued investments over the years have brought sustained results in improving the quality, coverage and utility of evaluations. The past year also saw a positive trend in improving the evaluation coverage, contributing to a growing body of evaluative evidence to inform programme formulation and decision-making. 97.3% % of offices have conducted at least one country programme evaluation (CPE) within two cycles, compared to 80%% in 2017. Most prominently, several country offices saw a notable upward trend in CPEs conducted in each country programme cycle. For the first time ever, all planned country programme level evaluations were implemented in 2022 (60%% in 2016). The new Strategic Plan and Evaluation Policy appear to enhance the coverage and quality of evaluations and by placing a greater emphasis on demonstrating impact. Several key aspects of the Evaluation Policy were addressed. Notably regarding coverage, the new Strategic Plan has	17, 82, 100, 162, 40, 54, 159, 18, 157.

introduced a more focused approach to Evaluation/Results-Based Management (RBM), which has been increasingly conducive over the past 15 years. This shift in strategic planning suggests a broader coverage of evaluation activities, aligning with the Evaluation Policy's principle to ensure comprehensive coverage. At field level, as previously mentioned, the IEO (DET) has produced and released a detailed "Costed Evaluation Plan: Guidance and template" to assist country and regional offices as they develop a costed evaluation plan (CEP) as part of their country or regional programme document and to ensure planned evaluations are strategic, feasible and provide useful evaluative evidence for UNFPA and its partners.

Figure 39: Trends in key performance indicators, 2014-23

Trends in key performance indicators, 2014-2023

Key performance indicator (%)	Description	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Overall assessment
3. Evaluation coverage	Percentage of country offices that have conducted a country programme evaluation once every two cycles	-	-	-	80	90	97	97.3	96.5	95	97.3	Achieved (target of 90 per cent)

Source: Annual report on the evaluation function

The move from lower-level outcomes to impact-level monitoring indicates an expansion in the scope of evaluations to capture the broader effects of the organisation's work. The evaluative framework's shift from observable to impact-oriented suggests a desire to use findings to inform strategic decisions and demonstrate accountability. Whereas current evaluations (theory-based/ contribution analysis) offer the possibility to measure UNFPA's contribution and its value-added, no impact evaluations are currently conducted at UNFPA.

The introduction of a quality assurance process in the new Evaluation Policy directly addresses the principle of ensuring the quality of findings. This process is now mandatory and systematic demonstrates a commitment to upholding high-quality standards in evaluations. The involvement of independent evaluators in all evaluations further supports the quality principle by promoting objectivity and credibility in the evaluation findings.

As underlined in the 2024 Evaluation Policy, a key progress in 2024 will be the gradual inclusion of all typologies of decentralised evaluations (including project level and humanitarian evaluations) in the revamped evaluation quality assurance and assessment system.

Element 8.2.2: The Policy and an evaluation manual guide the implementation of corporate-level and decentralised evaluations.

For centralised evaluations: Centralised evaluations are managed by the Evaluation Office and include institutional, programme, thematic and joint or system-wide evaluations, as well as evaluability assessments and baseline studies. Quality assurance is provided during the evaluation process and the final evaluation reports are subject to an external quality assessment. An evaluation synthesis at centralised level pulling together and aggregating findings from evaluations is produced periodically by the Evaluation Office. The Evaluation Office implements the 2022-25 Quadrennial Budgeted Evaluation Plan, whose purpose is to provide a coherent framework to guide the commissioning, management and use of evaluations at UNFPA. The plan provides a basis for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of planned centralised evaluations, as well as decentralised country and regional programme level evaluations. The Evaluation Office is responsible for implementing the plan and reports on its implementation to the Executive Board

annually.

For decentralised evaluations: UNFPA first published an "Evaluation Handbook: how to design and conduct a country programme evaluation at UNFPA" in 2012. It published an updated and revised version in 2024. The current revised Evaluation Handbook is designed as a practical guide to help evaluation managers apply methodological rigour to evaluation practices in decentralised units. The Evaluation Handbook contains practical tools and hands-on advice to those who carry out evaluations commissioned by UNFPA or involved at other stages of the evaluations processes. Throughout the interview phase it appeared that the policy and evaluation manual effectively guide the implementation of both corporate-level and decentralised evaluations, with a clear emphasis on strategic alignment, utilisation of knowledge, adaptive management, innovation, and quality assurance. These elements collectively contribute to a robust evaluation framework that supports the achievement of UNFPA's strategic objectives.

In addition to the new Evaluation Handbook, the IEO Decentralised Evaluation Team conducts a yearly (one-week) Cross-Regional Evaluation Capacity Development Workshop for the professionalisation of evaluation staff in decentralised units (COs, ROs) (2023: Antalya; 2024: Nairobi). The DET also provides ad hoc methodological guidance and backstopping to M&E staff in decentralised units.

The 2022-25 Strategic Plan emphasises a focus on the object of evaluations, identifying evaluation gaps and risks, with the goal of covering the main areas of intervention of UNFPA by the end of the Strategic Plan. This suggests that the Strategic Plan may serve as a guiding document for both corporate-level and decentralised evaluations. Furthermore, a global evaluation strategy aligned with the 2022-25 Strategic Plan was launched at the final stage of the strategic plan, along with an evidence gap analysis.

Element 8.2.3: A prioritised and funded evaluation plan covering UNFPA's planning and budgeting cycle is available, but the level of the budget for the decentralisation evaluation function seems insufficient.

Planned financial resources to implement the quadrennial evaluation plan are presented for centralised and decentralised programme-level evaluations, together with costs for the Evaluation Office.

Figure 40: Overview of the estimated cost for the implementation of the quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan, 2022-25

Table 6. Overview of the estimated cost for the implementation of the quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan, 2022-2025 *(in millions of $)*

Typology of costs	Estimated budget *(in millions of $)*
Evaluation Office costs* and centralized evaluations funded by the Integrated Budget	17.2
Centralized evaluations funded by other resources	1.2
Decentralized programme-level evaluations – estimated costs	4.59
Total estimated budget for the implementation of the quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan, 2022-2025	**22.99**

*Evaluation Office costs include: (a) posts, (b) consultants, (c) furniture and equipment, and (d) operating expenses.

Source: Quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan, 2022–2025

As previously mentioned, the funding model demonstrates that evaluation continues to be a core component of UNFPA's work both within the central function and within country and regional programmes. CPEs and RPEs are fully funded by core resources, with each business unit subject to CPE/RPE receiving special allocations from core resources to fund the relevant evaluations. Other decentralised evaluations are normally commissioned for earmarked resources-funded projects, as

agreed with the relevant donors and are fully funded with the relevant donor's resources.

However, the level of the budget for the decentralised evaluation function appears insufficient according to the peer review. There are important variations of staff across regions, largely reflecting constraints faced by smaller country offices, notably in Latin America and the Caribbean, and Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Ensuring strategic evaluation planning and securing sustainable funding for decentralised evaluations remains a priority of IEO. All new CPD submitted to the Executive Board were accompanied by costed evaluation plans in 2023. In 2024, the "Costed Evaluation Plan: Guidance and template" produced by the IEO in 2024 aims to ensure among others that the planned evaluations in COs and ROs are prioritised and cost-effective.

Element 8.2.4: The evaluation plan presents a systematic and periodic coverage of UNFPA's interventions, reflecting key development and humanitarian priorities.

Building on the quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan (2022-25), an evidence-gap analysis was conducted by the Independent Evaluation Office, assessing the coverage of centralised evaluations managed during 2018-23 against the corresponding Strategic Plans. In conformity with the increasing scale and the corresponding growth of the UNFPA portfolio on humanitarian response, the analysis also illustrated increasing need for evaluative evidence of humanitarian responses.

As observed by the peer review, country-level project evaluations remained "on the fringes" of the evaluation function (not quality assessed, no visibility as part of the global evaluation workplan, and not published). As underlined in the 2024 Evaluation Policy, a key progress in 2024 will be the gradual inclusion of all typologies of decentralised evaluations (including project level and humanitarian evaluations) in the revamped evaluation quality assurance and assessment system. Whereas all decentralised evaluations, including project evaluations, will progressively be included in the EQAA system as of 2024, only CPEs and RPEs were submitted for EQA in the past.

Element 8.2.5: Evidence demonstrates that the Evaluation Policy is being implemented at headquarters, regional and country-levels.

2023 saw a positive trend in improving the evaluation coverage, contributing to a growing body of evaluative evidence to inform programme formulation and decision-making. 97.3%% of offices have conducted at least one country programme evaluation (CPE) within two cycles, compared to 80%% in 2017. Several country offices saw a notable upward trend in CPEs conducted in each country programme cycle. For the first time ever, all planned country programme level evaluations were implemented in 2022 (60%% in 2016).

The interview phase indicated that the Evaluation Policy is actively being implemented across various levels of the organisation, including headquarters, regional, and country levels. Regional offices are engaged in evaluation activities, dedicating approximately 20% of their time to these efforts. In 2023, the IEO set up a Decentralised Evaluation Team (DET - 1 P5 lead + 2 staff: P4 and P2) with the purpose of accelerating the operationalisation of the UNFPA Evaluation Strategy Area 2, namely, effective decentralised evaluation systems are implemented for greater accountability, improved programming, and a stronger culture of results.

Efforts are made to manage the allocation of personnel's time to evaluation by clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of reference group members, thereby streamlining their workload and reducing the number of meetings. Additionally, there is advocacy for the inclusion of reference group members' roles in performance assessments. A significant portion of evaluations are decentralised, and 57% of country offices have dedicated Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) officers, with others having designated focal points. Collaborations with Human Resources and Programme Support Division are underway to ensure staff can allocate sufficient time to M&E activities.

MI 8.2 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 8.3: [Evaluation quality] Systems applied to ensure the quality of evaluations	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.00**
Element 1: Evaluations are based on design, planning and implementation processes that are inherently quality oriented	3
Element 2: Evaluations use appropriate methodologies for data collection and analysis	2
Element 3: Evaluation reports present the evidence, findings, conclusions, and recommendations in a complete and balanced way	3
Element 4: The methodology presented incudes the methodological limitations and concerns	4
Element 5: A process exists to ensure the quality of all evaluations, including decentralised evaluations	3

MI 8.3 Analysis	Evidence documents
Element 8.3.1: Centralised evaluations are based on design, planning and implementation processes that are inherently quality oriented, and are assessed as being of high quality. However, this is not yet systematically the case with decentralised evaluations but some positive developments need to be considered. The Evaluation Policy identifies steps in the evaluation process to ensure the credibility of evaluation results. The Independent Evaluation Office has implemented several measures to improve the overall quality of evaluations and aspires to improve the quality beyond mere compliance with UNEG Norms and Standards. The technical guidance and tools, capacity building for centralised and decentralised staff, ring-fenced budgets for country programme evaluations, and the use of internal quality assurance and external quality assessments, are among the measures which the Evaluation Office has taken. Figures in the 2023 Annual Report on the evaluation function show that of those evaluations UNFPA assessed, 80% were rated as "very good" or "good" in 2018. UNFPA reached 100% in 2019 to 2021, and has not gone below its target of 90% since then. The Annual Report specifies that in 2023, 90% of CPEs and 100 per cent of centralised evaluations externally were rated as 'good' and above. It is however important to note that quality assurance has so far not included all types of decentralised evaluations. As previously mentioned, while all decentralised evaluations, including project evaluations, will progressively be included in the EQAA system as of 2024, only CPEs and RPEs were submitted for EQA in the past. With the introduction of the new EQAA system (grid and guidance) in 2024, it is expected it will lead to a more accurate and credible assessment of evaluation reports. The Panel of the 2023 Independent Peer Review was generally positive on centralised evaluations but saw room for improvement for decentralised evaluations. Even though RPEs and CPEs were externally assessed as "very good" or "good", the peer review noted that there was scepticism internally in UNFPA about the quality of CPEs and their added value beyond compliance with requirements for the preparation of CPDs. The Peer Review Panel was unable to verify the use of RPEs and was struck by the apparent absence of other types of evaluations commissioned by Regional Offices. The credibility of decentralised evaluations at the regional and country level may also be impaired because the manager of decentralised evaluations is not organisationally independent. Technical guidance, the pre-qualifying of independent evaluation teams, and the use of evaluation reference groups undoubtedly go some way towards ensuring the quality and credibility of CPEs. However, according to the peer review of the evaluation function, it leaves much of the burden of guarding the independence of the CPE to an M&E officer or M&E focal point who, in many instances, will have less authority than those officers whose programmes are being evaluated. As already mentioned, some recent or ongoing positive developments can be raised such as the set-up of the Decentralised	54, 9, 159.

Evaluation Team and the clarifications provided by the new Evaluation Policy in terms of expected roles, responsibilities, and reporting lines for M&E personnel at decentralised levels or the revised standard job description for M&E personnel at decentralised levels with additional reporting lines of M&E staff at the regional and country office levels.

As previously reported, several decentralised project evaluations are not subject to ex post quality assessment or published. Regional M&E Advisers may intervene and support, but this depends on whether the country office M&E staff bring these issues to their attention.

Information gathered throughout the interview phase reflects a focus on enhancing the quality of programme evaluations, although it does not explicitly detail the design, planning, and implementation processes. The new Evaluation Handbook in May 2024 puts a clear emphasis on establishing a quality and credibility assurance system, with the introduction of a new quality assurance system that includes the involvement of external assessors and quality assessments accompanying evaluation reports and management responses, as well as a gradual inclusion of all typologies of decentralised evaluations. This step will increase the volume of evaluations undergoing rigorous quality assurance.

The 2024 evaluation policy states that UNFPA will gradually include all types of decentralised evaluations (including project level and humanitarian evaluations) in the revamped evaluation quality assurance and assessment system.

Regional offices support country offices in evaluating programme outcomes. However, there is a need to encourage regions to invest in theory-based/ contribution analysis or outcome harvesting evaluation, as involvement is inconsistent. Challenges include reporting on significant indicators, such as family planning, which tend to plateau, and demonstrating UNFPA's impact amidst the contributions of multiple partners, highlighting the issue of collective accountability.

Element 8.3.2: Evaluations have improved their methodologies for data collection and analysis. Robust data analysis, mainstreaming of ethical considerations, stakeholder analysis and inclusion throughout the process are areas in which UNFPA can still improve.

The meta-analysis of quality assessments provides the Independent Peer Review Panel with useful insights into specific areas where the quality of evaluations (centralised and decentralised) can be improved. Although there has been a marked improvement in the overall quality of evaluations since 2019, there are areas that have not improved, and especially, the robustness of data analysis, stakeholder analysis and engagement of key stakeholders in the validation of findings and development of recommendations. The report recommended UNFPA push the quality of evaluations by paying further attention to these areas, as well as using more robust methodologies, and paying consistent attention to ethical considerations in all phases of the evaluation.

The self-assessment by UNFPA evaluation staff, and the external quality assessment review, identified evaluation methodology as an area for improvement. The Independent Peer Review Panel notes that the Evaluation Office is trying more innovative methodologies and approaches, such as the developmental evaluation on RBM, but detects some ambivalence towards innovation by some Evaluation Office staff. From the key informant interviews, there appears to be a level of frustration with the standard CPE methodology, where evaluation questions are determined mechanically by the OECD/DAC criteria, and less by the issues that emerge from a thorough analysis of the country context and the needs of evaluation users. CPEs are seen to reinforce the traditional "downstream" project model of UNFPA, not supporting the organisation's shift to "upstream" work nor the increase in the humanitarian portfolio. RPEs follow a similar methodology to CPEs and, in the view of the Independent Peer review Panel, show similar limitations.

The 2024 Evaluation Handbook now includes updated methodologies. UNFPA is piloting the use of generative AI in evaluations. It has used it in the desk review of the evaluation of the UNFPA strategic plan, 2022-25, and the third interagency meta-synthesis to support the UN Youth Strategy. It

explores the use of generative AI in the hope that it may enhance the accuracy and efficiency of data analysis. In 2024, all six regions conducted RPEs, which took a formative approach and adapted a conceptual framework developed as part of a centralised, formative evaluation of the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25. In this case, evidence from the RPEs fed into the global evidence base that, in turn, influenced the development of the new Strategic Plan 2025-29, as well as their future Regional Programmes.

Element 8.3.3: Evaluation reports present the evidence, findings, conclusions, and recommendations in a complete and balanced way.

A review of IEO's evaluations undertaken by the assessment team (published during the 2022-24 period) allows to conclude they are presented in a balanced manner, with supporting evidence and details consistent across findings, conclusions and recommendations.

However, appropriateness and completeness of evaluations appears to be a concern of UNFPA staff in the field due to the rigidity of the methodological requirements set out by the OECD methodology (see more detail in element 8.3.2).

Element 8.3.4: The methodology presented includes the methodological limitations and concerns for centralised evaluations, but not systematically yet for decentralised evaluations.
While not explicitly stated during interviews, the desktop review undertaken by the MOPAN assessment of a sample of evaluations (published during the 2022-24 period) attested to the clear documentation of methodologies inclusive of their limitations for centralised evaluation. Some of the documents also included mitigation strategies, and unforeseen issues. For instance, limitations to the methodology listed within the 2023 evaluation of the UNFPA to support population dynamics and data, including data extraction based on small sample sizes, data integrity and collection limitations, COVID-19 or conflict related disruptions, as well as availability of key stakeholders. These limitations were balanced with mitigation strategies. Furthermore, unanticipated challenges were also listed, demonstrating a comprehensive and transparent approach to methodological limitations and concerns. A significant challenge in evaluating outcomes is the plateauing of major indicators, such as those related to family planning, which complicates the measurement of progress. Additionally, there is difficulty in demonstrating UNFPA's specific impact due to the presence of multiple partners and the issue of collective accountability.

However, for decentralised evaluations, it doesn't appear systematically in practice. Limitations are not included for instance in the evaluation reports of the CPE in Papua New Guinea and Equatorial Guinea. As a positive recent development, the recent Evaluation handbook (May 2024) and related training workshops provide detailed guidance to evaluation reports at decentralised levels present methodology.

Element 8.3.5: A process exists to ensure the quality of all evaluations, but could be strengthened through the planned gradual incorporation of decentralised evaluations in the revamped evaluation quality assurance and assessment system.

The Evaluation Policy (2024) includes a description related to Quality Assurance and Assessments System. Guidance to ensure the quality of evaluations is also supported by additional documents such as the Evaluation Handbook, the Country Programme evaluation Management Kit, the guidance on evaluation quality assurance and assessment.

A specific indicator related to the quality of evaluations is presented in the IEO Annual Report submitted to the Executive Board and senior management. To ensure the credibility and quality of evaluations, all centralised evaluations and CPEs underwent an independent quality assessment to gauge the reliability of their findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Interviewees attested to the concerted effort to enhance the quality and credibility of evaluations through the implementation of a new quality assurance system.

However, the quality of evaluations decreased in 2023 with 90% of these reports externally rated as "good" or "higher", in comparison of 100% over the period 2019-21. Despite this slight decrease, the quality is overall good according to the Independent Peer Review Panel as already mentioned in element 8.3.1. (ie. 60%% of the 61 evaluations quality assessed between 2019 and 2021 were rated as "very good" and 40%% were rated as "good").

In addition, Country Programme Evaluations (CPEs) and Regional Programme Evaluations (RPEs), while rated as good quality in the quality assessments, appear to have a perfunctory use in the design of country and regional programme documents, and have limited strategic value for senior management in headquarters as mentioned by the Peer Review. However, as a positive development, to note that in 2024, all six regions conducted RPEs, which took a formative approach and adapted a conceptual framework developed as part of a centralised, formative evaluation of the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25. In this case, evidence from the RPEs fed into the global evidence base that, in turn, influenced the development of the new Strategic Plan 2025-29, as well as their future Regional Programmes. There was a strong engagement of senior management from the RO throughout the process - from the development of the TORs to data collection, stakeholder engagement, report finalisation and developing the management response. All six RPEs will have a direct influence and impact on the future RPs to be developed as part of the new Strategic Plan 2025-24.

As previously mentioned, a key progress in 2024 will be the gradual submission of all typologies of decentralised evaluations (including project level and humanitarian evaluations) in the revamped evaluation quality assurance and assessment system.

MI 8.3 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 8.4: [Evidence-based planning] Mandatory demonstration of the evidence base to design new interventions	Score
Overall MI rating	**Satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.40**
Element 1: A formal requirement exists to demonstrate how lessons from past interventions, thanks to monitoring and evaluation, are taken into account in the design of new programmes and interventions	4
Element 2: Clear feedback loops exist to feed lessons from past interventions into the design of new programmes and interventions	3
Element 3: Lessons from past interventions inform new programmes and interventions	3
Element 4: Incentives exist to apply lessons learned to new programmes and interventions	4
Element 5: The number/share of new operations designs that draw on lessons from evaluative approaches is made public	3
MI 8.4 Analysis	**Evidence documents**
Element 8.4.1: A formal requirement exists to demonstrate how lessons from past interventions have been taken into account in the design of new programmes. The Policy and Strategy Division oversees strengthening RBM and organisational effectiveness. The UNFPA Evaluation Policy (2024) states that the Division provides guidance to UNFPA business units on the use of evaluations results to improve organisational decision-making, accountability and institutional learning. The Division and the Independent Evaluation Office support UNFPA units to ensure evaluation plans are implemented properly. The Policy and Strategy Division monitors the implementation of management responses to evaluations, provides guidance to UNFPA units on the use of evaluation findings and lessons, and prepares the organisational management response to	54, 140, 100, 157.

the annual report on the evaluation function presented to the Executive Board.

The Evaluation policy also reminds that an evaluation should provide (…) recommendations and lessons into the decision-making processes of organisations and stakeholders."

The annual Evaluation Report also includes an indicator "Use of evaluation in programme development" which demonstrate how lessons from past programmes are taken into account in the design of new programmes. Since 2019, it is fully achieved (100%).

Interviewees also clearly demonstrated the way UNFPA and its partners actively incorporate lessons from past interventions into the design of new programmes (e.g.: Haiti, in the EECARO region). This is achieved through a combination of revising guidance based on past experiences, documenting and sharing lessons learned, fostering regional and cross-regional collaboration, and integrating evaluative evidence into new Country Programme Developments.

Element 8.4.2: Clear feedback loops exist to feed lessons into the design of new programmes and interventions for centralised evaluations but could be strengthened for decentralised evaluations.

The Evaluation policies (2019, 2024), the Evaluation Handbook (2024), the Strategy to enhance use through Communication and Knowledge Management 2022-25 emphasised the utility, dissemination and facilitation of use of evaluation. The peer review observed that IEO is proactive in communicating results for each centralised strategic evaluation and it exists evidence on the use of these evaluations. For instance, it was the case of the Development Evaluation on RBM at UNFPA, which contributed to strengthen RBM within UNFPA, as well as the Evaluation on the UNFPA Capacity for Humanitarian Action which informed the establishment of the Humanitarian Response Department. While the annual Evaluation Report includes a section on the use of centralised evaluations to foster change, decentralised evaluations are not included. This underlines a lack of strategic foresights in CPEs. Yet, these evaluations have a strong potential for learning. As a recent positive initiative, the IEO Decentralised Evaluation Team provided a detailed guidance to "Identify, Map and Use Evaluative Evidence to Demonstrably Inform Programming" - Regional (EECARegion)" through a webinar in August 2024 (after the cut-off of this assessment). It is planned to be repeated in all UNFPA regions with collaboration from RO M&E Advisers.

Element 8.4.3: Lessons from past interventions inform new programmes and interventions.

While there is a great commitment to using evidence from evaluations, more needs to be done in effectively informing, distilling lessons and embedding knowledge from evaluations in strategic, programmatic, and operational thinking. Allocation of adequate resources to the evaluation function is essential to maintaining the gains achieved across all key performance indicators.

Strong points include the use of evaluation findings, recommendations and lessons learned to improve organisational and United Nations system-wide performance toward the fulfilment of sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, and the accelerated implementation of the ICPD and other internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals, according to UNFPA's quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan. Notably, by generating evidence, evaluations enable informed management and decision-making. As part of a culture of accountability and managing for results, UNFPA seeks empirical evidence on the results achieved, using lessons learned to inform and improve programme design and effectiveness and to meet the needs of rights holders.

Furthermore, the Peer Review noted that between 2019 and 2022 three regional programmes and two sub-regional programmes were evaluated, primarily to inform the design of next programmes. The review of country programme document's sample also confirmed that lessons from past interventions inform new programmes and interventions (e.g.: Bangladesh, Central African Republic, Egypt). The annual report on evaluation provides additional examples on use of evaluation lessons

to inform programmes at the decentralised levels. For instance, in India, based on the recommendations of the CPE, the country office worked on mainstreaming the humanitarian response, strengthened partnerships with faith-based organisations to address social norms and harmful practices, reviewed gaps in the health system's response to the gender-based violence and developed state-specific strategies. In Nigeria, beyond to inform the development of the new country programme, the CPE was used to scale-up the establishment of forensic centres; replicate the GBV information management system in humanitarian and development settings; rationalise the number of implementing partners (from 54 to 34); and streamline the geographical footprint (from 18 to 14 states). An active use of lessons learned has also been demonstrated in the Kenya country office.

However, according to the 2022 Annual Report on the evaluation function, further efforts are needed to ensure all CPEs are designed and completed in a timely fashion to ensure the findings and recommendations are useful.

Latest, Mid-term Review of the SP includes an additional $1.3 million approved for the Independent Evaluation Office from core resources covering humanitarian evaluations and meta-synthesis, following the conclusions of a recently concluded independent peer review of the evaluation function.

Additionally, to facilitate evidence-based strategic dialogue informing new programming, the IEO contributed to bringing the findings and lessons of evaluations to bear on the strategic orientation and formulation of new country programmes through its participation in strategic dialogues and Programme Review Committee deliberations. As evidenced by recent strategic dialogue white papers and country programme documents, CPEs generated useful insights to shaping the strategic direction and priorities of country programmes. However, further efforts are needed to systematically respond to evidence in areas where UNFPA needs to either do more or work differently towards the three transformative results. Nevertheless, lessons learned feature as a strong component within the newly published Evaluation Handbook 2024.

Interviewees also clearly attest to the use of lessons learned to inform new programmes and interventions. As previously mentioned (element 8.4.1), UNFPA has effectively utilised lessons from past interventions to enhance new programmes, particularly in the realm of census data collection. The flexible approach to programme design, paired with the use of lessons learned, allows for innovative programme design informed by previous experiences. Nevertheless, the room for improvement remains in the use of lessons learned within strategic, programmatic and operational thinking.

Element 8.4.4: Incentives exist to apply lessons learned to new programmes and interventions.

The Independent Peer Review of UNFPA's Evaluation Function conducted in 2023 observed that, as compared to the 2013 Evaluation Policy, the 2019 Evaluation Policy sets out in further detail the "evaluation procedures, quality assurance and quality assessment, the enhancing the use of evaluations, system-wide evaluations and partnerships, and national evaluation capacity development".

The presence of structures and incentives that encourage the application of lessons learned to new programmes and interventions were demonstrated throughout the interview phase. Regional initiatives, such as the M&E Net Community, are in place to facilitate the sharing of experiences and insights across different regions. Additionally, cross-regional initiatives are designed to foster collaboration and knowledge exchange, exemplified by peer support activities in reviewing annual results plans. These initiatives serve as incentives for stakeholders to apply accumulated knowledge to enhance the effectiveness of new programmes and interventions. Finally, in 2024, exchange between Regional M&E Advisors occurred through meetings to coordinate the implementation of the SP evaluation and RPEs, through cross-regional training workshops that brought together M&E colleagues from regional and country levels, and from increased coordination by the Decentralised Evaluation Team at IEO.

Element 8.4.5: The number/share of new operations designs that draw on lessons from evaluative approaches is made public.

The Annual Evaluation Report reports the percentage of new country programme documents whose design was clearly informed by evaluation. Since 2019, all new country programme documents' design is informed by evaluation (above the target of 95%). The UNFPA evaluation function includes as one of the four purpose the evidence to inform development, humanitarian response and peace-responsive programming.

MI 8.4 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 8.5: [Poor performance tracked] Poorly performing interventions proactively identified, tracked and addressed	Score
Overall MI rating	Satisfactory
Overall MI score	3.25
Element 1: A system exists to identify poorly performing interventions	3
Element 2: Regular reporting tracks the status and evolution of poorly performing interventions	3
Element 3: A process for addressing poor performance exists, with evidence of its use	3
Element 4: The process clearly delineates the responsibility to take action	4
MI 8.5 Analysis	Evidence documents

Element 8.5.1: A system exists to identify poorly performing interventions well enough but it is not well known.

A corporate dashboard with key performance indicators is used to monitor the implementation of the strategic plan, assess the progress of various departments and programmes implemented by UNFPA's business units. The corporate dashboard includes among others, programmatic performance of the output indicators and the quarterly milestones of each BU, each region and division, and at the corporate level. Financial performance is detailed in the annual Statistical and financial review, which provides the financial perspective for UNFPA as a whole.

In Dashboard 2,0, every BU which their output indicator or quarterly milestones has a performance of less than 70% is flagged with a red triangle (if below 85% yet above 70% - then a yellow triangle is assigned). This enables users to easily see if the programmatic performance of a given unit/ region/ division/ corporate level is poorly performing. They can then access a list of all output and quarterly milestones to see the performance of each.

Dashboard2.0 also provides the budget utilisation, another performance measure, of each output and each intervention area, which can be used for detecting poorly performing interventions.

However, it seems that the existing system does not adequately address the identification of poorly performing interventions (in an operational sense). UNFPA uses the Quantum Plus system for planning and monitoring, linking results logic and financial resources. According to interviewees, there is a need for more up-to-date information concerning poorly performing interventions in evaluations and board reporting, with a specific emphasis on identifying poorly performing interventions. They noted that this is important, particularly in the context of speed in humanitarian crisis situations.

Despite overall positive perceptions, the survey shows that there is an important number of stakeholders who do not know whether UNFPA addresses any underperforming areas of intervention, or think that it does not do so (only financial and implementing partners were asked this question).

2, 4.

Figure 41: UNFPA addresses any underperforming areas of intervention, through technical support or changing funding patterns if appropriate

Legend: ■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree
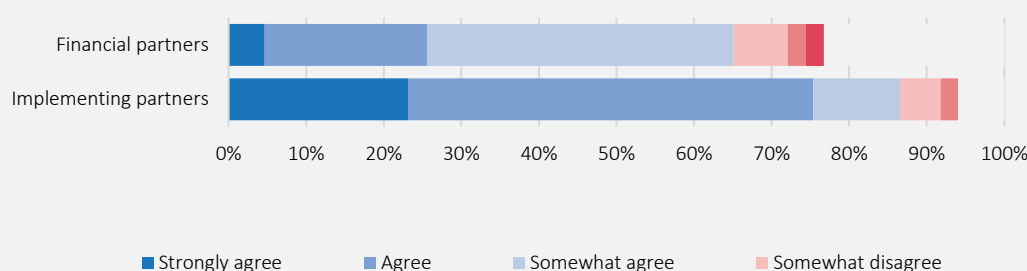
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

Element 8.5.2: Poorly performing interventions' status and evolution are tracked through the corporate dashboard, but less reported to EB.

Reporting guidelines exist for the "Results Planning, Monitoring and Reporting in myResults" and the "Reporting on the Performance Monitoring Framework" including scorecards for the annual report, dated 2016 and 2019 respectively. Within myResults, reporting appears to be conducted based on both quarterly monitoring (six weeks after the end of each quarter or December-January for Q4) and annual planning (March) reporting periods. Details on the monitoring of poor performance is managed through the myResults tool, with alerts sent for incomplete monitoring and approval of reporting required by the system on a quarterly basis.

The corporate dashboard tracks the status and evolution of poor performance interventions. However, the "Results Planning, Monitoring and Reporting in myResults" report does not include a specific section related to reporting poorly performing interventions (it includes on challenges and on lessons learned). In addition, the Annual Report of the Executive Director does not include a section related to poor performing interventions. Some interviewees recognised the EB could be better informed on this issue, and would benefit from more up to date information (Quantum+ would facilitate this).

Element 8.5.3: The process for addressing poor performance is precised through a guidance document and its use is to a large extent proved.

A document "How to respond to alerts in myDashboard" exists to provide guidance regarding the tracking to poorly performing interventions.

Its use is demonstrated by the fact that according to UNFPA Dashboard2.0 is accessed by over 85% of the COs on a monthly basis. It is extensively used by COs and ROs to monitor their performance of their units. The DED/P reviews all BUs with a red triangle in any of the key performance indicators, including budget utilisation and programmatic performance, with each regional director on a semi-annually basis. Regional Directors cascade those discussions to ROs and COs.

However, throughout the interview phase the recognised need for up-to-date and relevant data in evaluating and reporting on poor performance interventions was evident, particularly in the context of decentralised evaluations in humanitarian settings, while methods currently in place to address this remain unclear.

Still, the Executive Director (ED) reports play a crucial role in this process, with country programme reports serving as a primary source for identification of gaps and issues at least once a year. These reports, along with regional programme reports, are scrutinised at the headquarters level, and quality

checks are conducted annually at the country offices. However, there are areas identified for improvement as highlighted during interviews, such as demonstrating impact, managing complex indicators, and enhancing data management systems to efficiently collect and consolidate information.

Element 8.5.4: The process delineates the responsibility to take action.

QuantumPlus ensures that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and adhered to. All Business Units in UNFPA prepare annual Results and Resources Plan (RRP) outlining their outputs for the year, as derived from CPDs or other corporate IRFs. RRP includes indicators with baselines and targets, milestones with targets, responsible personnel, and implementation details such as activities, IP engagements, and required human and financial resources. Each milestone lead is responsible for monitoring and reporting progress on their milestones. The head of the office approves the RRP, oversees its implementation, and reports on its progress. Regional Offices (ROs) review and ensure the quality of annual results reporting by all Country Offices (COs) within their respective regions.

MI 8.5 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 8.6: [Follow-up systems] Clear accountability system ensures responses and follow-up to and use of evaluation recommendations	Score
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**4.00**
Element 1: Evaluation reports include a management response (or has one attached or associated with it)	4
Element 2: Management responses include an action plan and agreement clearly stating responsibilities and accountabilities	4
Element 3: A timeline for implementation of key recommendations is proposed	4
Element 4: An annual report on the status of implementation of evaluation recommendations is made public	4
MI 8.6 Analysis	**Evidence documents**

Element 8.6.1: Evaluation reports include a management response.

According to the 2023 Annual Report on the evaluation function, management responses were submitted for all (100%%) of corporate and decentralised programme evaluations, demonstrating the consistent achievement of the target since 2014.

Figure 42: Management response – 2023 Annual Report on the evaluation function

Key performance indicator (%)	Description	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Overall assessment
7. Management response submission	Percentage of completed programme-level evaluation reports with management response submitted	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	Achieved

Source: Annual report on the evaluation function 2023

47, 79, 1, 18.

Element 8.6.2: Management responses include an action plan and agreement clearly stating responsibilities and accountabilities.

According to the sample management responses to specific evaluations (Formative evaluation of the UNFPA support to population dynamics and data, Formative evaluation of the UNFPA support to adolescents and youth, Formative Evaluation of UNFPA's Engagement in UNDS Reform), UNFPA's management responses are clearly stating responsibilities and accountabilities in a table presented like below:

Figure 43: Table presenting management responses

Action point title	Action point text	Due date (MM/DD/YYYY)	Lead implementing unit [specify only one per action point only]	Lead implementing and reporting staff Owner [specify only one per action point only]	Additional units involved in implementation (if any)

Source: Management responses to evaluation

Element 8.6.3: A timeline for implementation of key recommendations is proposed.

As stated in the 8.6.2., management responses are clearly stating responsibilities and accountabilities as well as a due date for each action point. Furthermore, the overall structure and approach to integrating evaluation findings was evident throughout the interview phase, however the precise schedule remains unclear. Nevertheless, as previously mentioned, the proposed timeline for the implementation of key recommendations is intricately linked to the organisation's commitment to integrating evaluation findings into its decision-making process. Mechanisms are in place to guarantee the implementation and tracking of evaluation recommendations, ensuring accountability and continuous learning. Stakeholders are actively involved in the recommendation formulation stage and in defining the management response process, creating a series of milestones to verify the effective use of evaluations.

Element 8.6.4: An annual report on the status of implementation of evaluation recommendations is made public.

The 2023 Annual Report on the evaluation function, UNFPA has a management response tracking system implemented by the Policy and Strategy Division along with other measures.

The Policy and Strategic Division (PSD) monitors the implementation of evaluation recommendations for both centralised and decentralised evaluations. UNFPA achieved the annual implementation rate of 94% in 2023 – four percentage points over the Strategic Plan, 2022-25, target. Further, the implementation rate of centralised recommendation actions, which, for many years, lagged behind the overall rate for the regions and the organisation, reached 96%% in 2022, the highest in 10 years and maintained a robust implementation rate of 94% in 2023.

MI 8.6 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 8.7: [Uptake of lessons] Uptake of lessons learned and best practices from evaluations	Score
Overall MI rating	**Highly satisfactory**
Overall MI score	**3.75**
Element 1: A complete and current repository of evaluations and their lessons learned and best practices, is available for use	3
Element 2: A mechanism for distilling and disseminating lessons learned internally exists	4
Element 3: A dissemination mechanism to partners and other stakeholders is available and employed	4
Element 4: Evidence is available that UNFPA is applying lessons learned and best practices	4
MI 8.7 Analysis	**Evidence documents**

Element 8.7.1: A complete and current repository of evaluations and their lessons learned and best practices, is available for use but this repository is not fully complete yet.

The independent Evaluation office has a dedicated website, including key documents, evaluation office reports, evaluation database, resources, among others.
It acts as repository containing up-to-date collection of evaluations, which includes the lessons learned and best practices for utilisation.

However, as evidenced by the peer review, project evaluation do not form part of the central repository of evaluations shared internally and published on the evaluation website.

As a positive recent development, the new Evaluation Policy (2024) commits to quality assuring and publishing all evaluations that are produced by the organisation. This means that all decentralised evaluations that were previously not included in the EQA or in the repository will be included in both as of 2024.

Element 8.7.2: A mechanism for distilling and disseminating lessons learned internally exists.

The IEO launched in 2022 a Strategy to enhance evaluation use through communications and knowledge management. Key to this strategy is the introduction of "enhanced lessons learned products, including system-wide and joint exercises". This strategy defines an audience, including internally Executive Board members and UNFPA Senior management and technical staff at HQ, regional and country offices. It also defines how IEO will communicate and a minimum communication package, including obligatory tools (evaluation report, executive summary, brief, country or thematic case studies, video, presentation, webinar, newsflash, website, social media) and optional tools (podcasts, blogs, interactive snapshots, thematic briefs and notes). It also plans knowledge management approaches to increase accessibility of evaluation (evaluation managers participate in key meetings, strategic participation in learning events, inclusion of evaluation results in talking points for senior management at meetings). Aligned to the 2022 Strategy to enhance evaluation use, the 2023 Annual Report on evaluation highlights an initiative in the Europe and Central Asia region. Evaluation of regional projects (covering half the region), for example, have prompted knowledge-sharing sessions showcasing effective approaches to tackling social norm change, a regional priority. These sessions also help to replicate successes and share lessons. The results of the evaluation have informed the development of strategies for the second phase of the regional projects. The evaluation findings were also showcased at global fora such as the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI), expanding the external knowledge base and contributing to organisational guidance development. The Annual Report on Evaluation contains a section describing lessons learnt from a selection of evaluations for that year.

8, 121, 131.

To support the Division of External Relations towards the development of the Strategic Plan 2022-25, IEO, in 2021, extracted evidence and lessons from centralised evaluations, on partnerships, communications and resource mobilisation. IEO has also developed a strategy on AI-powered evaluation (2024), for leveraging its benefits and reducing risks and harms. Following the strategy, AI tools and methodologies are being piloted in evaluation exercises to increase the effectiveness and timeliness of evaluation evidence and lessons.

Element 8.7.3: A dissemination mechanism to partners and other stakeholders is available and employed.

The mechanism described above is applicable for external stakeholders. The external audience planned in the 2022 Strategy includes externally Implementing partners, national governments, Members States, donors, civil society, parliamentarians, national planners and decision makers, young evaluators, wider group of stakeholders.

In line with General Assembly resolutions 70/1 (endorsing the 2030 Agenda), 69/237 (building

capacity for the evaluation of development activities at the country level) and 77/283 (strengthening voluntary national reviews through country-led evaluation) as well as the 2020 QCPR, UNFPA is part of multi-stakeholder partnerships with governments, voluntary organisations for professional evaluation, civil society organisations and academia, among others, in order to support national evaluation capacities. For instance, IEO is participating to Evaluation advocacy and multi-stakeholder partnerships. The Evaluation Office co-leads the Decade of EVALUATION for Action, also the Eval4Action campaign, with the EvalYouth Global Network and the Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation to advance global advocacy on influential evaluation and national evaluation systems and capacities, to support COVID-19 recovery and equitable and inclusive delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals. The IEO is also an active member of the Global SDG Synthesis Coalition, which is synthesising evaluative evidence across five-SDG_related pillars and is actively leading and participating in numerous UNEG Working Groups where approaches and lessons are shared.

As described in its last Annual Report, IEO also supported strategic initiatives and events to mobilise a range of stakeholders and share good practices and lessons learned on strengthening inclusive national evaluation systems. IEO supported the fifth Forum international francophone de l'évaluation organised by the Réseau francophone de l'évaluation, in which IEO organised a pre-conference workshop on career development in M&E for young people; and a panel, in partnership with UNDP and EvalYouth, on "Meaningful youth engagement in evaluation: A practical example from the United Nations." In addition, IEO, in partnership with UNICEF and the Green Climate Fund, led a panel at the Asian Evaluation Week organised by the Asian Development Bank and the Government of China, on "AI-powered evaluation: Maximising efficiency while minimising risks." IEO partnered with the Hamad Bin Khalifa University in Qatar in the annual conference on evaluation research in the Global South, engaging in panels on "How AI can empower evaluation in the Global South" and on "Enriching meaningful engagement of youth in evaluation in the Global South." In addition, IEO in partnership with UNICEF, has conducted three interagency exercises, synthesising lessons from UN evaluations related to the UN Youth Strategy. The lessons are widely disseminated among UN agencies and beyond, as for example, at the Youth Ecosoc 2023, a side event was held on the lessons from the second meta-synthesis exercise, targeting youth, implementing partners, Member States and UN agencies.

Element 8.7.4: Evidence is available that UNFPA is applying lessons learned and best practices.

The review of country programme documents shows there is a section on lessons learned from past programmes. Survey respondents are overall positive regarding the capacity of UNFPA to learn lessons from previous experience.

Lessons learned feature as drivers for improvements across UNFPA programmes. For example, the strengthening of alignment between national needs and UNFPA country programmes is a key objective of the "Strategic dialogue" priority, set out within the UNFPA Programme Review and Approval Guidance Note, resulting from the learnings of successes from previous Programme Review Committee reports. Several field staff interviewed through this assessment confirmed that lessons learned are drawn from past interventions in the design of new programmes and interventions.

Figure 44: UNFPA learns lessons from previous experience, rather than repeating the same mistakes

Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)
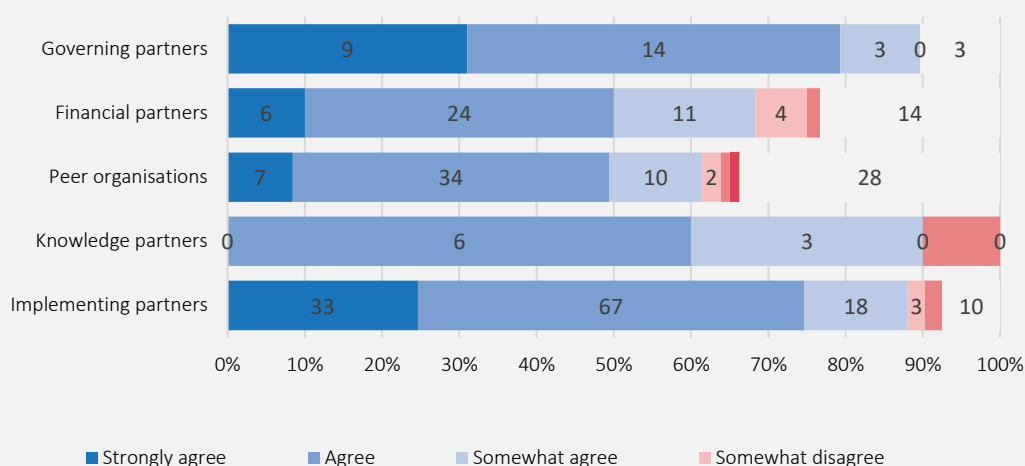
MI 8.7 Evidence confidence	High confidence

RESULTS

KPI 9: Development objectives are achieved and results contribute to normative and cross-cutting goals	KPI score
Satisfactory	2.88

At outcome level, the current pace of acceleration remains inadequate to achieve the three transformative results by 2030 according to the Mid-Term Review. The factors hindering acceleration are related to humanitarian crises and their adverse impact on inequalities and health systems, discriminative gender and social norms, inadequate policy and legal frameworks, and absence of data and evidence to guide interventions.

UNFPA has achieved most of its SP's planned outputs, except mainly in Population and for several (sub)-outputs on Gender and humanitarian action. Indeed, five of its six outputs were achieved in 2023 according to the Mid-Term Review highlighting an overall positive performance: (i) Policy and accountability; (2) Quality of care and services; (3) Gender and social norms; (5) Humanitarian action; and (6) Adolescents and youth. However, the Population Change and Data (4) output was partially achieved. In addition, at the level of specific (sub)-outputs, despite some progress on Gender and social norms, most of (sub)outputs were not achieved (four out of seven). On humanitarian action, there is also a mixed balanced: half of the ten (sub)-outputs were not achieved.

Interventions have improved to a large extent with regard to gender equality and women's empowerment despite some remaining progress to achieve in specific indicators. As a cross-cutting issue, gender-related indicators are integrated in multiple Strategic outputs. On one hand, some indicators were exceeded such as the indicator 3.6. related to the following-up of human rights recommendations related to the indicator 3.6. "following up human rights recommendations related to social and gender norms and discrimination" (85% of countries accepted those recommendations above of the target of 84%) and the indicator 6.4. on improving skills of adolescent girls (6.4 million of marginalised girls reached out versus a target of 6 million). In addition, in 2022, UNFPA met or exceeded the requirements for 16 out of 16 applicable performance indicators of UN-SWAP 2.0 Performance. UNFPA maintained its status as a top performing entity, achieving a stronger performance than the average results of the Funds and Programmes and of the UN system as a whole. While UNFPA maintained overall UN-SWAP 2.0 compliance, there was a decrease of one indicator rating from exceeds to meets requirements (from 76% in 2022, compared to 82% in 2021). UNFPA was encouraged to continue by working to exceed all UN-SWAP 2.0 requirements, particularly for the three indicators ared as meeting requirements: Audit, Policy and Equal representation of Women". On the other hand, beyond UN-SWAP 2.0, other targets were not achieved regarding SP's indicators such as the indicator 5.3. related to the inclusion of women and young people in decision-making in humanitarian action. Regarding gender and social norms, while this output was partially achieved in 2022, it was

achieved in 2023. Out of the seven sub-outputs, a majority (four) of them were not achieved and three were fully achieved[7].

Interventions have partially improved environmental sustainability. One of the key limitations to assess this MI is the absence of dedicated climate change strategy (the ESS is focusing more on the reduction of the carbon footprint) and results frameworks, and the lack of indicators to assess the progress at intervention level. One key achievement of UNFPA was linked to the fact that 29% of countries have integrated SRHRR and Programme of Action into the national climate policies (above the target of 18%). However, some (sub)outputs were not achieved particularly those linked to data related to megatrends including climate change.

Interventions have largely improved human rights and strengthened its results benefiting populations left furthest behind. UNFPA's interventions in human rights and LNBO have seen a reinforced commitment of UNFPA through the new 2022-25 SP (2024). UNFPA has invested in "populations left furthest behind" and "reaching those furthest behind first" over the recent years. A dedicated LNOB operational plan is implemented since 2022. Several outputs of this SP are related directly or indirectly to human rights and LNOB. Most of the time they were achieved in 2023.

Interventions in innovation have largely improved. The integrated midterm review and progress report on the implementation of the UNFPA strategic plan, 2022-25 (2024) states that UNFPA expanded its efforts to advance innovations by women, for women and with women to accelerate the realisation of the ICPD Programme of Action and the Fund's three transformative results. Innovations were supported by UNFPA in 110 countries and territories, reaching 23 million people through more than 200 initiatives. 10 women-led social enterprises received USD 600,000 of seed funding and mentorship, reaching nearly 300,000 women and girls in 21 countries.

MI 9.1: [Results obtained] Interventions assessed as having achieved their objectives and results (analysing differential results across target groups, and changes in national development policies and programmes or system reforms)	Score
MI rating	**Satisfactory**
MI score	**3**

4. Highly satisfactory: The organisation achieves all or almost all intended significant development, normative and humanitarian objectives at the output and outcome level. Results are differentiated across target groups.

3. Satisfactory: The organisation either achieves at least a majority of stated output and outcome objectives (more than 50% if stated) or the most important of stated output and outcome objectives is achieved

2. Unsatisfactory: Half or less than half of stated output and outcome level objectives is achieved

1. Highly unsatisfactory: Less than half of stated output and outcome objectives has been achieved, including one or more very important output and outcome level objectives

MI 9.1 Analysis	Evidence documents
Methodological limit: as highlighted in KPI 7, the annual report does not detail out the degree of results attributed to UNFPA (contribution analysis) because this a common agreement across UN agencies that this is not an ethical way of reporting. Consequently, this section focuses on outputs and outcomes considering UNFPA's reporting remains dominated by the output level. Our assessment of results is based on a document review of outputs and outcomes at the global and country levels, presented in UNFPA's Annual Reports of the Executive Director 2019-23 on progress in implementing the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25 and its annexes and the two Integrated midterm reviews and progress reports on the implementation of the UNFPA strategic plan, 2022-25 and 2018-21. We used country-level information from the aforementioned Annual Reports of the Executive Director (Annex 3 – Results achieved at the country level – 2023 Orange Book of Results) and 11 country/regional programme evaluations (CPE) from the sample countries chosen for this MOPAN assessment. **UNFPA has achieved most of its SP's planned outputs, with the exception of shortcomings in Population Change and Data and several (sub)-outputs on Gender and humanitarian action. However, at the outcome level, the**	15, 80, 24, 36, 61, 146, 148, 150, 33, 33.

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[7] Those achieved include availability of platform for dialogue, strengthened social movements, following-up human rights recommendations related to social and gender norms and discrimination, collected and reported social and gender norm evidence. Those not achieved are related to (sub)national mechanism to address social and gender norms, capacity for changing discriminatory social and gender norms, promotive positive masculinities, following up human rights recommendations related to social and gender norms and discriminations. They are impacted mainly by political push-back.

current pace of acceleration remains inadequate to achieve the three transformative results by 2030 at a global level, according to the Mid-Term Review.

As mentioned earlier, UNFPA's strategic plan has six interconnected output areas:
- (1) Policy and accountability;
- (2) Quality of care and services;
- (3) Gender and social norms;
- (4) Population Change and Data;
- (5) Humanitarian action; and
- (6) Adolescents and youth.

At output level, UNFPA has fully achieved five of its six outputs in 2023, according to the midterm review, highlighting an overall positive performance. However, the Population Change and Data (4) output was only partially achieved (89%). According to the mid-term review, UNFPA attributes the cause to the fact that "some countries still struggle to initiate census and other data collection mechanisms, primarily due to conflicting priorities in the context of recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. Humanitarian crises also hamper efforts in generating data and utilising it for policy changes in several countries." It may also suggest that UNFPA has de-emphasised its role in population development.

In addition, at the level of specific (sub)-outputs, despite some progress on Gender and social norms, most of (sub)outputs were not achieved (four out of seven). On humanitarian action, there is also a mixed balanced: half of the ten (sub)-outputs were not achieved.

Figure 45: Output scorecard

	Output	Performance against 2023 targets	Total expenses (in millions of dollars)	
			Regular	**Other**
1	Policy and Accountability	117%	61.1	37.7
2	Quality of care and services	154%	86.8	476.0
3	Gender and social norms	96%	41.4	175.8
4	Population change and data	89%	40.6	30.9
5	Humanitarian action	93%	24.7	201.2
6	Adolescents and youth	120%	30.2	74.9

Green: Fully achieved   Orange: Partially achieved

Source: Mid-term review of the Strategic Plan 2022-25 (2024)

At **outcome** level, the 2025 targets for the three transformative outcomes are that:
(1) By 2025, the reduction in the unmet need for family planning has accelerated
(2) Outcome 2: By 2025, the reduction of preventable maternal deaths has accelerated
(3) Outcome 3: By 2025, the reduction in gender-based violence and harmful practices has accelerated.

There is no evidence that the introduction of accelerators and shifts has led to a marked

acceleration. Only some countries have acceleration rates, if maintained, to achieve the transformation results. The factors hindering acceleration are related to humanitarian crises and their adverse impact on inequalities and health systems, discriminative gender and social norms, inadequate policy and legal frameworks, and absence of data and evidence to guide interventions.

- **Progress against Outcome 1, reducing the unmet need for family planning, has slowed down considerably**. Although it decreased by 20% worldwide since the adoption of the ICPD Programme of Action in 1994, that progress has stagnated since 2021, at 8.5%, for any method. UNFPA attributes the slowdown to several factors, including: "(a) population growth, which increases the number of women of reproductive age; (b) limited access to and choice of contraceptives, especially in low-income countries; (c) cultural, religious and social norms; (d) gender inequalities that limited women's autonomy regarding their reproductive choices; (e) the lack of favourable legal frameworks; and (f) the COVID-19 pandemic."(DP/FPA/2024/4 [Part I]). However, it should be noted since 2017, the countries included in the UNFPA Supplies Partnership (48 countries with the highest rates of unmet need for family planning), reduced their collective unmet need by 5%, highlighting the contribution of this programme. Factors that meanwhile enabled countries such as Ghana, Jordan or the Philippines to make progress, were generating data to locate the most vulnerable populations, focusing on rural populations, enhancements in education to bridge the knowledge gap on family planning, increasing advocacy and applying innovative and digital tools for supply chain management and demand generation.

- **Progress against Outcome 2: reducing preventable maternal deaths, has also stagnated between 2016 and 2022, and the world is not on track to end preventable maternal deaths by 2030.** Although between 2000 and 2020, global maternal mortality declined by 34%, with significant progress notably between 2000 and 2015, and LDCs (-2.8% annually), and although UNFPA programme countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia have achieved the SDG maternal mortality target of 70 per 100,000 live births, UNFPA estimates that "more than 80% of countries will not achieve their national maternal mortality targets by 2030." (DP/FPA/2024/4 [Part I]). UNFPA explains this through "(a) health-system failures, including weak supply chains and lack of competent health staff; (b) insufficient access to and availability of critical life-saving maternal and neonatal health care for marginalised populations, due to social determinants such as income, education, race and ethnicity; (c) lack of public trust in some health systems; and (d) the existence of harmful gender and social norms." (ibidem).

  Where progress was made, such as in the Colombian Department of Chocó, which reduced maternal deaths by 43% between 2022 and 2023, UNFPA attributes it at least partly to the fact that the accelerators in the UNFPA Strategic Plan were applied. Those included focusing on "leaving no-one behind", the implementation of a national acceleration plan, and the introduction of innovative initiatives (such as mobile applications to register newborns).

- Progress against **Outcome 3** is uneven and not fully clear. **There is a lack of data to determine the reduction of GBV**, but there has been some progress in reducing female genital mutilation and child marriage. Data on GBV was not yet available, although examples of partial success exist. For instance, UNFPA's advocacy efforts paid off in some countries which took measures to accelerate progress to end GBV, including Argentina (with a dedicated law to prevent GBV online) and Somalia (bill criminalising rape and indecency).

- The **reduction in female genital mutilation, one of the three TRs, has evolved positively**. The rate of reduction in female genital mutilation was higher (15%) from 2016-21 compared to 9% from 2011-16. Of the 25 countries with the highest incidence of FGM, ten made significant progress in terms of a decline in the practice and ten more showed some progress; five countries had no significant change to report). UNFPA and UNICEF continued to lead the largest global programme to accelerate the elimination of female genital mutilation in 17 countries. Among them, 14 now have legal and policy frameworks

banning female genital mutilation. Among the threats to progress is notably the medicalisation of FGM – i.e. FGM executed by health personnel.
- **UNFPA reports a decline in child, early, and forced marriage, but the current rate of decline is insufficient to meet the 2030 target**. Today, one in five young women aged 20-24 were married as children (in comparison of one in four, ten years ago). This reduction has only accelerated slightly, from 1.4% (2011-16) to 2% (2016-21) since UNFPA prioritised the ending of child marriage as one of its 3TRs.

Detailed analysis at output level

As of 2023, key achievements by outputs include:

- On policy and accountability: out of the 11 sub-outputs, the majority (eight) were fully achieved, only one was not achieved (integration of population change within policies related to the 3TRs), and two will be reported in 2024.
  Those fully achieved included:
- 69% of countries have integrated SRHR as well as the prevention and response to GBV and harmful practices into the universal health coverage-related policies and plans, and other relevant laws, policies, plans, and accountability frameworks (beyond the target of 54% in 2023). Concrete examples illustrate this key achievement.
- 68% of countries have included sexual and reproductive services as part of their financial protection mechanisms and risk pooling and pre-payment schemes (beyond the target of 67% in 2023).
- 66% of countries have integrated SRHR into the national youth-related policies, development plans or strategies (beyond the target of 60% in 2023).
- 64% of countries have made a national commitment to end preventable maternal deaths through a costed national action plan/s, strategy, laws, political commitment or any other mechanism (beyond the target of 55%).
- 72% of countries have multiples stakeholder mechanisms to support the acceleration of TR and IPCD Programme of Action (beyond the target of 56%).
- 29% of countries have SRHR and Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development priorities into the national climate policies (beyond the target of 18%).
- 49% of countries have laws and regulations aligned with international human rights standards that support the realisation of universal access to SRHR, including related to one or more of the 3TRs (beyond the target of 46%).

These key achievements are illustrated through the review of CPEs, including for instance:
- Angola CP integrated SRH service and rights for young people and marginalised populations, as well as contributed to GBV prevention.
- In Syria, the programme made efforts under SHR in contributing to strengthening the health systems, enhancing service delivery and enhancing capacity of the country to access to comprehensive multisectoral GBV.
- In Sierra Leone, UNFPA contributed to strengthening of the national health system to provide high-quality, integrated SRH abilities and FP services, as well as facilitated enhanced demand for SRH, FP and GBV response, especially among adolescent and young people.
- In Lesotho, UNFPA contributed to the enhancement of policies and strategies which are gender responsive to SRHR needs of adolescents and young people. UNFPA contributed to improving the capacity of the government in development and delivery of integrated gender-responsive SRHR services in the country.

However, one (sub)-output was not achieved: 48% of countries have national development plans addressing SRHR and gender equality that explicitly integrate population changes (below the target of 54%).

- On quality of care and services: out of the 14 sub-outputs, most of them (nine) were fully

achieved, some of them (three) were not achieved, and two didn't have updated data available.

Those fully achieved included among others:
- 78 of countries met at least 75% of their requirement of midwifery professionals for the sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn and adolescent health care (beyond the target of 60%).
- 48% of countries have national and/ or subnational mechanisms for accreditation of midwife education and training institutions and their programmes are in line with International Confederation of Midwives (beyond the target of 38%).
- 26% of countries have at least 50% of women aged 30-49 years screened for cervical cancer at least once, or more often, and for lower or higher age groups, according to national programmes or policies (beyond the target of 25%).
- 76% of countries scaled up new adaptation to improve the availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality of services related to TRs (beyond the target of 50%).
- 39% of countries have safe and ethical information management systems for GBV (beyond the target of 35%).
- 43% of countries have national standards for the provision of SRH services to adolescents (beyond the target of 37%).
- 48% of countries have a mechanism where women, adolescents and youth have access to a safe and accessible channel to report sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA).

However, several (sub)-outputs were not achieved, notably in terms of client satisfaction, scaling up quality service provision and applying GBV minimum standards in emergency contexts.
- 13% of countries have a mechanism for getting client satisfaction modalities for the provision to the services related to SRH (below the target of 18%).
- 24% of countries in which at least half of the government-led health facilities provided the comprehensive package of SRH (below the target of 48%).
- 69% of countries were affected by emergencies realising the inter-agency minimum standards for GBV programming.

- On gender and social norms: out of the seven sub-outputs, a majority (four) of them were not achieved and three were fully achieved. Those not achieved are related to (sub)national mechanism to address social and gender norms, capacity for changing discriminatory social and gender norms, promotive positive masculinities, following up human rights recommendations related to social and gender norms and discriminations. More details are included in MI 9.2.

- On population change and data: out of the nine sub-outputs, most of them (seven) were not achieved and two were only achieved in terms of strengthened capacity to measure population access to essential services related to SRHRR and strengthened civil registration and vital statistics systems. Those not achieved included:
- 41% of countries have SRH indicated routinely collected as part of the national health information systems and made publicly available (below the target of 48%).
- 32% of countries collect, map, and report disaggregated data on the incidence of GBV and harmful practices (below the target of 37%).
- 66% of countries produce key population data outputs (below the target of 83%).
- 37% of countries conducted population situation analysis on population changes and diversity and the impact of mega-trends (below the target of 44%).
- 12% of countries produced UNFPA-prioritised SDG indicators domestically.
- 47% of countries conducted vulnerability assessments (below the target of 54%).
- 48% collected and used georeferenced census data (below the target of 61%)

These mixed achievements are confirmed through the review of CPEs at field level, such as:
- In Haiti, the completion of the census was blocked by instability and troubles of the period.
- In Lesotho, UNFPA contributed to strengthening the country's statistics systems through

supporting different ministries. There are still data needs that could be an opportunity to support generation of large-population-based based surveys to inform programming in addition to enhanced advocacy for utilisation of population data for decision-making.

- On humanitarian actions : out of the ten sub-outputs, there is mixed achievement: five of them were not achieved and five of them were achieved.
  Those achieved are related to the inclusion of women and young people in inter-agency co-ordination mechanism, decision-making in humanitarian action, women and peace. In detail, this includes:
- The proportion of countries affected by humanitarian crisis that have a functioning inter-agency co-ordination mechanisms or platform to address GBV and SRHRR (all sub-indicators are beyond those targeted).
- The proportion of countries responding to humanitarian, climate, health or other crises that include women, young people and those affected by UNFPA core "left furthest behind" factors in decision-making mechanisms (all sub-indicators are beyond those targeted).
- 43 peace-responsive processes inclusive of young women are supported by UNFPA (target of 42%).
  A specific annex dedicated to humanitarian results was produced in 2023. UNFPA's rapid response efforts in 50 crisis-affected countries in 2023 led to over 10 million people accessing essential sexual and reproductive health services. From Haiti to Ukraine to Yemen and beyond, over 3,600 health facilities were supported to provide life-saving care. More than 4.2 million people found safety and protection from GBV.

Those not achieved are related to access to life-saving services, youth and peace, strengthened data to support humanitarian preparedness and response, needs assessment of crisis-affected population, minimum initial service package for SRH. In detail, this includes:
- Three countries have adopted a youth, peace and security framework (below the target of five countries).
- 62% of preparedness and operational response countries have Common Operational Datasets on Population Statistics available online (below the target of 86%).
- 73% of countries with humanitarian crises that conducted rapid needs assessments of affected populations at the onset of the crises (below the target of 91%).
- 34% of countries performed a readiness assessment to provide minimum initial service package (MISP) for SRH in Crisis Situations within the past 12 months.
- The number of women, adolescents and youth benefited from life-saving interventions in humanitarian settings (all the sub-indicators were below those targeted).

These key achievements are illustrated through the review of CPE, including for instance:
- Angola CP contributed to mitigate SRH crisis in provinces affected by droughts.
- In Haiti, UNFPA was able to successfully develop a proactive strategy positioning at the heart of the national response system to humanitarian crises. UNFPA thus obtained that access to SRH care and GBV are integrated into the priorities of the response system.

- On adolescents and youth: out of the seven sub-outputs, almost all of them (eight) were achieved, except one not achieved related to strengthened evidence on youth aspirations for marriage, fertility, and gender roles (38% of countries collect evidence above the target of 46%).
  Those achieved includes in detail:
- 36% of countries operationalised in-school comprehensive sexuality education following international standards (beyond the target of 30%).
- 32% of countries operationalised out-of-school comprehensive sexuality education following international technical and programme guidance (beyond the target of 26%).
- 73% of countries involved young participation in policy-making (beyond the target of 63%).
- 9.9 million marginalised adolescent girls reached by girl-centred programmed improved their skills of adolescent girls (beyond the target of 6.5 million).

- 82 countries promoted youth-led innovative initiatives (beyond the target of 70 countries). 43% of countries where human papillomavirus vaccine roll-out initiatives integrated SRH information and services for adolescent girls (beyond the target of 33%).

Results Snapshot	
Sexual and Reproductive Health	
10.6 million	Total number of people reached with UNFPA-supported sexual and reproductive health services in 50 countries
2.7 million	People reached with family planning information and services in UNFPA-supported facilities in 44 countries.
2.2 million	Adolescents and youth (ages 10 to 24) reached with adolescent sexual and reproductive health information and services in 46 countries
956,000	Assisted safe deliveries in UNFPA-assisted facilities in 39 countries
25,000	People reached with cash and voucher assistance in 12 countries
11,900	Personnel trained on MISP for sexual and reproductive health in 39 countries
3,648	Health facilities supported by UNFPA in 48 countries
808	Mobile clinics supported by UNFPA in 36 countries
Gender-Based Violence	
4.2 million	Total number of people reached with gender-based violence prevention, risk mitigation and response services in 50 countries
925,300	Dignity kits distributed in 48 countries
33,000	Women reached with humanitarian cash and voucher assistance for GBV case management and/or other response and risk mitigation measures in 23 countries
30,200	Non-specialized humanitarian workers or front-line workers trained/oriented on core concepts and guidelines related to gender-based violence in 51 countries
1,690	Safe spaces for women and girls supported by UNFPA in 46 countries
939	Youth-friendly spaces for recreation, vocational training and community outreach in 29 countries

Source: Mid-term review of the Strategic Plan

MI 9.1 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 9.2: [Gender equality] Interventions assessed as having helped improve gender equality and women's empowerment	Score
MI rating	Satisfactory
MI score	3
4. Highly satisfactory: Interventions achieve all or nearly all of their stated gender equality objectives	
3. Satisfactory: Interventions achieve a majority (more than 50%) of their stated gender objectives	

2. Unsatisfactory: Interventions either lack gender equality objectives or achieve less than half of their stated gender equality objectives. (Note: where a programme or activity is clearly gender-focused (maternal health programming for example) achievement of more than half its stated objectives warrants a rating of satisfactory

1. Highly unsatisfactory: Interventions are unlikely to contribute to gender equality or may in fact lead to increases in gender inequalities

MI 9.2 Analysis	Evidence documents
Interventions have improved to a large gender equality and women's empowerment despite some remaining progress to achieve in specific indicators. As cross-cutting issue, gender-related indicators are integrated in multiple Strategic outputs. On one hand, some indicators were exceeded such as the indicator 3.6. related to the following-up of human rights recommendations related to the indicator 3.6. "following up human rights recommendations related to social and gender norms and discrimination" (85% of countries accepted those recommendations above of the target of 84%) and the indicator 6.4. on improving skills of adolescent girls (6.4 million of marginalised girls reached out versus a target of 6 million). In addition, in 2022, UNFPA met or exceeded the requirements for 16 out of 16 applicable performance indicators of UN-SWAP 2.0 Performance. UNFPA maintained its status as a top performing entity, achieving a stronger performance than the average results of the Funds and Programmes and of the UN system as a whole. While UNFPA maintained overall UN-SWAP 2.0 compliance, there was a decrease of one indicator rating from exceeds to meets requirements (from 76% in 2022, compared to 82% in 2021). UNFPA was encouraged to continue by working to exceed all UN-SWAP 2.0 requirements, particularly for the three indicators marked as meeting requirements: Audit, Policy and Equal representation of Women". On the other hand, other targets were not achieved such as the indicator 5.3. related to the inclusion of women and young people in decision-making in humanitarian action. Regarding gender and social norms, it is one of the six strategic plan outputs. While this output was partially achieved in 2022, it was achieved in 2023. However, out of the seven sub-outputs, a majority (four) of them were not achieved and three were fully achieved. This partial achievement explains the scoring of 2. Those achieved include availability of platform for dialogue, strengthened social movements, following-up human rights recommendations related to social and gender norms and discrimination, collected and reported social and gender norm evidence. However, those not achieved are related to (sub)national mechanism to address social and gender norms, capacity for changing discriminatory social and gender norms, promotive positive masculinities, following up human rights recommendations related to social and gender norms and discriminations. The "Evaluation of UNFPA support to gender equality and women's empowerment (2012-20) published in 2021 was the first evaluation of UNFPA support to gender equality and women's empowerment. It found overall UNFPA has contributed importantly to gender equality since 2022 at global, regional and national levels. • UNFPA has made notable progress on institutional mainstreaming. Yet, UNFPA faces challenges in terms of staff capacity, clear responsibilities, and the cross divisional or programme cooperation required to enhance gender analysis and a gender-responsive programmatic response. UNFPA gender mainstreaming efforts have led to varied or inconsistent gendered results across programmatic outcomes. UNFPA made progress in gender equality and rights as part of programming for sexual and reproductive health and family planning. While its youth programming reflects efforts at gender integration, differentiating by gender is not systematic enough to promote a gender equality approach. UNFPA has made improvements in the census and the demographic health survey to keep pace with gender equality and inclusion data needs. • UNFPA also contributed to gender equality programming through different ways. UNFPA has generated guidance that contributes to international normative frameworks and operational mechanisms on advancing GEWE and, at the regional level, has played a critical role in fostering an enabling environment for GEWE. UNFPA has also contributed	128, 62, 64, 210, 148-150, 177, 33.

to strengthening national policies, accountability frameworks and legal normative frameworks, including laws on GEWE. In addition, UNFPA has contributed to preventing, responding to and eliminating GBV, notably with the rise of gender-based violence during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through its dedicated work on harmful practices, in particular its years of programming on female genital mutilation and more recently child marriage, UNFPA has made significant contributions to behaviour change at community level and policy change at national level. […] However, projections are that new cases will result from the pandemic, with the elevated risk of not reaching the 2030 targets.

The review of CPEs confirms those achievements, including for instance:
- In Angola, the CP has succeeded in mainstreaming gender with a great focus on GBV prevention as well as training service providers to provide GBV services in humanitarian response.
- In Cambodia, UNFPA contributed to the integration of GE into development planning at national, sectoral and local levels.
- In Lesotho, UNFPA was instrumental in advocating for and supporting review, finalisation enhancement of policy, legal and institutional frameworks in the field of GEWE. The finalisation of the Counter-Domestic Violence Bill 2021 was a key achievement in advancing gender equality.
- In Malawi, UNFPA made significant contributions to respond to GBV and harmful practices.
- In Sierra Leone, UNFPA played a key role in the development and formulation of policies and strategies further enhancing protection systems for the people affected by GBV and harmful practices.
- In Haiti, progress on gender equality and the fight against GBV has been limited by the lack of leadership in the administration in the implementation of public policies. However, UNPFA strategies have increased awareness and improved prevention measures against GBV.

MI 9.2 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 9.3: [Environment/climate change] Interventions assessed as having helped improve environmental sustainability/tackled the effects of climate change	Score
MI rating	Unsatisfactory
MI score	2

4. Highly satisfactory: Interventions include substantial planned activities and project design criteria to achieve environmental sustainability and contribute to tackle the effects of climate change. These plans are implemented successfully and the results are environmentally sustainable and contribute to tackling the effects of climate change

3. Satisfactory: Interventions include some planned activities and project design criteria to ensure environmental sustainability and help tackle climate change. Activities are implemented successfully and the results are environmentally sustainable and contribute to tackling the effects of climate change

2. Unsatisfactory: EITHER Interventions do not include planned activities or project design criteria intended to promote environmental sustainability and help tackle the effects of climate change. There is, however, no direct indication that project or programme results are not environmentally sustainable. AND The intervention includes planned activities or project

1. Highly unsatisfactory: Interventions do not include planned activities or project design criteria intended to promote environmental sustainability and help tackle climate change. In addition, changes resulting from interventions are not environmentally sustainable/do not contribute to tackling climate change.

MI 9.3 Analysis	Evidence documents
Interventions have improved partially environmental sustainability. One of the key limitations to assess this MI is the absence of dedicated climate change strategy (the ESS is focusing more on the reduction of the carbon footprint) and results frameworks, and the lack of indicators to assess the progress at intervention level.	62, 80, 148-150, 177, 33.

The Mid-Term Review of the UNFPA 2022-25 Strategic Plan (June 2024) included few indicators at output level to assess the progress made at intervention level.

One key achievement of UNFPA was linked to the fact that 29% of countries have integrated SRHRR and Programme of Action into the national climate policies (above the target of 18%).

However, some (sub)outputs were not achieved particularly those linked to data related to megatrends including climate change.

- 66% of countries produced key population data including population mega-trends, such as climate vulnerability (below the target of 83%).

- 37% of countries conducted population situation analysis on population changes and diversity and the impact of mega-trends, including climate change, on achieving the three transformative results and ICPD Programme of Action (below the target of 44%).

The review of CPE provides few inputs on UNFPA's contribution to environmental sustainability, except for some of them such as in Cambodia. Although UNFPA did not include plans to support the mitigation of climate or environmental issues, the Country Office in Cambodia has integrated activities contributing directly or indirectly to reduce the impact of climate change, such as the "Sanitary Hygiene Pad". UNFPA has also supported interventions to respond to climate change and emergency and natural disasters such as Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) training to sub-national health staff; climate change and environment were embedded into the new standards for midwifery education like waste management; new midwifery curriculum incorporates perinatal mental health skill to support women causes by the climate change.

MI 9.3 Evidence confidence Lack of data related to UNFPA's climate change contributions.	**Medium confidence**

MI 9.4: [Human rights] Interventions assessed as having helped improve human rights, including the protection of vulnerable people (those at risk of being "left behind").	Score
MI rating	**Satisfactory**
MI score	3

4. Highly satisfactory: Interventions include substantial planned activities and project design criteria to address fragility situations and reach those most at risk of being left behind. These plans are implemented successfully and the results have helped improve fragility demonstrating results for the most vulnerable groups.

3. Satisfactory: Interventions include some planned activities and project design criteria to mitigate fragility. These activities are implemented successfully and the results have reduced fragility.

2. Unsatisfactory: EITHER Interventions do not include planned activities or project design criteria intended to address fragility or demonstrate their reach to vulnerable groups. There is, however, no direct indication that project or programme results will not reduce fragility, AND The intervention includes planned activities or project design criteria intended to reduce fragility but these have not been implemented and have not been successful

1. Highly unsatisfactory: Interventions do not include planned activities or project design criteria intended to address fragility. In addition, changes resulting from interventions do not reduce fragility. Interventions do not focus on reaching vulnerable groups.

MI 9.4 Analysis	Evidence documents
Interventions have largely improved in human rights and strengthened its results benefiting to populations left furthest behind, despite still area for improvement as noted at field level.	
According to the Mid-Term Review and progress report on implementation of the UNFPA 2018-21 Strategic Plan, the outputs focusing on leaving no one behind posted relatively lower performance compared to the other outputs. Several reasons explained this under-performance: a) gaps in availability of data and information about left behind populations, (b) inadequate financial resources and skills (such as advocacy) to reach furthest behind populations (c) pushback on recognising some marginalised populations. In detail, it includes:	24, 80, 148-150, 177, 33.

- The output on policies and programmes for prioritising the furthest left behind populations of outcome 1 performed 65%. This was due to: (a) cultural and political sensitivity to prioritise furthest behind populations; (b) lack of required skills of staff to advocate for furthest behind populations; (c) resource intensiveness to reach those populations, and (d) lack of data to count and account the furthest behind populations.
- The achievement of the output on advancing adolescent and youth skills and capabilities of outcome 2, performed 66%. It is explained by the challenges of reaching the marginalised girls and the limited resources and time to implement the out-of-school sexuality education and align it to the international standards.
- The achievement of the output on advancing policy, legal and accountability frameworks for empowering women and girls, including marginalised and excluded groups, to exercise their reproductive rights of outcome 3 achieved 60%. The limited progress was partly because of the limited know-how and limited resources; reaching marginalised and excluded groups can be resource intensive.

UNFPA's interventions in human rights and LNBO have seen a reinforced commitment of UNFPA through the new SP 2022-25 (2024). UNFPA has invested in "populations left furthest behind" and "reaching those furthest behind first" over the recent years. A dedicated LNBO operational plan is implemented since 2022. Several outputs of this SP are related directly or indirectly to human rights and LNBO. Most of the time they were achieved in 2023. 9.9 million marginalised adolescent girls in 2023 were empowered through health and economic asset-building programmes (beyond the target of 6.5 million). 49% of countries have laws and regulations aligned with international human rights in 2023 (beyond the target of 46%), 85% of countries are following up accepted recommendations from international and regional human rights mechanisms related to social and gender norms and discrimination (below the target of 86%). 66% and 47% of countries are responding to humanitarian, climate, health or other crises that include women, young people and those affected by UNFPA core "left furthest behind" factors in decision making mechanisms related to respectively GBV and SRH (beyond the respective targets of 56% and 43%). Despite those results, it does not exist today a dedicated results framework related to the LNBO operational plan which will promote more easily those results.

According to the Orange Book of Results 2022, significant key results related to human rights have been achieved in several countries. To name only a few, the National Human Rights Strategy 2022-30 was developed in Georgia, in Madagascar the decree implementing the 2019 law combating GBV was adopted following joint advocacy actions through the gender and human-rights thematic group, and in Lesotho the 2023 procurement plan resulted from training of two representatives from each district on the human rights approach to family planning. However, the Orange Book does not show whether interventions helped improve human rights for all countries. Results related to the protection of the "left-behind" are only mentioned for one country, the Maldives, where a women's self-help group was established and has begun reaching the furthest left behind to address harmful social and gender norms that promote violence against women and girls.

The review of CPE also confirms that UNFPA overall reached positive achievements in human rights despite limitations to reach vulnerable people.
- In Angola, UNFA has succeeded in mainstreaming gender and implementing human rights, nonetheless, limitations remain to reach the most vulnerable, particularly people with disability.
- In Central African Republic, interventions focused on the prevention and mitigation of GBV/SEA risks such as security audits, the establishment and management of safe spaces for women and girls, and strengthening the involvement of protection committees. Interventions also took into account the concepts of human rights, including those of people living with disabilities and minorities (deaf-mute and indigenous populations). However, UNFPA did not specifically target the highest concentrations of vulnerable or weakened groups without access to health services.
- In Lesotho, CO ensured that the programme delivery embedded human rights approaches.

UNFPA ensured inclusion and participation of adolescents, young people, vulnerable women and girls in access to services, dialogue and education sessions. UNFPA was focused on enhancing human rights perspectives in delivery, for instance supporting implementation of programme interventions based on the SRH access gaps that were existing at the time, as well as supporting the development of strategies that integrated human rights into them.

MI 9.4 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 9.5: [Innovation and digitalisation] Interventions assessed as having successfully applied innovation and digitalisation to achieve results.	Score
MI rating	Satisfactory
MI score	3

4. Highly satisfactory: Interventions include substantial planned activities and project design criteria to promote or ensure any other cross-cutting issue. These plans are implemented successfully and the results have helped promote or ensure any other cross-cutting issue.

3. Satisfactory: Interventions include some planned activities and project design criteria to promote or ensure any other cross-cutting issue. These activities are implemented successfully and the results have promoted or ensured any other cross-cutting issue.

2. Unsatisfactory: EITHER Interventions do not include planned activities or project design criteria intended to promote or ensure any other cross-cutting issue. There is, however, no direct indication that project or programme results will not promote or ensure any other cross-cutting issue, AND Intervention include planned activities or project design criteria intended to promote or ensure any other cross-cutting issue but these have not been implemented and been successful

1. Highly unsatisfactory: Interventions do not include planned activities or project design criteria intended to promote or ensure any other cross-cutting issue. In addition, changes resulting from interventions do not promote or ensure any other cross-cutting issue.

MI 9.5 Analysis	Evidence documents
Interventions in innovation have largely improved. The Mid-Term Review of the Strategic Plan 2018-21 states that the UNFPA's targets in terms of innovation were exceeded in 2019: 72% of its offices that pilot or transition to scale innovations (target 2019: 49%), showing the organisation's institutionalisation of innovation to meet its targets. The integrated Mid-Term Review and Progress Report on the implementation of the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2022-25 (2024) states that UNFPA expanded its efforts to advance innovations by women, for women and with women to accelerate the realisation of the ICPD Programme of Action and the Fund's three transformative results. Along with investing in strengthening the Fund's innovation capabilities and enabling culture, UNFPA created a strong incentive and recognition system to nurture innovations within UNFPA, including through innovation fairs, awards, and capacity-building initiatives. The midterm review found that 98%% of country offices had deployed the innovation and digitalisation accelerator to boost the effectiveness and efficiency of their interventions". 82% of countries promoted youth-led innovative initiatives, including digital solutions for accelerating the achievement of the TRs (beyond the target of 70%). Innovations were supported by UNFPA in 110 countries and territories, reaching 23 million people through more than 200 initiatives. 10 women-led social enterprises received USD 600,000 of seed funding and mentorship, reaching nearly 300,000 women and girls in 21 countries. There were 18 Young Innovator Fellows trained and employed to drive innovation, creativity, capacity development, and programme delivery for UNFPA's three transformative results. Innovation pilot projects were finalised in 11 country offices, unlocking further investments and partnerships to take the most impactful initiatives to scale. The review of CPEs provides examples at field level of UNFPA's support to innovation. It should be noted however this contribution is not systematically analysed and explicitly highlighted	61, 80, 59, 176, 148-150, 177, 33.

through a dedicated section:

- In Angola, UNFPA supported the ministry of Youth and Sports to launch the SMS Jovem digital platform which contributed to expand access to information on SRHR/ITS/HIV/GBV to adolescent and young people.
- In Cambodia, UNFPA has supported the Big Data on Violence Against Women and Girls to identify its trend during the pandemic and capture how women/ survivors use the internet to seek help.
- In Moldova, UNFPA built digital skills of most vulnerable older women and men to seek medical, social, informational and psychological assistance through intergenerational dialogue with young people. UNFPA also supported National Bureau of Statistics to move from paper-based data collection to using digital tools for data collections.

MI 9.5 Evidence confidence	High confidence

KPI 10: [Relevance to partners] Interventions are relevant to the needs and priorities of partner countries and beneficiaries, as the organisation works towards results in areas within its mandate	KPI score
Highly satisfactory	**4.00**

Conducted analyses demonstrated that UNFPA's intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries' global, country and partner/institution needs, policies and priorities. Indeed, at the global level, UNFPA's interventions are aligned with its Global Strategy and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030. At the country level, UNFPA's interventions are relevant and aligned with the countries' national contexts and priorities as UNFPA's CPs are aligned with national plans. The design of CPs takes into account national priorities, national policies and strategic development plans. UNFPA's CPs proved to be highly relevant in responding to beneficiaries' need, including the most vulnerable population. UNFPA conducts assessments of beneficiaries' needs during the design process of CPs, in a participatory and collaborative way with national actors and civil society.

UNFPA also demonstrated its efforts to adapt its strategies to changing global and local contexts to maintain the relevance of its interventions as circumstances change. Conducted analyses clearly showed that UNFPA was responsive to the changing national needs and political and contextual changes.

MI 10.1: Intervention objectives and design assessed as responding to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities (inclusiveness, equality and Leave No One Behind), and continuing to do so where circumstances change	Score
MI rating	Highly satisfactory
MI score	4

4. Highly satisfactory: Systematic methods are applied in intervention design (including needs assessment for humanitarian relief operations) to identify target group needs and priorities, including consultation with target groups, and intervention design explicitly responds to the identified needs and priorities

3. Satisfactory: Interventions are designed to take into account the needs of the target group as identified through a situation or problem analysis (including needs assessment for relief operations) and the resulting activities are designed to meet the needs of the target group

2. Unsatisfactory: No systematic analysis of target group needs and priorities took place during intervention design or some evident mismatch exists between the intervention's activities and outputs and the needs and priorities of the target groups

1. Highly unsatisfactory: Substantial elements of the intervention's activities and outputs were unsuited to the needs and priorities of the target group

MI 10.1 Analysis	Evidence documents
To assess the relevance of UNFPA's interventions, a documentary review was conducted for 11 country/regional programme evaluations (CPE) available. This documentary review has been completed by the results of the survey and the interviews conducted in the framework of this assessment. **All CPEs available found the UNFPA's interventions to be highly satisfactory.**	148, 33, 240, 150, 240.

At the global level, UNFPA's interventions within the sampled countries are aligned with its Global Strategy and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 2030. For instance,

- In Malawi, UNFPA's CP is highly relevant to Malawi's United Nations Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDF) 2019-23, to its international commitments, as well as to UNFPA mandate. The associated interventions of the four thematic components (SRHR - Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, GEWE - Gender Equality and Women Empowerment, AY - Adolescents and Youth and Population Dynamics - PD) were consistent with the priority components of the ICPD, the 2030 SDG Agenda and the three transformative results of UNFPA's Strategic Plan.
- In Cambodia, UNFPA had worked with relevant UN agencies, contributing to sustainable development goals (SDGs), in particular Goal 3 on health, Goal 4 on education, Goal 5 on gender equality, and Goal 17 on partnerships that includes data and accountability.
- The Lesotho CPE reads "The CP was aligned to the UNFPA's Strategic Plan (2018 – 2021) contributing to its results 1, 2 and 3, in addition to being aligned to the UNDAF's outcome areas. Further, the CP was contributed to the SDGs 3, 4, 5, 10 and 17 and facilitated achievement of the goals of the ICPD Programme of Action."

At the country level, UNFPA's interventions are relevant and aligned with the countries' national contexts and priorities as UNFPA's CPs are aligned with national plans. For instance:

- In Cambodia, UNFPA's CP is relevant at the national level, supporting the government priorities, as the CP took into consideration the national policies and strategic development plans (NSDP, CSDG, etc.).
- In the Philippines, "UNFPA support has been relevant from multiple perspectives, with a focus towards policy level engagement at national as well as selected sub-national levels, and in line with national and sub-national priorities."
- Sierra Leone 7CP was also found to be strategically adapted to the national priorities, as it "contributed to the "Medium-Term National Development Plan (MTNDP) 2019 – 2023, and line ministry strategic foci, directly contributing to their respective objectives around SRH, A&Y and GEWE, thereby making it relevant to the national needs."
- In Angola, the 8th Country Programme was also found to be "strategically aligned to relevant national strategies and policies for each thematic area of programming such as the National Youth Policy, FP 2020, Law Against Violence, among others."

The annual reports of the Executive Director also provide elements on whether UNFPA's interventions are relevant as regards to identified needs. As stated in the ED report of 2023, "country programme evaluations conducted in 2022 found that the majority of country programmes were {…] all relevant to the country context".

Lastly, UNFPA's CP are highly relevant in responding to beneficiaries' needs, including the most vulnerable populations. Thorough assessments of beneficiaries' needs, run in a participatory and collaborative way with national actors and civil societies, allow UNFPA to tailor its interventions to beneficiaries' needs. For example,

- In Moldova, most of interventions start with a need assessment of target beneficiaries that informs the design of the following activities. The CPE states that "a needs assessment can also be conducted in the course of an intervention to inform its further implementation." "For example, an intervention that supports the development of the national network of Youth Centers (YCs) started with the assessment of the institutional capacity of YC as well as needs and interests of young people. Later UNFPA conducted an assessment of YC accessibility for young people with disability (YPWD). Findings informed the following UNFPA support to renovation and changes of premises of some YCs to ensure YPWD access."
- In Haiti, the most vulnerable populations and the youth were particularly targeted by interventions. More generally, the CP did take into consideration population's needs.
- In Syria, "beneficiaries considered the support provided by the sexual and reproductive health (SRH), gender equality and women's empowerment and Adolescent and Youth components to be highly relevant. Work under the population and development (P&D)

thematic area is also considered highly relevant, as reliable and up-to-date population data are crucial for determining needs and priorities and for developing policies. UNFPA Syria clearly added value to addressing national development needs in Reproductive health, for adolescents and youth, and in population data, and in responding effectively to humanitarian situations in the country."

The survey deployed in the framework of this assessment confirms the elements shared in the analysed CPEs, as more than 90% of respondents claim that UNFPA's work responds to the needs of beneficiaries, including the most vulnerable populations.

Figure 46: UNFPA's work responds to the needs of beneficiaries, including the most vulnerable populations
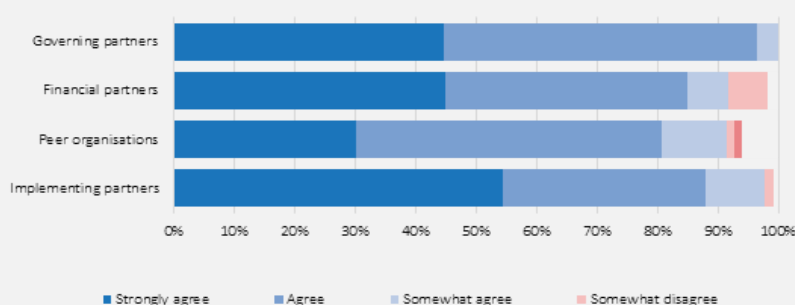
Source: Survey – MOPAN (2024)

It is however worth noting that UNFPA's alignment with country needs was less observable at the regional level in ESARO. ESARO RPE's indeed reads "The RP was found to be aligned and relevant to the UNFPA Strategic Plan and international and regional frameworks and also adapted its structures; capacities to address requirements of middle-income countries; was flexible in responding to needs of countries, regional bodies and other partners and responded appropriately to changing circumstances, opportunities and emergencies. However, ESARO will need to adopt structured and differentiated approach to managing country needs for better planning and resource utilisation."

Lastly, UNFPA adapts its strategies to changing global and local contexts, which is crucial for maintaining the relevance of interventions as circumstances change. This adaptability is key to ensuring that interventions continue to align with the evolving needs and priorities of partner countries and beneficiaries. UNFPA's CPs managed to be flexible and adapt themselves to the Covid-19 crisis. For instance, in Sierra Leone the CP was responsive to the changing national needs and environment during COVID-19, where UNFPA was instrumental as part of the UN Country Team (UNCT) to contribute to the response, in addition to reprogramming to adapt to the context of the pandemic, ensuring realisation of results. More broadly, although it was not clear in documents related to the design of programmes whether or how interventions would be adapted to changing contexts, UNFPA's interventions has proved to adapt to changing local contexts.

- In Angola, in all thematic areas, key informants and documentation indicate that UNFPA has demonstrated responsiveness to emerging requests, policies, plans and opportunities for strengthened engagement […]. UNFPA showed a strong response to the partners capacity needs and the emerging humanitarian situations in the south of the country affected by the drought contributing in its thematic areas to the overall response."
- In the Philippines, the adaptation of interventions had been assured by the continuous coordination with local institutions: "through the country office had turned its focus on national level policy making, during the course of the implementation of the 8th CP, major contextual changes took place that urged the country office to provide support at the sub-national level. The CO, in close coordination with the UNCT, responded well to the installation of the BARMM regional government, with support to the linkages between humanitarian,

development, and peacebuilding programming, facilitated by UNFPA's long term presence in Cotabato and other parts of Mindanao and its long-running support for ARMM, the predecessor of BARMM."

- Malawi CO was also found to act quickly and in a flexible way to the political shifts (change of government in 2020) and the advent of Covid-19 pandemic: "When the current government came into power, the significant changes it made were the development of MW2063 and the renaming of ministries. The CO adjusted to these changes responsibly and quickly."

Therefore, intervention objectives and design assessed as responding to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities (inclusiveness, equality and Leave No One Behind), and continuing to do so where circumstances change.

MI 10.1 Evidence confidence	High confidence

KPI 11: Results are delivered efficiently	KPI score
Unsatisfactory	2.50

UNFPA demonstrates significant efforts to ensure the cost-efficiency of its investments as well as operational efficiency of its initiatives and of its interventions. At the global level, UNFPA achieved key operational efficiencies as, for instance, the Fund achieved an overall operational efficiency gain of USD34.7 million in 2022. UNFPA also seeks operational efficiencies by implementing several measures with sister agencies and by deploying mechanisms to capitalise at the programmatic level on partnerships with local actors to enhance coverage and cost-sharing.

However, despite UNFPA's measures to produce outputs in the most cost/resource efficient manner, room for improvement has been identified at the global and the CP level. Cost-efficiency and impact could be improved by collaborating even more with partners and other UN agencies to leverage shared resources and expertise. At the country level, limits to UNFPA's efficiency have been observed, such as delays, insufficient capacities of IPs, and difficulties in collaborating with local authorities. Despite UNFPA's effort to ensure timeliness of implementation and results at the corporate and programmatic level, challenges that remain with regard to disbursements and co-ordination in specific contexts limit UNFPA's efficiency gains and its impacts.

MI 11.1: Interventions/activities assessed as resource-/cost-efficient	Score
MI rating	Satisfactory
MI score	3

4. Highly satisfactory: Interventions are designed to include activities and inputs that produce outputs in the most cost/resource efficient manner available at the time

3. Satisfactory: Results delivered when compared to the cost of activities and inputs are appropriate even when the programme design process did not directly consider alternative delivery methods and associated costs

2. Unsatisfactory: Interventions have no credible, reliable information on the costs of activities and inputs and therefore no data is available on cost/resource efficiency

1. Highly unsatisfactory: Credible information is provided which indicates that interventions are not cost/resource efficient

MI 11.1 Analysis	Evidence documents

Evaluating UNFPA's efficiency in delivering its various outcomes needs an assessment of resources mobilised, their effective deployment, and the realisation of intended results. The analysis unfolds at two distinct but interconnected levels: the macro-impact level seen in global outcomes and the nuanced micro-level stemming from individual country programs.

112, 148
33

Particular attention dwells on the cost-efficiency of investments. For instance, this can be illustrated by Outcome 1 in the Report of the Executive Director on Progress in implementing the UNFPA Strategic Plan (2023), where every dollar invested in family planning yields USD8.40, establishing a strong long-term return with projected economic benefits of USD660 billion by 2050. Such a significant return demonstrates high cost-efficiency.

More generally, UNFPA tracks its organisational effectiveness and efficiency. For the period 2019-2023, UNFPA achieved an overall operational efficiency gain of USD63.1 million. These operational efficiency gains were related to UNFPA-specific initiatives (USD36.7 million), bilateral initiatives with partner United Nations organisations (USD6.4million) and related to Business Operations Strategy (USD20 million). In 2022, UNFPA achieved key operational efficiencies, with an overall operational efficiency gain of USD34.7 million, including USD12.7 million of cost savings, USD3.7 million of cost avoidance, and USD18.3 million of staff time reduction. Those operational efficiency gains were both related to UNFPA-specific initiatives (USD29 million out of the overall USD34.7 million) and related to bilateral initiatives with partner United Nations organisations (USD5.7 million). Significantly, this underlines the organisation's capacity to refine internal efficiencies while exploiting strategic partnerships for improved outcomes.

Regarding operational efficiencies, UNFPA has indeed implemented several measures with sister agencies, such as

- UNFPA using UNICEF's procurement services to procure items falling under UNFPA mandate but not included in the UNFPA product catalogue, thus benefiting from bulk pricing negotiated by a sister UN agency for procurement volume over and above one that UNFPA could have negotiated on its own and without investing resources to carry out associated procurement processes.
- UNFPA using UNOPS' procurement services to procure items such as vehicles requiring a specialised skill set to manage efficiently.
- UNFPA partnership with UNICEF and UNHCR to develop specifications for menstrual cups and reusable menstrual sanitary pads.

However, interviews with other stakeholders suggest cost-efficiency could be improved and UNFPA could enhance its impact by collaborating even more with partners and other UN agencies, thereby leveraging shared resources and expertise.

Regarding UNFPA's specific initiatives, such operational efficiency gains have been secured by measures such as:

- The number of generic contraceptives and pharmaceuticals has been increased within UNFPA's catalogue, UNFPA also procures more generics to realise cost savings.
- UNFPA also successfully established and actively used Bulk Purchase Agreements (BPA) for frequently procured products and services, which has led to cost reductions from bulk purchasing and has saved staff time otherwise spent on procurement procedures.

The analysis of CPEs also demonstrates CPs' efficiency but nuances those results as room for improvement is identified to what regards the mobilisation of all available resources. For instance,

- Lesotho CPE shows that UNFPA deployed several mechanisms to capitalise on partnerships with local actors to enhance coverage and cost-sharing. The CPE indeed reads: "The 7CP was largely efficient, particularly in the utilisation of available resources in its delivery. UNFPA utilised different strategic mechanisms including partnership with local NGOs and government line ministries, direct contribution into the national development strategies, to enhance coverage and partnerships. […] Partnerships within UNCT also enhanced the delivery as one principle which leveraged on cost-sharing, coordination and accountability and resources mobilisation."
- The analysis of Value for Money (VfM) in the Malawi CPE shows good results for some of the

indicators/activities (less than USD 0.5 per person): adolescent and youth utilising integrated SHR services; youth accessing integrated YFHS; mentees who graduated from safe spaces (less than USD 12). The other indicators/activities showed modest Vfm (women and girls living with fistula receiving treatment with UNFPA support, GBV survivors supported via community fund to access services from distant health facilities, social services, police formations and courts) (cf. Table below).

The evaluation analysed the performance ratio and unit costs related to a number of output indicators as shown in Table 19.

Table 19: Value for money analysis

Description of indicator /activity	Target (T)	Achieved (A)	Budget utilized $	Performance ratio (T/A)	Cost ($)per beneficiary	Judgement
1. No. of adolescents and youth (aged 10-24) who have utilized integrated SRHR services.	2,461,100	4,851,383	695,051	197%	0.14	There is VfM
2. No. of women and girls living with fistula receiving treatment with UNFPA support	2,000	5,562	68,155	278%	12.3	VfM is modest
3. No. of youth accessing integrated YFHS		840,951	94,847.2		0.11	There is VfM
4. No. of GBV survivors (young women & girls) supported through survivor economic fund (to engage in various business enterprises		2,024	185,822.9		91.8	Further VfM analysis is needed especially on checking no. of clients
5. No. of GBV survivors supported via community fund to access services from distant health facilities, social services, police formations and courts		5,569	86,273.9		15.5	VfM is modest
6. Mentees who graduated from safe spaces supported for their economic activities		11,239	121,428.1		11.4	There is VfM

Source: UNFPA Malawi 8th CPE

- Syria CPEs however shows how some partnerships can limit UNFPA's efficiency. The CPE indeed reads: "During the period under review, some of the limitations to achieving efficient work mainly included; delays and sometimes refusals in government permissions, lack of access and the inability to conduct full and independent surveys. Weak capacities by some IPs leading to delays in implementation of interventions also led to underachievement in the programme implementation progress."
- Angola CPE also illustrates how external challenges linked to national contexts influence UNFPA's and its partners' ability to efficiently implement CP interventions. The CPE indeed reads: "Several external challenges linked to the Angolan context influence the ability of UNFPA and its partners to efficiently implement Country Program interventions. These include the difficulty of recruiting staff with the necessary requirements in terms of quantity and quality; the high turnover of government staff, […] During the period 2020-22 the 8CP was impacted by the Government "rule" to channel financial assistance through the government institutions which led to reduction of funds available to the civil society organisations. In addition, given the reduction of UNFPA and other donor (e.g. Embassy of the Netherland) funds in comparison to the previous CP also had a negative impact on the resources available particularly to CSO's."

Therefore, although room for improvement has been identified at the global and the CP level, interventions are designed to include activities and inputs that produce outputs in the most cost/resource efficient manner available at the time. However, examples such as Syria and Angola show that insufficient alternative delivery methods and associated costs are put in place to compensate external challenges.

MI 11.1 Evidence confidence	High confidence

MI 11.2: [Timeliness] Implementation and results assessed as having been achieved on time	Score

MI rating	Unsatisfactory
MI score	2

4. Highly satisfactory: All or nearly all the objectives of interventions are achieved on time or, in the case of humanitarian programming, a legitimate explanation exists for delays in achieving some outputs/outcomes

3. Satisfactory: More than half of the intended objectives of interventions are achieved on time, and this level is appropriate to the context that existed during implementation.

2. Unsatisfactory: Less than half of the intended objectives are achieved on time but interventions have been adjusted to take account of the difficulties encountered and can be expected to improve the pace of achievement in the future.

1. Highly unsatisfactory: Less than half of stated objectives of interventions are achieved on time, and no credible plan or legitimate explanation is identified that would suggest significant improvement in achieving objectives on time.

MI 11.2 Analysis	Evidence documents
According to the Output scorecard and indicator updates of reports of the Executive Director, UNFPA has attained, perhaps even surpassed, its objectives in terms of timeliness of implementation and results at the corporate level. However, analysed CPEs illustrate that bottlenecks remain in specific contexts.	

UNFPA reports on the timeliness of its outputs – at a corporate level – in its Organisational Effectiveness and Efficiency (OEE) table in the output scorecard. It indicates that in 2023,
- 91% of surge requests were successfully filled within lead response times (2023 objective: 85%), and that
- UNFPA has shortened the average recruitment time from 110 days in 2022 to 87 in 2023 and from 99.6 days for humanitarian-funded positions in 2022 to 73 in 2023.

UNFPA had similar results in 2022, when
- 90% of surge requests were successfully filled within lead response times (2022 objective: 85%), and
- 49% of reproductive health commodities orders were handed over to implementing partners within the specified time (objective 2022: 50%).

It should be noted that some indicators indicating the timeliness of interventions and results are not available (such as the proportion of long-term agreement procurement delivered within the specified delivery time and proportion of reproductive health commodities orders handed over to implementing partners within the specified time in 2023).

112, 148, 150

33, 291

At the CP level, some examples illustrate those good results. The CPE for Cambodia concludes that "planned resources were received to the expected level to carry out the AWPs and the resources were available in a timely manner. No delays in the process of fund transfers and IPs received resources that were planned, to the levels foreseen in a timely manner. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic period, there were adequate funds generated to complete the planned work as well as the additional work demanded by the pandemic." Similarly, the Sierra Leone CPE writes that IPs reported "flexibility from the CO at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, where they were allowed to reallocate funds, enabling them to make necessary adjustments." The CPE of CAR notes that UNFPA sometimes uses no-cost extensions where delays make this necessary.

Nonetheless, the analysis of CPEs and interviews also pointed to challenges that remain with regard to disbursements and co-ordination. Delays in disbursement are noted in the Malawi, Sierra Leone, Some of the challenges that UNFPA's CPEs found are not in UNFPA's hands.

The Malawi CPE notes delays in disbursements that were due to late quarterly accountabilities by Implementing Partners, which subsequently affected the timeliness of the intervention roll-outs.

- The Syria CPE identifies the low capacity of government and IP staff as the reason for delays in decision-making, challenges for continuous and timely provision of services; and delays in government approvals for field visits.

- The Sierra Leone CPE notes delays in advocacy programmes that were due to COVID.

- Others delays in disbursements had to do with complex donor reporting templates that were time-consuming for IPs to complete (Sierra Leone, CAR). The latter recommends this should be re-negotiated with donors, although the Donor Agreements and Report Tracking System (DARTS) seems to be an effort in that direction.

Among the factors that may indicate room for improvement,

- there is a mention of potential "rigidity in the allocation of the budget" to the IPs (Sierra Leone CPE), and of

- lengthy approval processes for annual workplans (AWPs) (Sierra Leone);

- a recommendation to work more "closely with the IPs to address the challenges that result in the delays in the disbursement of funds and reporting." (Sierra Leone CPE).

- Staff-related challenges, such as overwhelming workload due to under-staffing (mentioned in the CPE of Central African Republic, or high staff turnover (Syria CPE)

- CAR - coupled with administrative delays in fund management.

Those elements are aligned with perspectives shared by interviewees. Several remained concerned about lengthy recruitment processes, despite the tools UNFPA has developed to increase its capacity to intervene in a timely manner, and regarding delays in financial disbursements. In humanitarian contexts, some interviewees suggested that partnerships with sister agencies were perhaps not sufficiently mobilised to ensure timely availability of necessary products. This concern was substantiated, for instance, in the CPE of the Haiti Programme, which states that UNFPA's procedures are complex and lengthy, even in emergency crises, which requires stocks of emergency kits to be assured in Haiti. Interviews also indicated that engaging with Member States and the sometimes complex coordination required between Nairobi and regional offices can be an additional source of delays and hinder UNFPA's ability to intervene in a timely manner.

MI 11.2 Evidence confidence	High confidence

KPI 12: Results are sustainable	KPI score
Unsatisfactory	**2.00**
MI 12.1: Benefits assessed as continuing, or likely to continue after intervention completion (Where applicable, reference to building institutional or community capacity and/or strengthening enabling environment for development, in support of 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda)	**Score**

Although UNFPA focuses on institutional and capacity issues, it has yet to find ways to have a more financial sustainable impact. UNFPA pays significant attention to local capacity development as a way to ensure the sustainability of its results. UNFPA interventions in all focus areas indeed include capacity development components. Another key aspect of sustainability is UNFPA's work to advocate for the change of legal frameworks and norms. Nonetheless, sustainability of UNFPA's interventions is jeopardised by financial dependency on UNFPA and the absence of defined exit strategies.

MI rating	Unsatisfactory
MI score	2

4. Highly satisfactory: Evaluations assess as likely that the intervention will result in continued benefits for the target group after completion. For humanitarian relief operations, the strategic and operational measures to link relief to rehabilitation, reconstruction and, eventually, development are credible. Moreover, they are likely to succeed in securing continuing benefits for the target group. Sustainability may be supported by building institutional capacity and/or strengthening the enabling environment for development.

3. Satisfactory: Evaluations assess as likely that the intervention will result in continued benefits for the target group after completion. For humanitarian relief operations, strategic and operational measures link relief to rehabilitation, reconstruction.

2. Unsatisfactory: Evaluations assess as a low probability that the intervention will result in continued benefits for the target group after completion. For humanitarian relief operations, efforts to link the relief phase to rehabilitation, reconstruction and, eventually, to development are inadequate. (In some circumstances such linkage may not be possible due to the context of the emergency. If this is stated in the evaluation, a rating of satisfactory is appropriate).

1. Highly unsatisfactory: Evaluations find a very low probability that the programme programme/project will result in continued intended benefits for the target group after project completion. For humanitarian relief operations, evaluations find no strategic or operational measures to link relief, to rehabilitation, reconstruction and, eventually, to development.

MI 12.1 Analysis	Evidence documents
UNFPA's efforts to improve local capacity and its advocacy for legal changes are important ways to ensure that the benefits of its work are last beyond the programmes, but sustainability of UNFPA's interventions is not yet assured. Although there has not been a specific evaluation of the sustainability of UNFPA's results in supporting the ICPD Programme of Action and SDGs, it is evident that the quest for sustainability is an uphill battle. The Executive Director's report - Integrated midterm review and progress report on the implementation of the UNFPA SP 2022-25 notes that factors hindering acceleration include "humanitarian crises and their adverse impact on inequalities and health systems, discriminative gender and social norms, inadequate policy and legal frameworks, and absence of data and evidence to guide interventions." As mentioned in 5.6.1, one way in which UNFPA ensures the sustainability of its results is by **developing local capacity**. UNFPA interventions in all focus areas indeed include capacity development components. CPEs show UNFPA's significant results in its support to partners and beneficiaries in developing capacities and establishing mechanisms to ensure ownership of country programmes. The Moldova CPE is a great illustration of these efforts as a way to ensure sustainability of obtained results. For example, UNFPA supported direct capacity building for health care professionals and integration of SRH topics into the curriculum of the partner university and colleges. Another key aspect of sustainability is UNFPA's work to advocate for the change of legal frameworks and norms. The Integrated midterm review and progress report on the implementation of the UNFPA strategic plan, 2022-2025 (Report of the Executive Director) contains examples of such results, (which are further detailed in the Orange Book), including:	112, 148, 150, 33

- As a result of the advocacy efforts of UNFPA and its partners, Argentina passed a law (known as the Olimpia Law) to prevent GBV online and hold perpetrators accountable;
- In 2023, the Government of Somalia developed a bill criminalising rape and indecency with the
- advocacy support of UNFPA and other partners;
- UNFPA supports the model law on ending child marriage in Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries. As of 2023, six countries of the SADC have aligned their legal provisions with the Community's model law.
- As of 2022, 14 of the 17 countries supported by the UNFPA/UNICEF Joint Programme have legal and policy frameworks banning FGM.

The formative evaluation of UNFPA support to adolescents and youth also found that UNFPA programmes targeting this population have strengthened national agendas and commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Despite these success stories, sustainability of UNFPA's interventions is not completely assured. Several instances in CPEs indicate that sustainability may be jeopardised by financial dependency on UNFPA and the absence of defined exit strategies.
- The Sierra Leone CP illustrates that adequate capacity-building alone may not be enough to guarantee sustainability. UNFPA's commendable work in strengthening capacity at national and district levels is overshadowed by potential financial fragility. This arises from the country's reliance

on UNFPA for financing reproductive health commodity security, indicating its vulnerability should UNFPA withdraw its fiscal support. Showing similar potential sustainability issues, Cambodia has localised participation and capacity building at the core of its program, but the lack of a clear exit strategy implies an undefined timeline for the eventual self-reliance of its programming.

- The case of Haiti also shows that UNFPA's efforts to ensure sustainability of obtained results are challenged in countries that face long-term political crises. Emergencies in Haiti have limited the government's commitment to supporting family planning. Despite UNFPA's normative role, the sustainability of results are not assured, as involved national institutions would not have the capacity to pursue the supported interventions should UNFPA stopped its support.

- The CPE of the Philippines suggests that UNFPA's programmes can suffer from shifts in policy and legislation. CPDs, CPEs and interviews conducted for this assessment showed that UNFPA tries to align with local political orientations by continuously coordinating with governments, but that it cannot be certain that the outlast a president's tenure. The CPE notes: "With a new political agenda under the new President, some of the issues supported by the previous government may not be a priority for the newly installed government. In this respect the sustainability of some of the results remains uncertain till more clarity is obtained on the political strategy and plans of the new government, including the new Philippine Development Plan for 2023-28 […].

More broadly, despite the financial optimisation that is pursued by UNFPA and the fund's objectives to guarantee sustainability of its interventions and their results, the team has not been able to witness any exit strategies. This puts into question to what extent UNFPA's interventions are sustainable, as its financial support remains indispensable to continue benefits after the completion of interventions.

MI 12.1 Evidence confidence *The evidence confidence is rated medium because there was no specific evaluation of the sustainability of UNFPA's work, and no synthesis in this regard.*	**Medium confidence**

Annex B – Document list

Code	Document Title
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Annex C – Survey Results

As part of the evidence gathering process for the UNFPA assessment, MOPAN conducted an online survey over a period of 8 weeks, beginning on 16 March and closing on 22 April 2024. The survey was sent to an effective sample of 746 individuals provided by UNFPA and MOPAN. Out of this effective sample, 316 responded to the survey, i.e. the survey closed with a 43% response rate.

UNFPA partners were sampled from 12 countries (Angola, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Egypt, Guatemala, Haiti, Malawi, Moldova, Sierra Leone, Syria and Türkiye); in addition to two further categories described as 'global' and 'regional or multi-country'. The selection criteria for the country sample were agreed as part of the inception phase for this assessment.

Respondent Profile

A number of different types of partners responded to the survey, with responses coming from implementing partners, peer organisations, financial partners, knowledge partners, governing partners and others (see Figure 47). Most respondents worked in a programme country; one quarter worked with UNFPA at the global level, and one-tenth worked in a regional context or on several countries at once (see Figure 48).

Figure 47. Respondents' profile
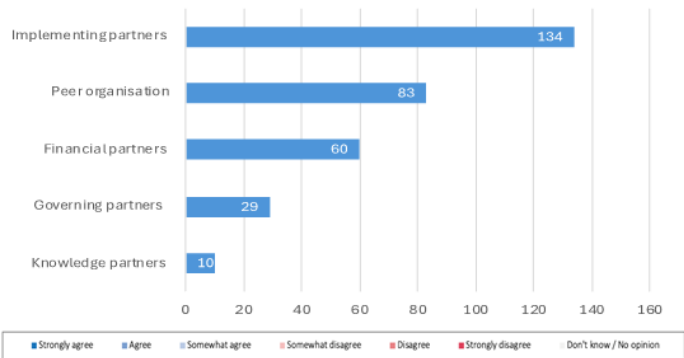
Figure 48. Respondents' geographical coverage
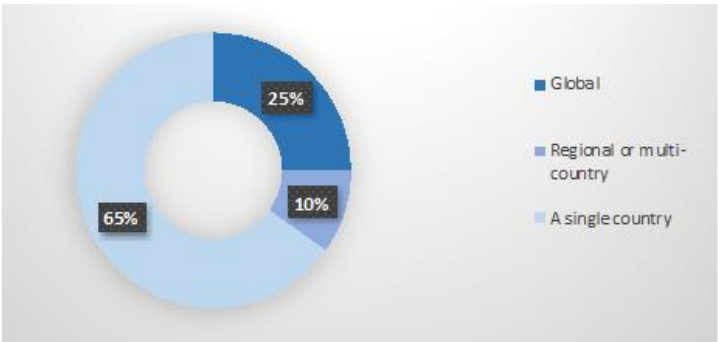
Survey Results

Strategic management

Figure 49 The strategies and policies of UNFPA demonstrate clarity of vision.
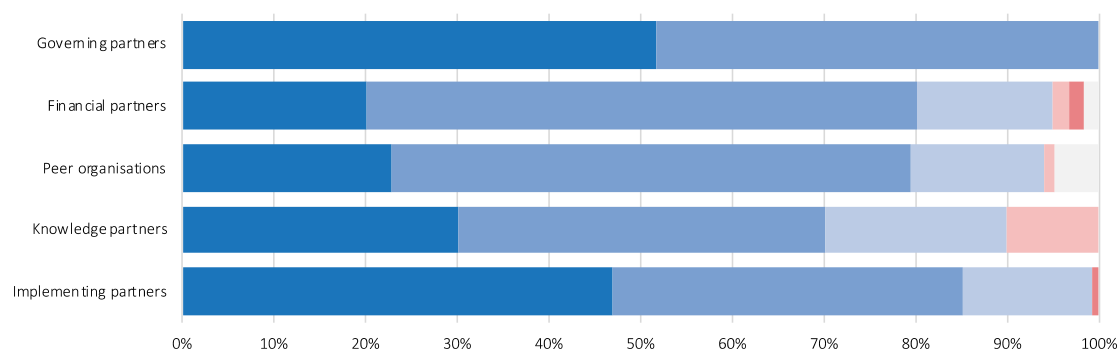
Figure 50 The strategies of UNFPA demonstrate good understanding of its comparative advantage.
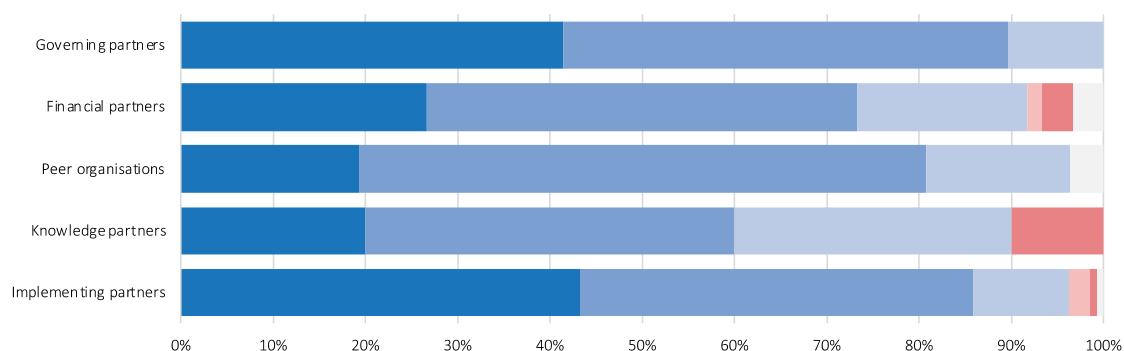
Figure 51 UNFPA organises and runs itself in a way that fully supports its strategic direction and vision.
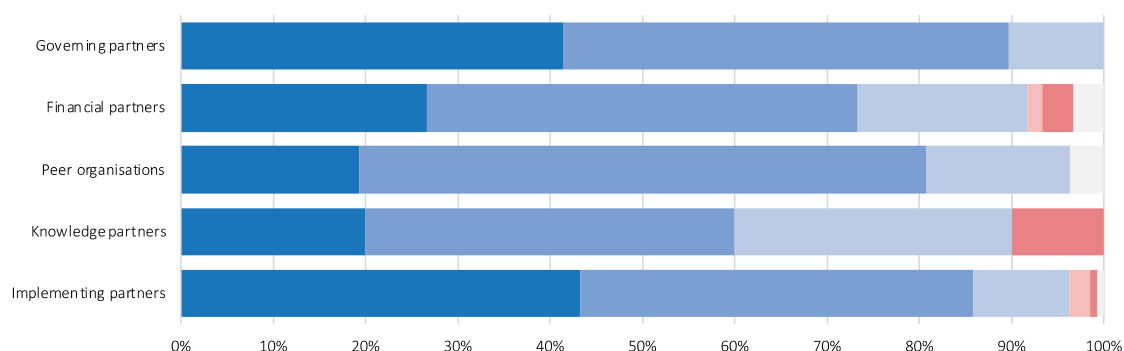
Figure 52 UNFPA's financial framework supports the effective implementation of the mandate and strategy.
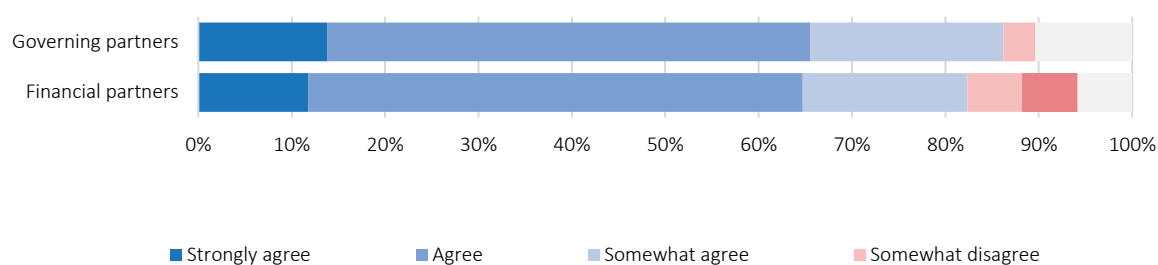
Figure 53 UNFPA's strategic allocation of resources is transparent and coherent with agreed strategic priorities.
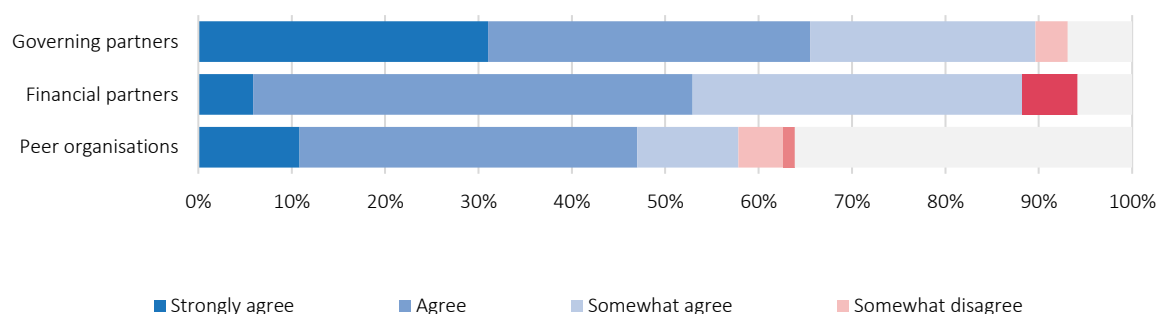
Figure 54 UNFPA applies principles of results-based budgeting and reports expenditures according to results.
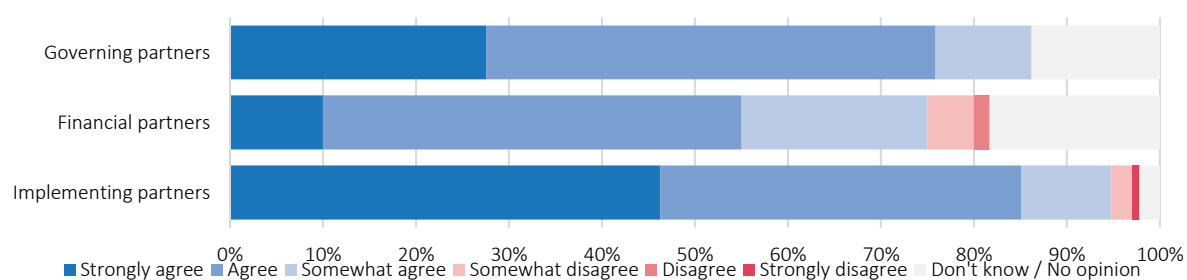
Figure 55 UNFPA adequately addresses issues and concerns raised through reporting channels (including operational and financial risk management, internal audit, social and environmental safeguards).

Legend: ■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree
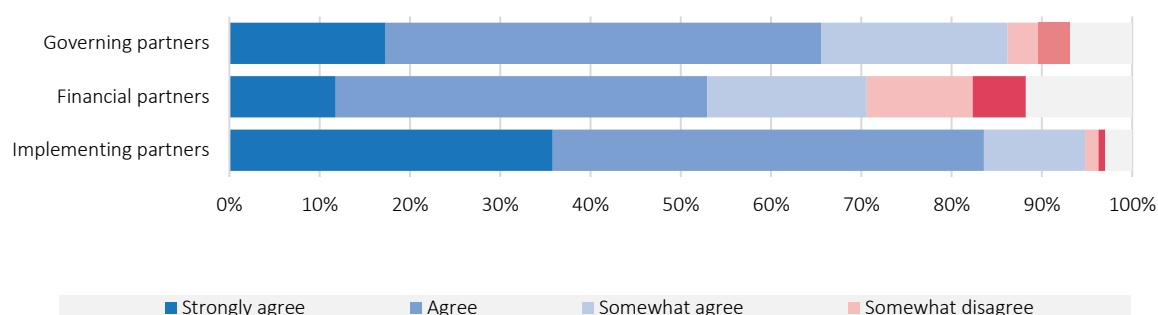
Figure 56 UNFPA is promoting and using pooled funding, including multi-partner trust funds.

Legend: ■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree Don't know / No opinion
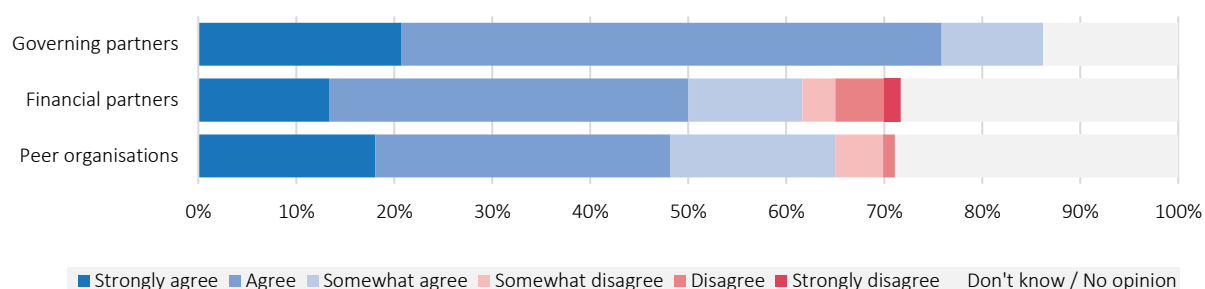
Staffing

Figure 57 UNFPA has a sufficient number of staff, either in or accessible to countries where it operates to deliver intended results.

Legend: ■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree Don't know / No opinion
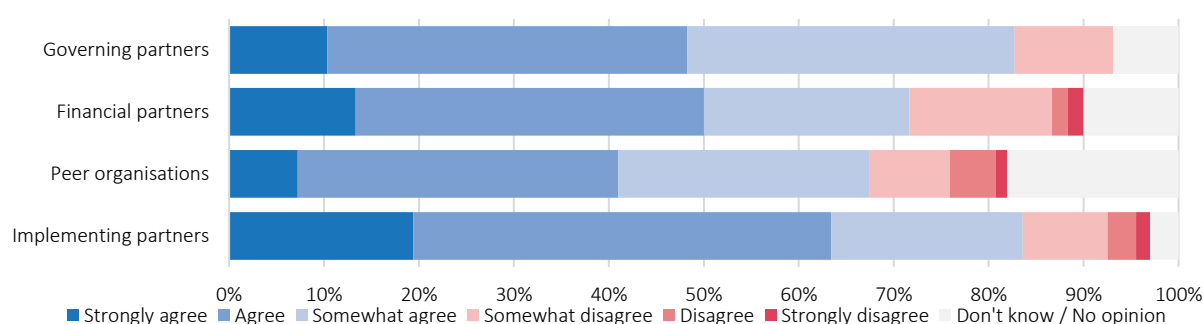
Figure 58 UNFPA's staff are sufficiently experienced and skilled to work successfully in the different contexts of operation.

■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know / No opinion
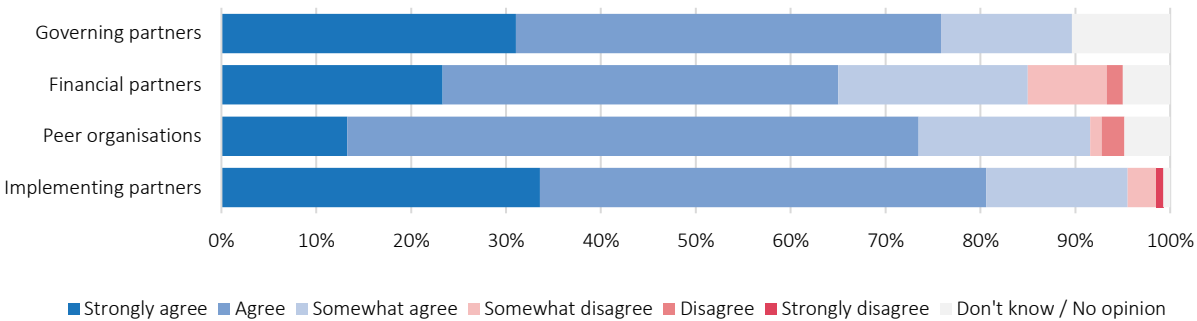
Figure 59 UNFPA's staff are present for a long enough time to build the relationships needed.

■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know / No opinion
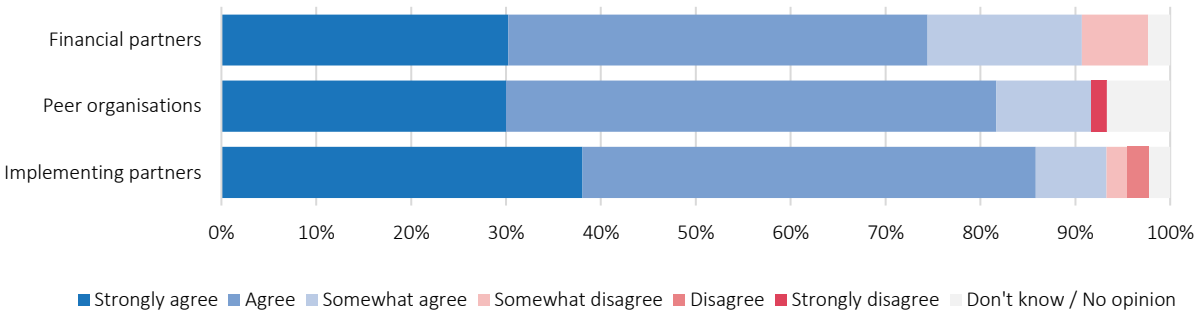
Figure 60 UNFPA can make critical strategic or programming decisions locally

■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know / No opinion
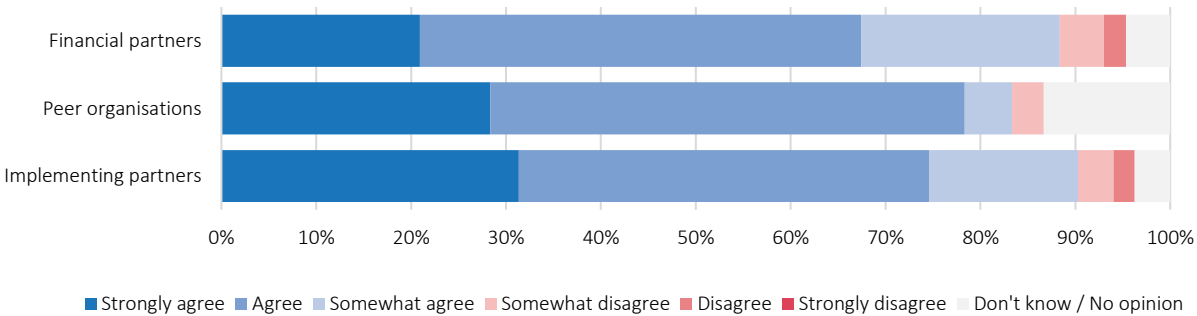
Cross-cutting priorities

Figure 61 UNFPA promotes gender equality through its strategies and programmes (including its humanitarian response).
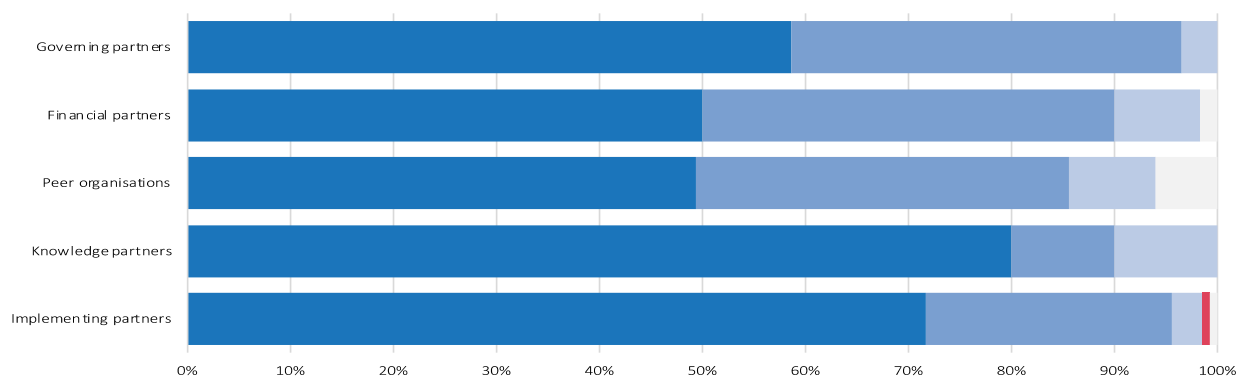
Figure 62 UNFPA promotes environmental sustainability and addresses climate change through its strategies and programmes (including its humanitarian response).
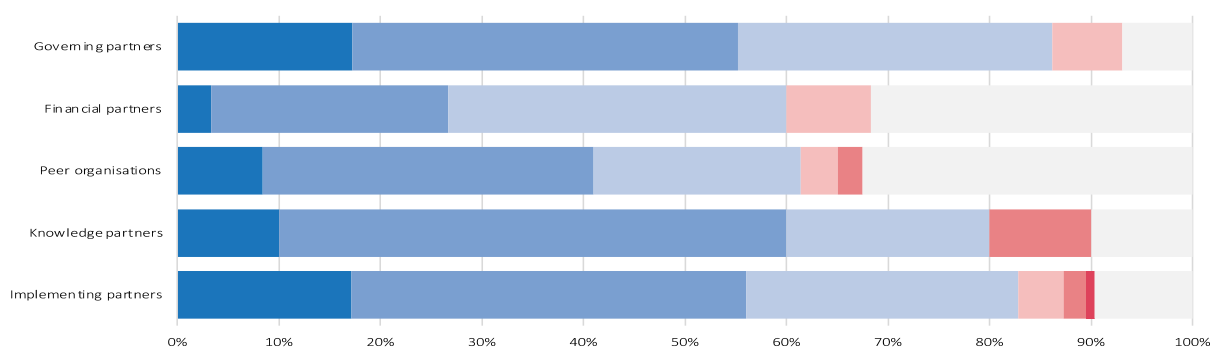
Figure 63 UNFPA promotes human rights across its work
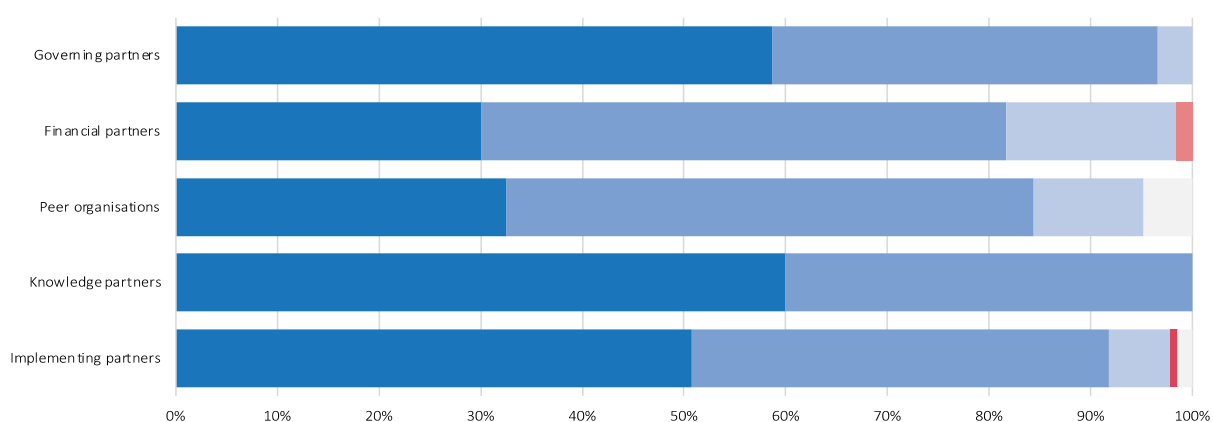
Figure 64 UNFPA promotes the use of innovation and digitalization to deliver its development programmes and humanitarian response.
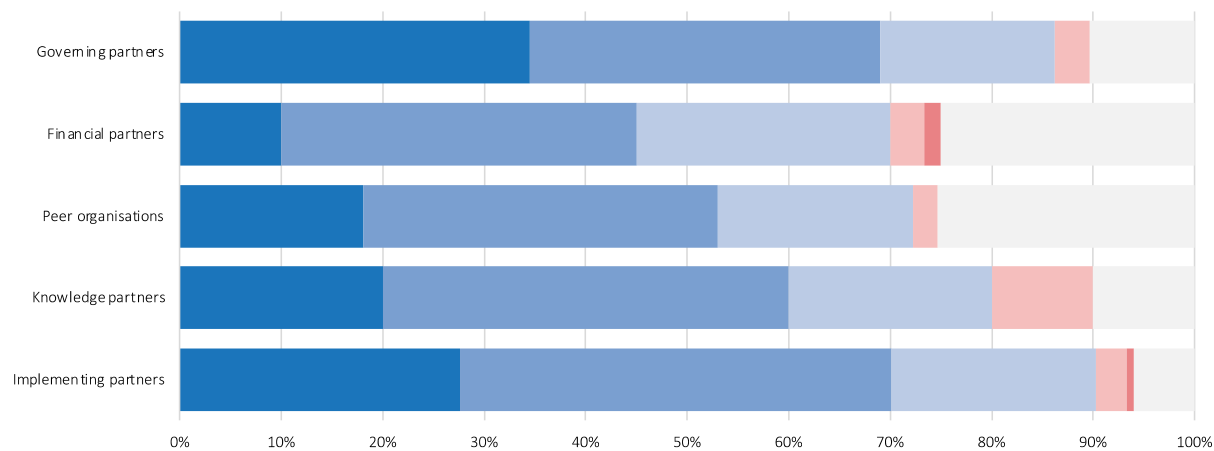
Interventions

Figure 65 UNFPA's work responds to the needs of beneficiaries, including the most vulnerable populations.

■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know / No opinion
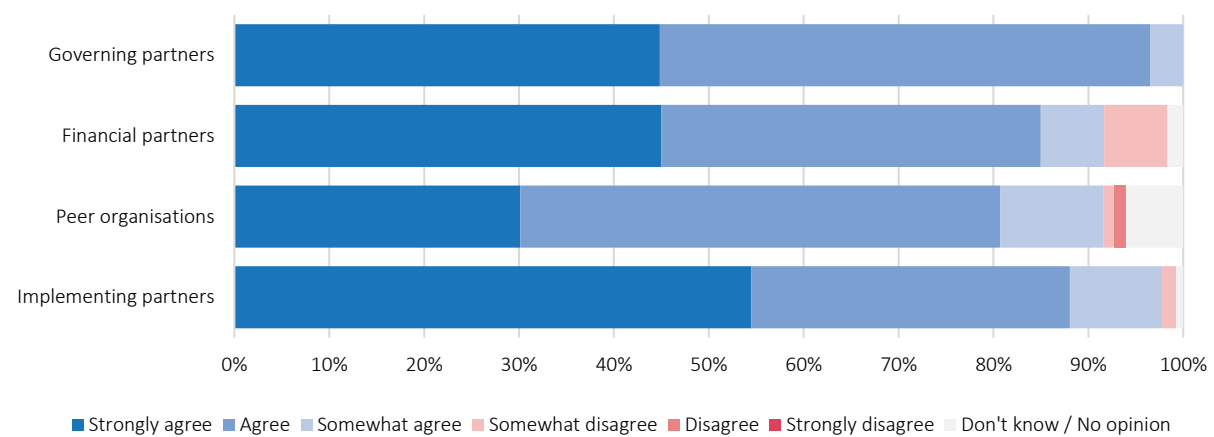
Figure 66 UNFPA adapts its work as the context changes.
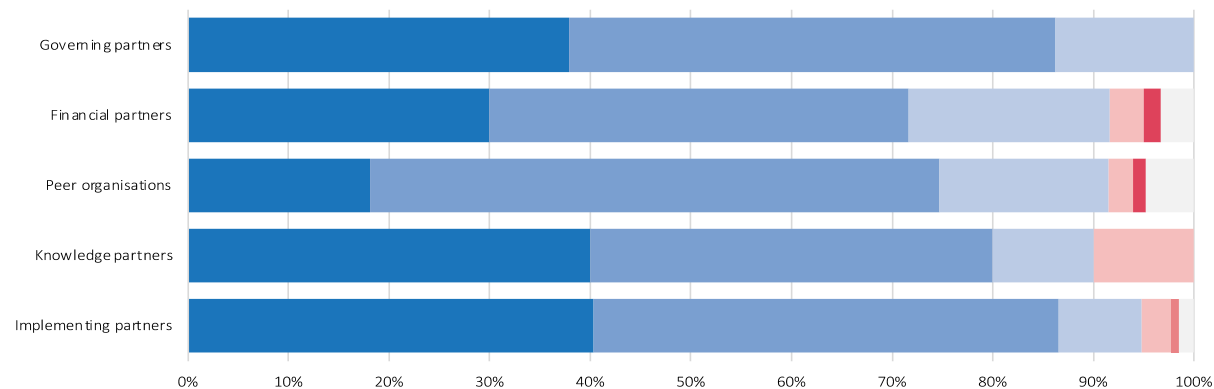
Figure 67 UNFPA's work designed and implemented to fit with national development and humanitarian programs and intended results of countries in which it works.

■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ☐ Don't know / No opinion
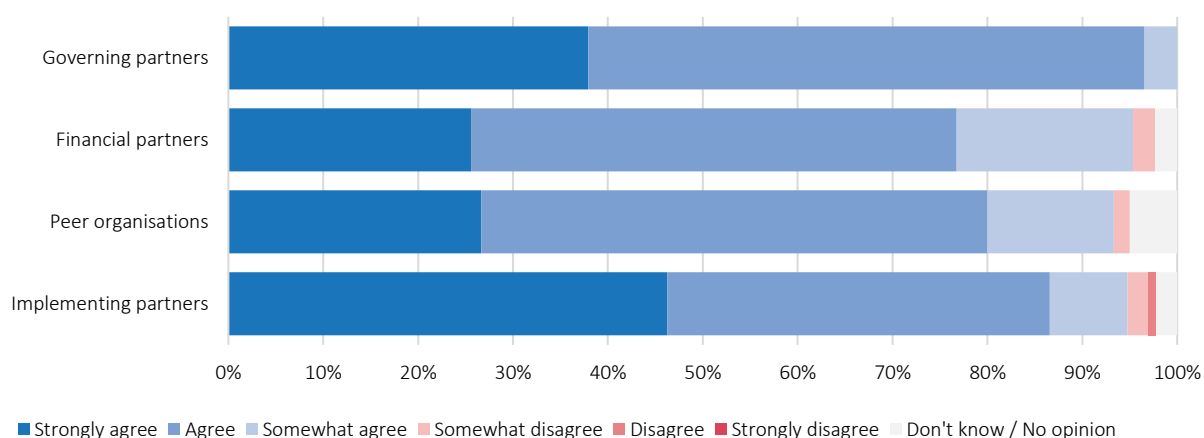
Figure 68 UNFPA's work is tailored to the specific situations and needs in the local context.

■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ☐ Don't know / No opinion
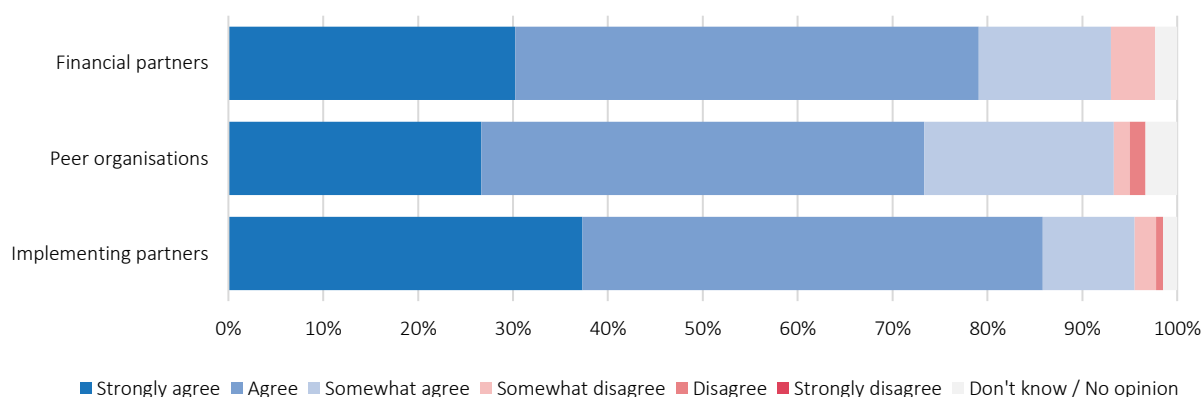
Figure 69 UNFPA's work with partners is based on a clear understanding of comparative advantages.

■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ☐ Don't know / No opinion
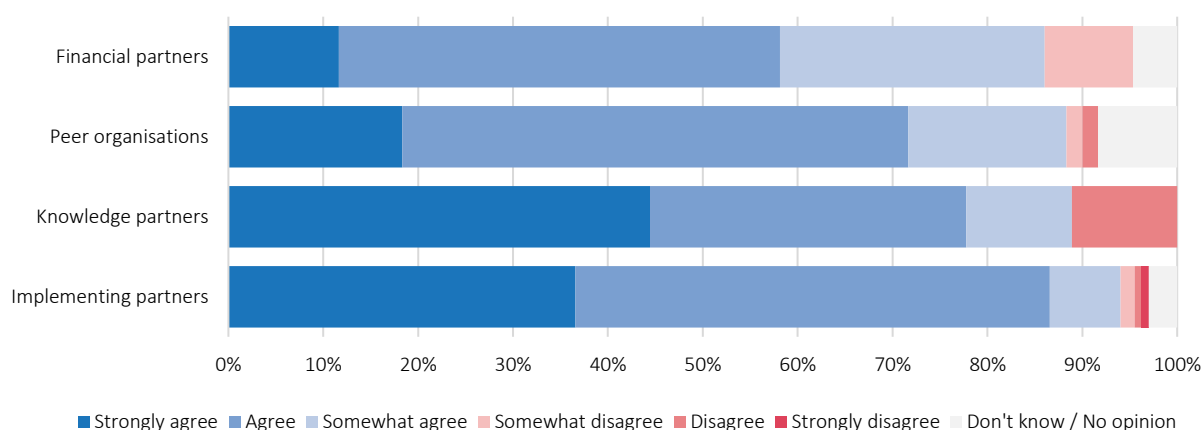
Figure 70 UNFPA's work takes into account national capacity, including of government, civil society, private sector and other actors.

Legend: Strongly agree, Agree, Somewhat agree, Somewhat disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree, Don't know / No opinion
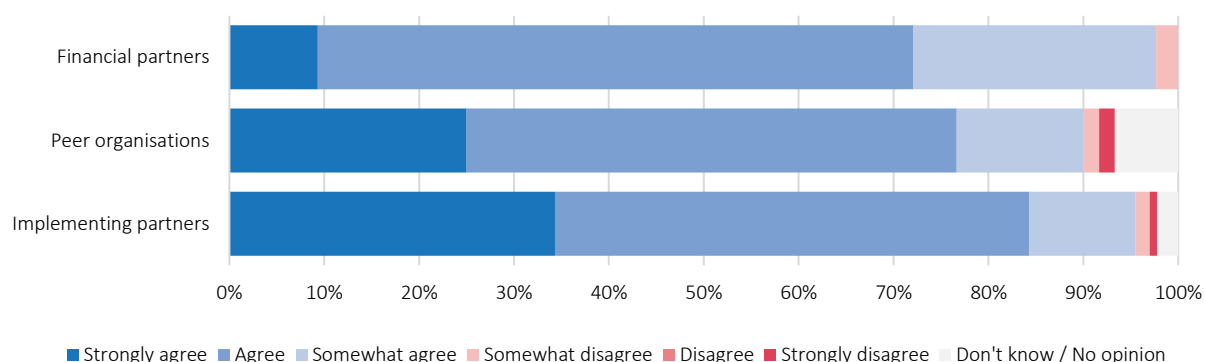
Figure 71 UNFPA designs and implements its work in such a way that its effects and impact can sustained over time.

Legend: Strongly agree, Agree, Somewhat agree, Somewhat disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree, Don't know / No opinion
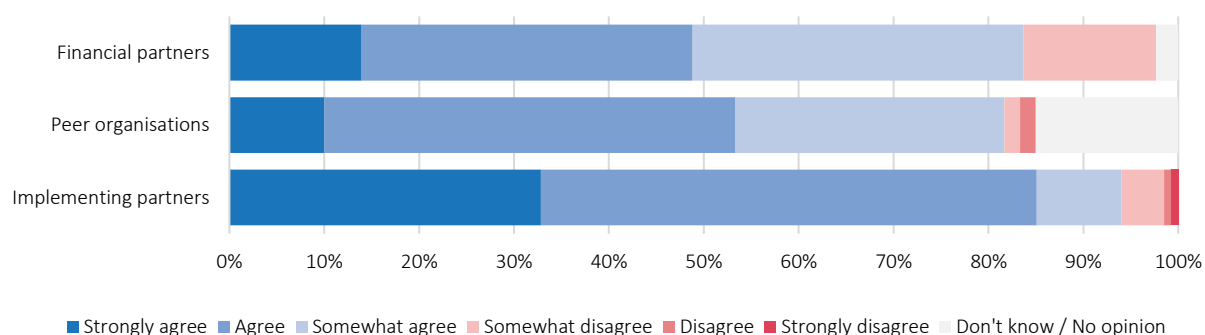
Figure 72 UNFPA appropriately manages risk within the context of its work.

Legend: Strongly agree, Agree, Somewhat agree, Somewhat disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree, Don't know / No opinion
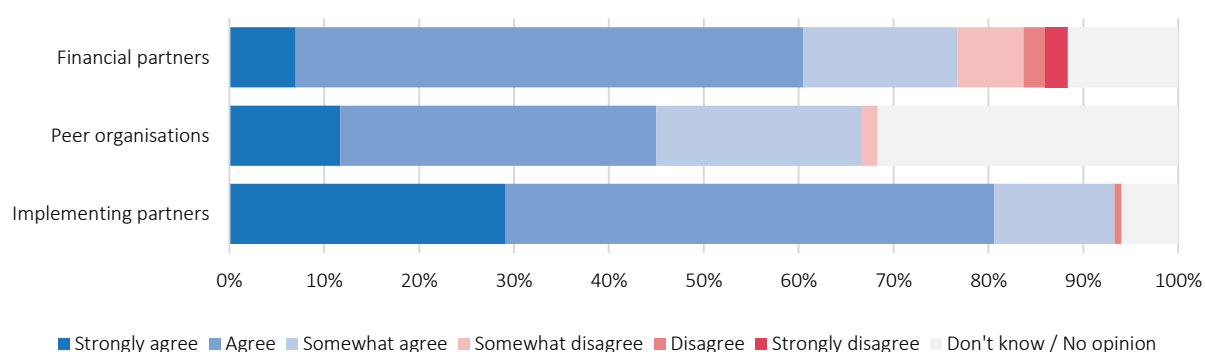
Managing financial resources

Figure 73 UNFPA is transparent about the criteria it applies to allocate financial resources to its regional and country programmes.

Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know / No opinion
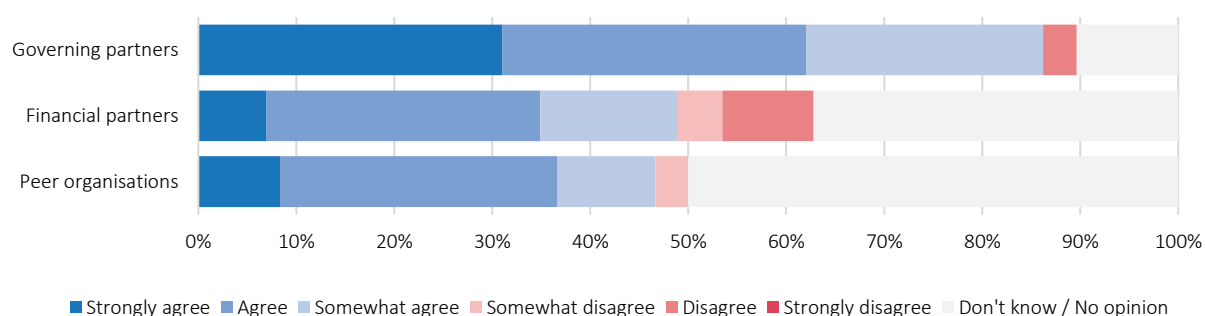
Figure 74 UNFPA provides reliable information on when financial disbursement to (implementing) partners will happen, and the respective amounts.

Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know / No opinion
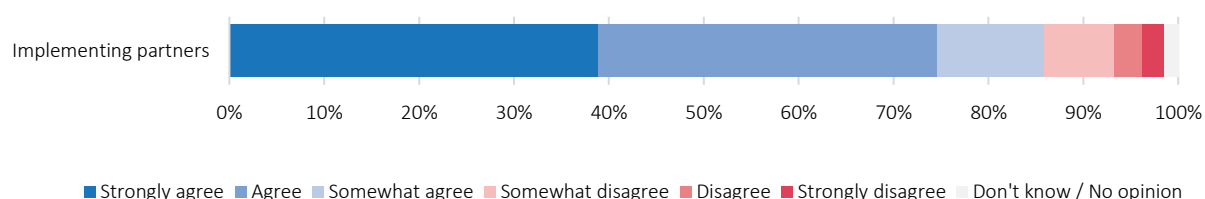
Figure 75 UNFPA's resource mobilization efforts ensure that the organization has the financing in place to deliver its strategy.

Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know / No opinion
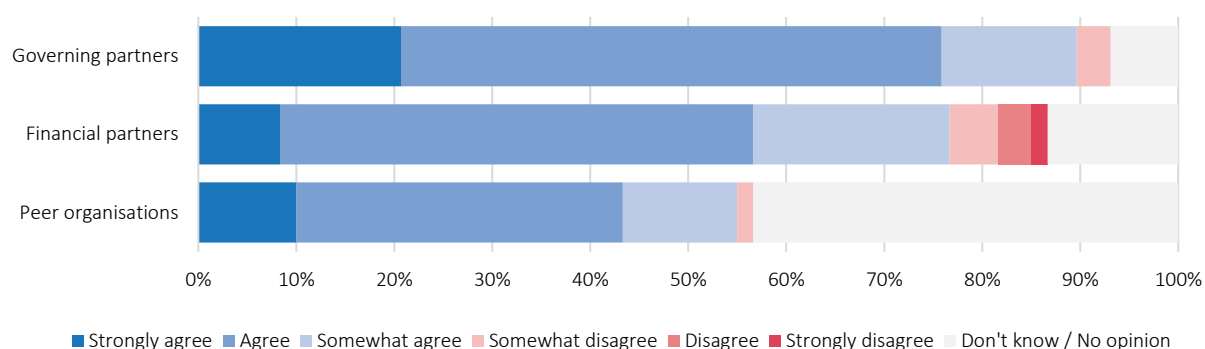
Managing relationships

Figure 76 UNFPA's knowledge products are useful for my work.
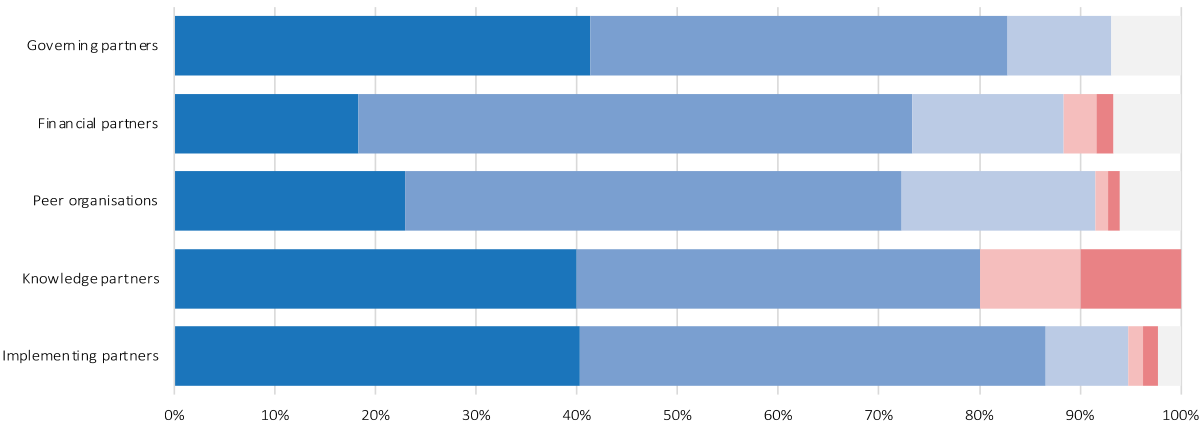
Figure 77 UNFPA's knowledge products are provided in a format that makes them easy to use.
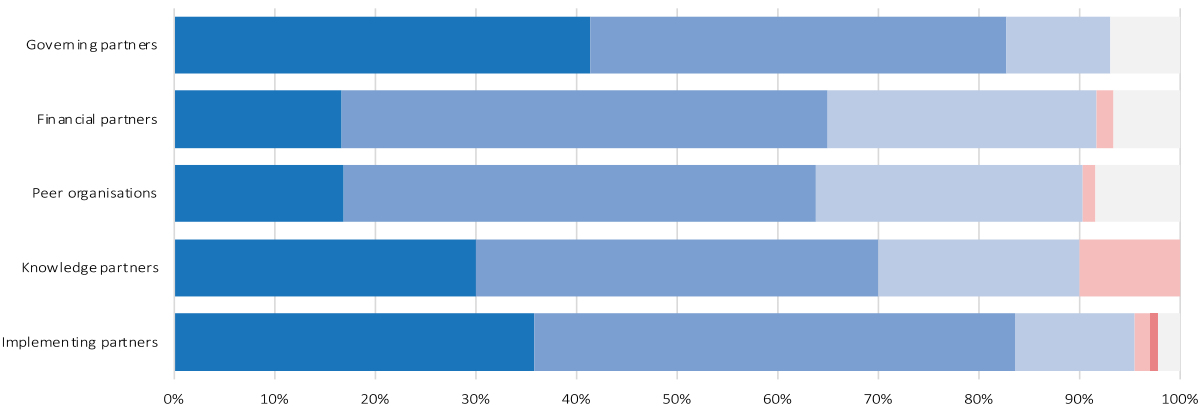
Figure 78 UNFPA's knowledge products are timely.
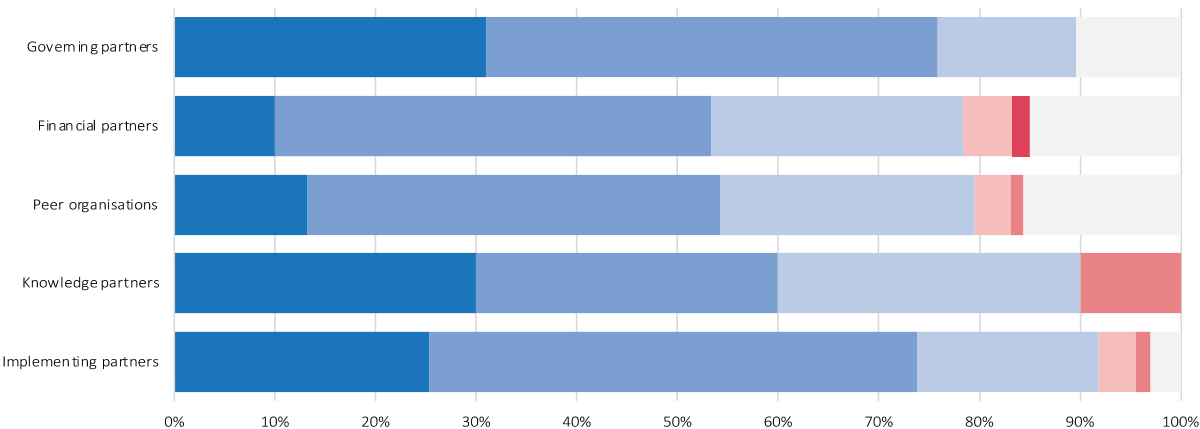
Figure 79 UNFPA provides high-quality inputs to the global policy dialogue.
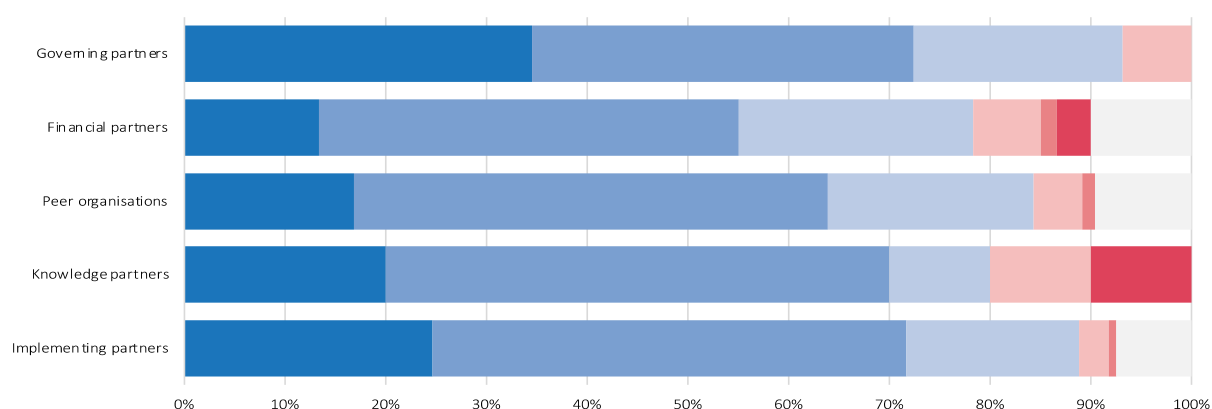
Figure 80 UNFPA shares key information (analysis, budgeting, management, results) with partners on an ongoing basis.

Legend: ■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree □ Don't know / No opinion
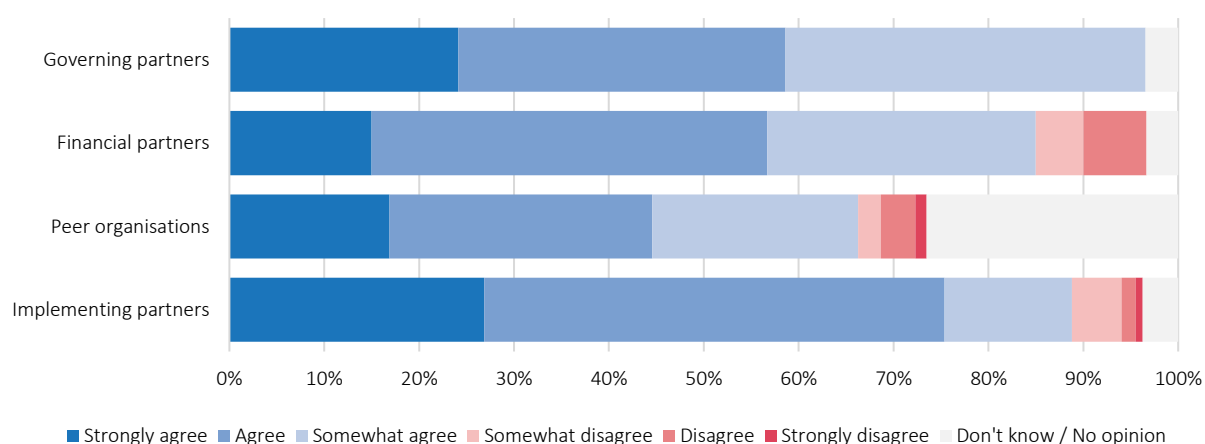
Figure 81. UNFPA helps develop the capacity of country systems.

Legend: ■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree □ Don't know / No opinion
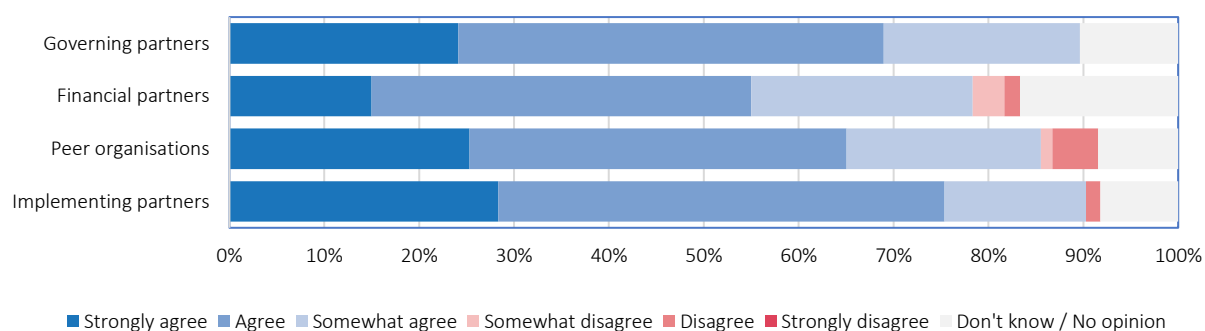
Figure 82 UNFPA management processes (e.g. hiring, procuring, disbursing) do not cause unnecessary delays for partners in implementing operations.

Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know / No opinion
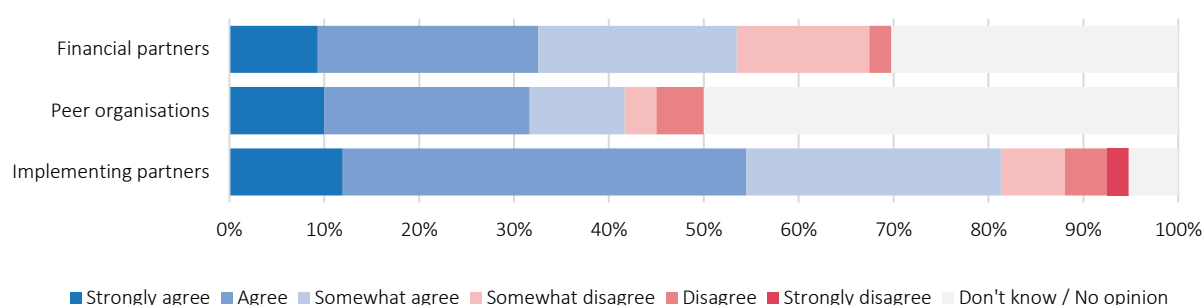
Figure 83 UNFPA seizes opportunities to support countries in furthering their development partnerships through South-South triangular cooperation.

■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know / No opinion
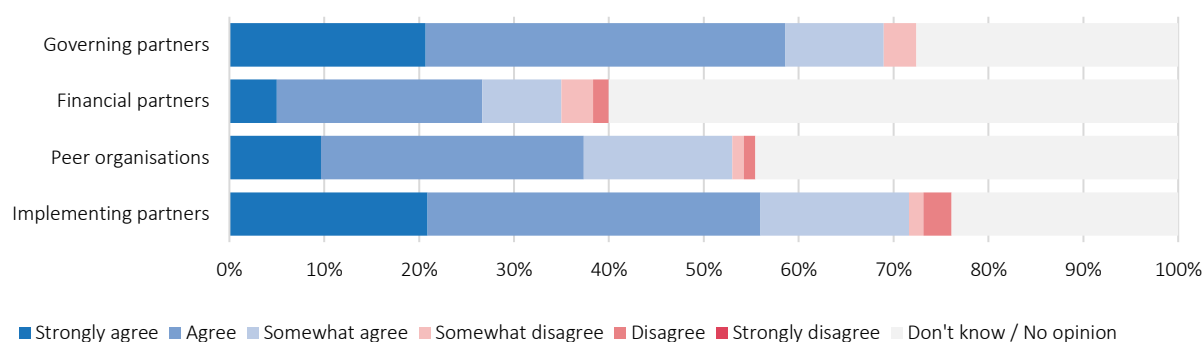
Figure 84 UNFPA is actively engaged, appropriate to its role, in inter-agency co-ordination mechanisms for planning, implementation, monitoring, and context analysis.


■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know / No opinion
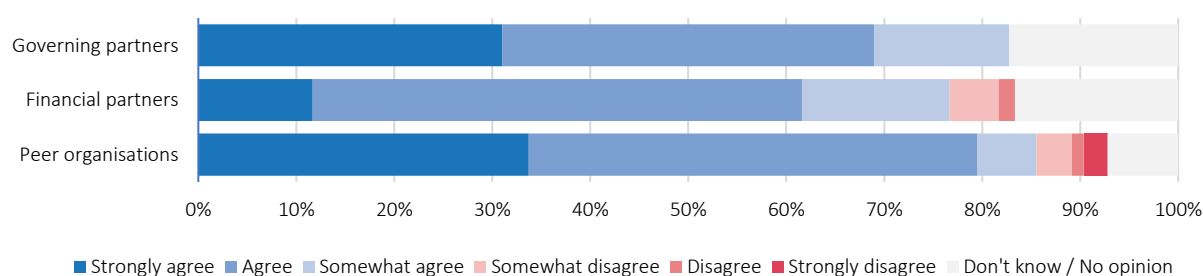
Figure 85 UNFPA jointly monitor progress on shared goals with partners.

Legend: Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know / No opinion
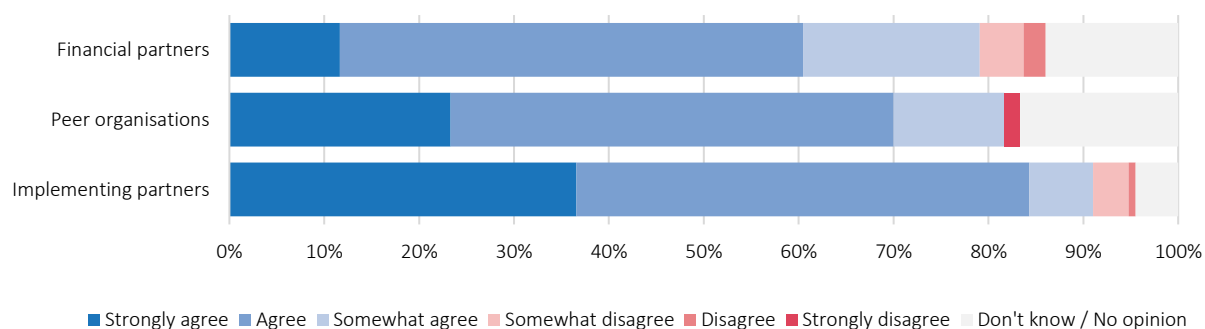
Figure 86. UNFPA has clear standards and procedures for accountability to its partners.

Legend: Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know / No opinion
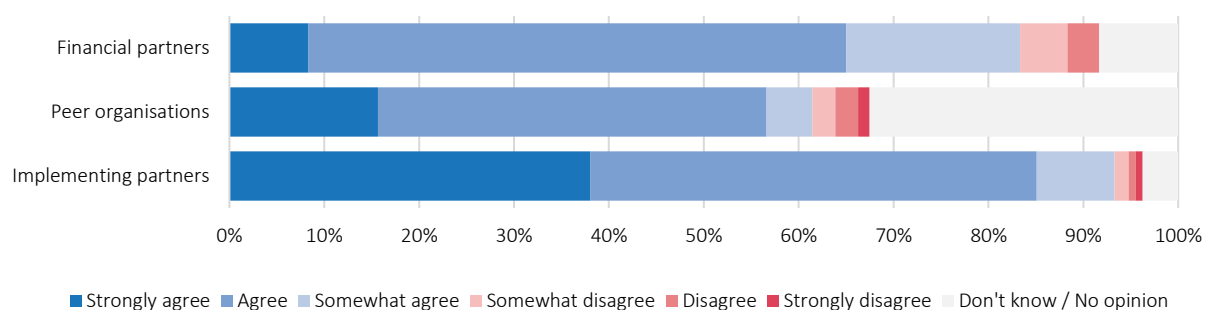
Figure 87. UNFPA co-ordinates its strategies with partners to ensure coherence and avoid fragmentation/duplication.
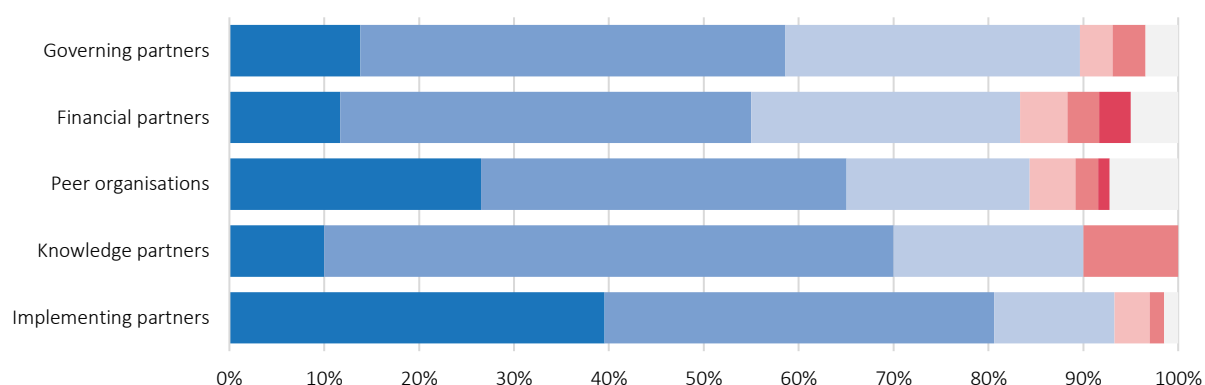
Performance management

Figure 88 UNFPA prioritises a result-based approach – for example when engaging in policy dialogue or planning and implementing interventions.

Strongly agree · Agree · Somewhat agree · Somewhat disagree · Disagree · Strongly disagree · Don't know / No opinion
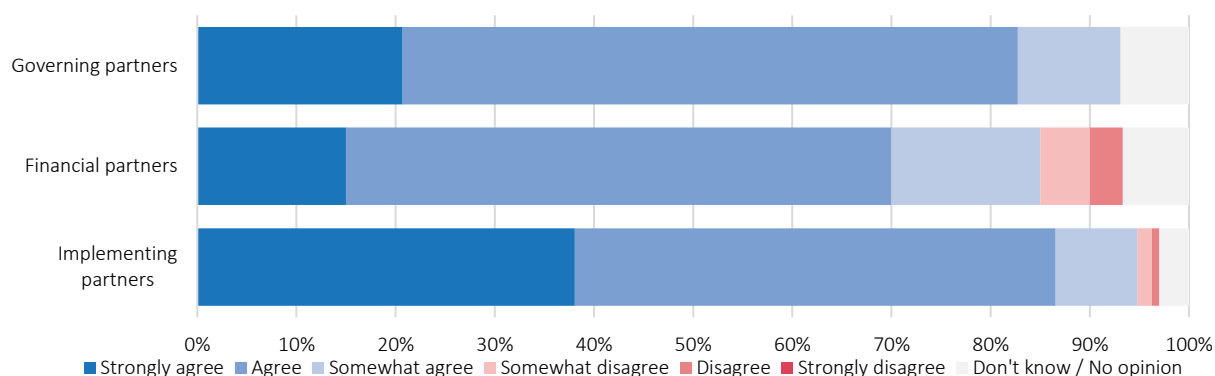
Figure 89 UNFPA consults with stakeholders on the setting of results targets at a country level.

Strongly agree · Agree · Somewhat agree · Somewhat disagree · Disagree · Strongly disagree · Don't know / No opinion
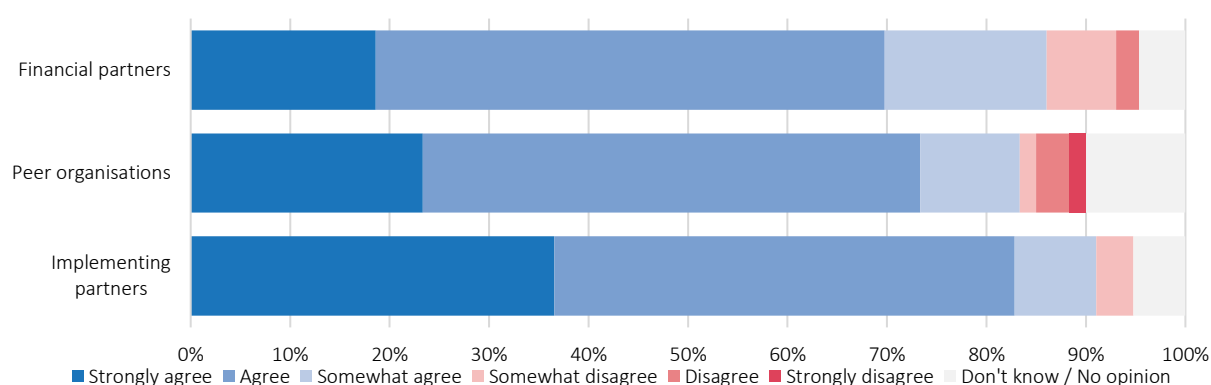
Figure 90 UNFPA consistently identifies which interventions are under-performing.

Strongly agree · Agree · Somewhat agree · Somewhat disagree · Disagree · Strongly disagree · Don't know / No opinion
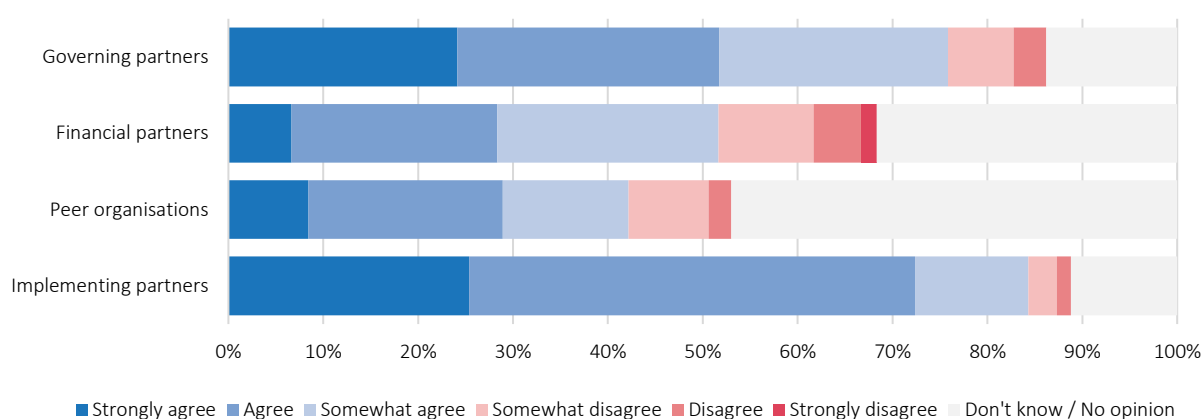
Figure 91 UNFPA addresses any underperforming areas of intervention, through technical support or changing funding patterns if appropriate.
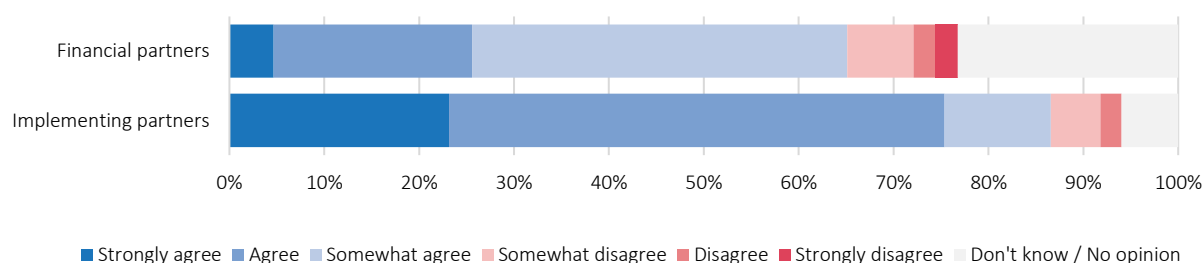

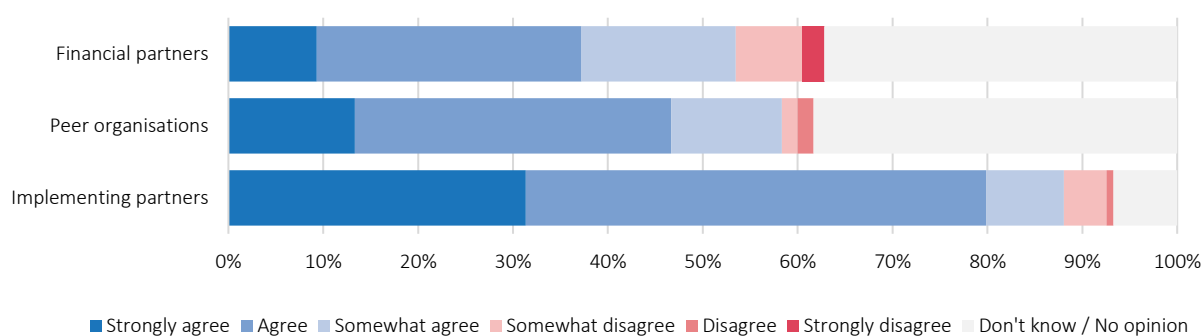**Figure 92 Where interventions are required to be evaluated, UNFPA follows through to ensure evaluations are carried out.**

Figure 93 UNFPA learns lessons from previous experience, rather than repeating the same mistakes.
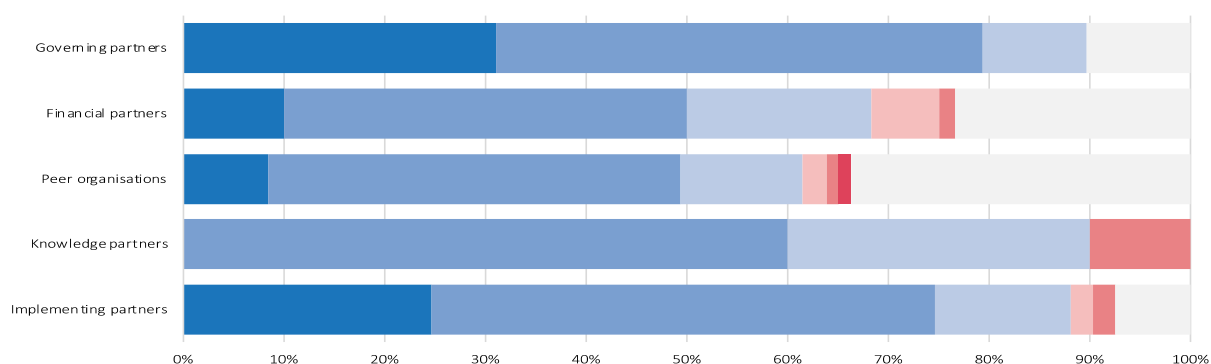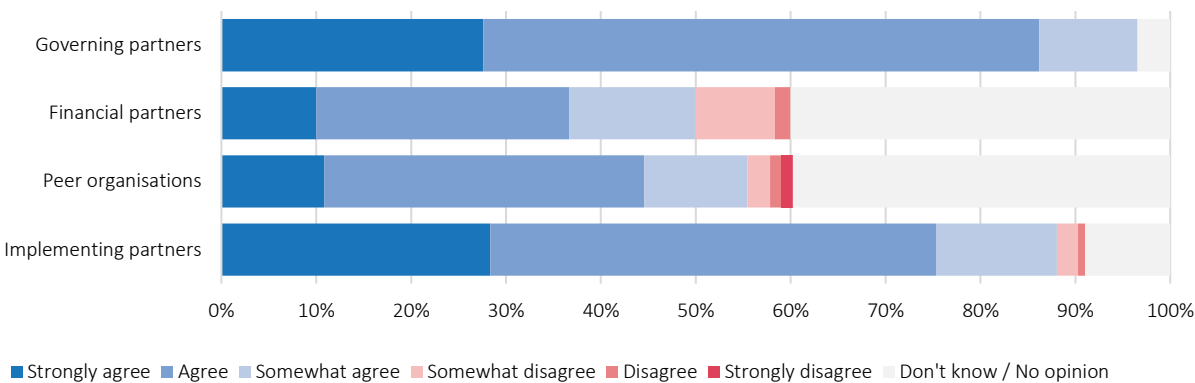
Figure 94 Evaluations produced by UNFPA have been of high quality and useful.

Legend: Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree □ Don't know / No opinion

Specific questions on sexual misconduct

Figure 95 Has UNFPA assessed your organisation's capacity to prevent SEA and handle any SEA allegations before you signed the contract?
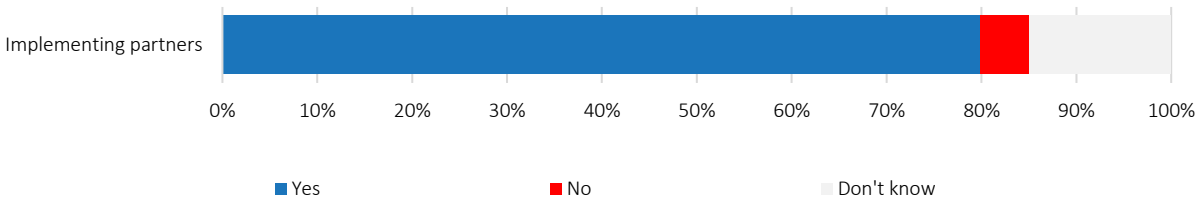

Legend: ■ Yes ■ No □ Don't know

Figure 96 Does UNFPA support the capacity of your organisation to fulfil the SEA obligations that you have agreed in the contract?
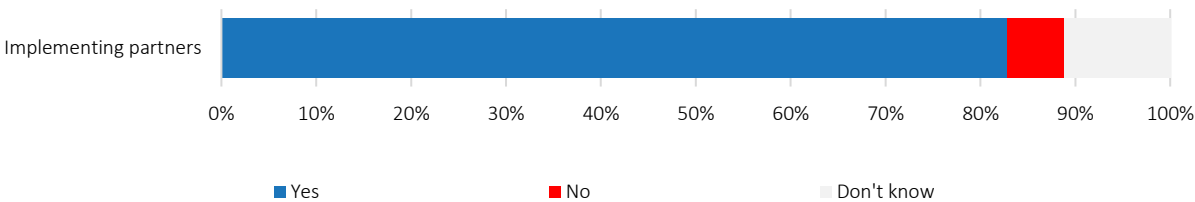

Legend: ■ Yes ■ No □ Don't know

Figure 97 UNFPA requires its partners to apply clear standards for preventing and responding to sexual misconduct in relation to host population (prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse).

Legend: ■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree □ Don't know / No opinion
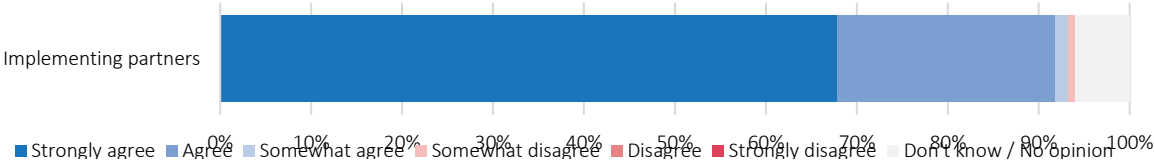
Figure 98 My organisation receives sufficient support from UNFPA to understand and fulfil the obligations related to the protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (of local populations) that we have signed in the contract with UNFPA.

■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know / No opinion
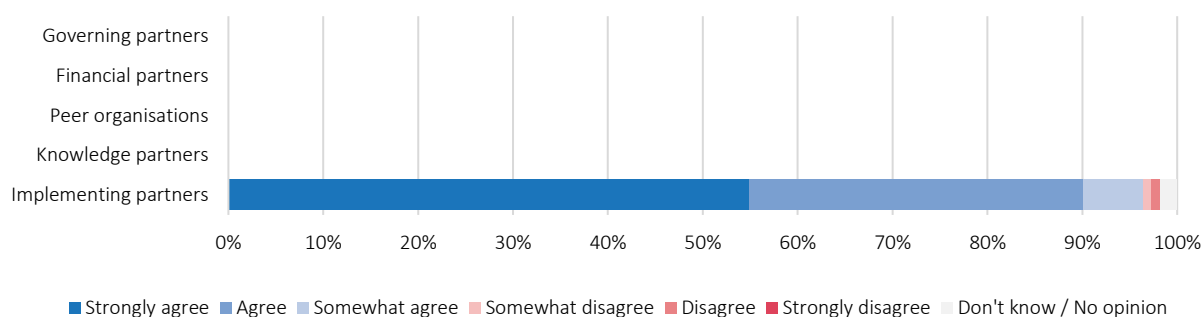
Figure 99 UNFPA has sufficiently assessed my organisation's capacity to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse (of local populations) by our staff.