

## UNHCR'S APPROACH TO EVALUATING THE COVID-19 RESPONSE FOR REFUGEES AND OTHER PERSONS OF CONCERN

### CONTEXT

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the response of States and the role of international cooperation and assistance will be subject to cross-cutting thematic and institutionally focused evaluations globally during 2021-22. The [Global Evaluation Coalition](#), facilitated by OECD DAC Evaluation Network (EvalNet), brings together OECD members development assistance evaluation units, with those of partner countries and UN system organizations in an effort to reduce the evaluative footprint and harmonize evaluation and synthesis work where practical.

Within the UN system, in addition to individual organizational COVID-19 response evaluations, three main COVID-19 response evaluations are planned: the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation (IAHE) of the Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP) led by OCHA; an evaluation of the Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) set up to support the UN Socio-Economic Framework for COVID-19, led by the UN Systemwide Evaluation Office under the Executive Office of the Secretary-General; and an evaluation of the WHO's response to COVID-19, under and an independent panel for pandemic preparedness and response.

### UNHCR COVID-19 EVALUATIONS

UNHCR is leading or supporting three COVID-19 related evaluations in 2021, a meta-evaluation on UNHCR's adaptation and response; a joint-evaluation on the protection of refugee rights during COVID-19, and as a member of the inter-agency humanitarian evaluation of the GHRP, as detailed below.

### EVALUATING UNHCR'S ADAPTATION AND RESPONSE TO COVID-19: META-EVALUATION

**Purpose:** To provide robust and timely evidence on how effectively UNHCR is adapting to COVID-19 and addressing the emerging/expanding needs of Persons of Concern (POC).

**Content & Scope:** Global scope, with a focus on the effectiveness of UNHCR's adaptations to COVID-19 with respect to the organization's ability to address the new/expanded needs of POC. The meta-evaluation will include a focus on the coherence and effectiveness of UNHCR's collaboration and coordination with partners (including other UN agencies), governments and civil society organizations in responding to COVID-19. The analysis and recommendations will be framed as being future-focused and generate evidence that could be used to enhance the organization's understanding of the effects of COVID-19 and government's actions to mitigate COVID-19, and the agency's effectiveness, coherence and relevance of the adaptations and responses to COVID-19.

**Approach and Timing:** The study will synthesize evidence on COVID-19 by building questions into ongoing and new UNHCR led evaluations in 2021, thus generating evidence without placing additional operational pressures on the organization and in recognition of the logistical challenges of travel and data collection during this period. Evidence briefs will be produced during 2021, with an overall report due in December 2021.

THE PROTECTION OF REFUGEES DURING THE  
COVID-19 PANDEMIC: JOINT EVALUATION UNDER  
THE AUSPICES OF THE GLOBAL EVALUATION  
COALITION



**Purpose:** examine the effectiveness of international cooperation and the combined response of key actors in ensuring the protection of the rights of refugees during the COVID-19 pandemic: to identify emerging good practice, innovation and adaptation to protection responses.

**Content & Scope:** COVID-19 appears to have challenged the protection of the fundamental rights of refugees in a way that is profound and with possible lasting impacts. Understanding how widespread this is, how effective the combined response – governments, host communities, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and refugees themselves has been, and what we can learn from progressive and less progressive actions taken will be crucial to the implementation of current operations and the design of future strategies and plans.

**Approach and Timing:** Joint Evaluation under the auspices of the [Global Evaluation Coalition](#), facilitated by OECD DAC Evaluation Network (EvalNet). The Management Group for this evaluation includes the Evaluation Units of UNHCR, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, Governments of Colombia and Uganda, and the humanitarian system network ALNAP, and chaired by UNHCR. Currently in design phase, report due November 2021.

COVID-19 GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PLAN:  
INTER AGENCY HUMANITARIAN EVALUATION (IAHE)



**Purpose:** To provide evidence of the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of funding spent against the Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP). The response to COVID-19 involved a multi-pillar UN and NGO response - the first major test of the humanitarian reform process and its impact on coordination among humanitarian, health, development and peace and security actors at global and country level. The evaluation should provide a valuable and timely humanitarian perspective to inform the reform agenda, going beyond COVID-19.

**Content & Scope:** The proposed scope includes three phases examining: the process of the GHRP appeals design and launch; the results observed on humanitarian programming and affected populations at both global and country level; and thirdly, lessons learnt and considerations for improving the design, implementation and integration of global response plans in the future.

**Approach and Timing:** [IAHEs](#) are led by OCHA, with a Management Group (UNHCR is a member), and a wider Reference Group, still to be formed. The evaluation report is due in Q1/2022.

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