

UNHCR EVALUATION PLAN 2020/21 – RESPONDING TO COVID-19

June, 2020

The purpose of this document is to outline the main principles of action and adaptations being made to UNHCRs 2020/21 **rolling evaluation workplan** in light of the Organizations' COVID L2 Activation and global pandemic.

Evaluation is MORE important rather than less in times of crisis – so much is at stake. Wherever possible, centralized and decentralized evaluations should go forward – the needs created by and constraints due to COVID will inevitably be part of what these evaluations will look at.

Introduction

The current COVID-19 pandemic is affecting UNHCR staff health and well-being, business continuity and our operations for persons of concern (PoCs) in many countries. UNHCR units/divisions/offices will need to review and reprioritize both what they are doing and how they are doing it – likely for most of 2020. Travel is restricted and will remain limited – while at the same time UNHCR will be called upon to “stay and deliver” protection, health, WASH, livelihood & cash-based interventions and others in lower- and middle-income countries with large refugee/IDP populations. Of particular concern will be our capacity to respond in countries in crisis (L2/3 emergencies) and those with weak national systems. In this context, the Evaluation Service has reviewed what the ongoing COVID19 crisis means in terms of a) evidence needs to help UNHCR better respond to the Covid19 Crisis, and b) the evaluation function more broadly including the evaluation workplan 2020/2021.

Principles

- Respond to the organization’s strategic priorities vis-à-vis COVID preparedness and response, in particular with respect to priority countries;
- Stand and deliver on evaluations that are both urgent (time sensitive) and important (high programme criticality and high risk operations);
- Emergency as opportunity - to innovate and develop new more efficient and effective approaches – in evaluation and in UNHCR more broadly. Evaluations to consider what we doing exceptionally in response to the COVID crisis, that is more efficient and effective, that we should keep doing?!

Priorities/Action Plan – Centralized Evaluations (see Annex 1)

1. Synthesize lessons and good practices from recent evaluations that are relevant to UNHCR COVID19 preparedness and response;
2. Secondment of an expert from the Evaluation Service to the HQ Multi-Functional COVID19 longer-term Strategy Cell/Team;
3. Phased real-time evaluation of the COVID19 Response in the field;
4. Undertake L2/3 emergency evaluations (Sahel, DRC, Venezuela, Yemen) as planned, as travel restrictions allow and adopting protection precautions as relevant in each country;
5. Finalize and fully disseminate evaluations that have completed fieldwork phases;
6. Conduct extended desk reviews for other evaluations that are planned to start in Q2/3 2020, develop TORs, recruit teams (no missions before Q3 or potentially Q4), produce secondary data analysis/interim reports;
7. For ongoing evaluations, where further data gathering is required, use technology to do remote data gathering¹ and increase responsibilities of national consultants if appropriate; and
8. Advance other important ES work (recruitments, guidance, capacity building webinars and training materials, evaluation tools, expand LTAs, preparation for the 2021 UNEG/DAC Peer Review of the evaluation function, etc.)

To be able to conduct rigorous evaluations in the absence of significant possibilities to collect information directly from stakeholders, the support of colleagues will be critical. Evaluation Managers will work to ensure that we place the minimum burden on UNHCR offices during this period. In this regard, we will require **full access to existing secondary data (surveys, financial information, admin/registers, progress reports, geospatial data, etc.) as well as staff/mgmt availability for remote interviews and support to get access to key informants and partners.**

UNHCR Commissioned Centralized Evaluations 2019-2021

(June 2020 – Updated Plan in the Context of COVID19)

Centralized Evaluations Carried Over to/Starting in 2020	Original Completion	Priority/ Action Plan	Projected Completion
Real-time evaluation of UNHCR L2 Response in COVID Affected Countries (NEW).		COVID	Q2/2021
Country Portfolio Evaluation Afghanistan	Q1/2020	Dissemination Phase	Q2/2020
Country Portfolio Evaluation Iraq	Q2/2020		Q2/2020
UNHCRs L3 Response in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe to cyclone Idai	Q3/2020	L2/L3 Evaluations	Q3/2020
UNHCR's L3 Response in DRC	Q1/2021		Q1/2021
UNHCRs L3 Emergency Response Evaluation in Burkina Faso and L2 Niger (Sahel Multi-Country Evaluation)	Q3/2020		Q4/2020
InterAgency Humanitarian Evaluation L3 Yemen	Q3/2020		tbd
Country Portfolio Evaluation Ukraine	Q2/2021	TOR, Desk Review, postpone fieldwork to Q3/4	Q2/2021
Country Portfolio Evaluation Egypt	Q3/2020		Q4/2020
Country Portfolio Evaluation Myanmar	Q2/2021		Q2/2021
Country Portfolio Evaluation Uganda	Q1/2021		Q2/2021
Country Portfolio Evaluation Zambia	Q1/2021		Q2/2021
UNHCR's Support for Voluntary Return	Q4/2020		Q1/2021
UNHCR's Asylum Capacity Development	Q3/2021		Q3/2021
UNHCR's Efforts to End Statelessness	Q1/2021		Q2/2021

Joint (UNAIDS) Programme's work on preventing and responding to GBV	Q4/2020		Q4/2020
Humanitarian Development Cooperation	Q3/2020	Complete by remote approaches	Q3/2020
UNHCRs Emergency Response to the Venezuela Situation	Q4/2020		Q3/2020
UNHCR's Approaches to Learning and Development	Q4/2020		Q4/2020
Implementation of UNHCR's 2018 Age, Gender and Diversity Policy	Q4/2020		Q4/2020
InterAgency Humanitarian Evaluation of Gender Equality	Q2/2020		Q2/2020
Real Time Evaluation - UNHCR/UNICEF Roadmap for Refugee Children (NEW)			Q4/2021