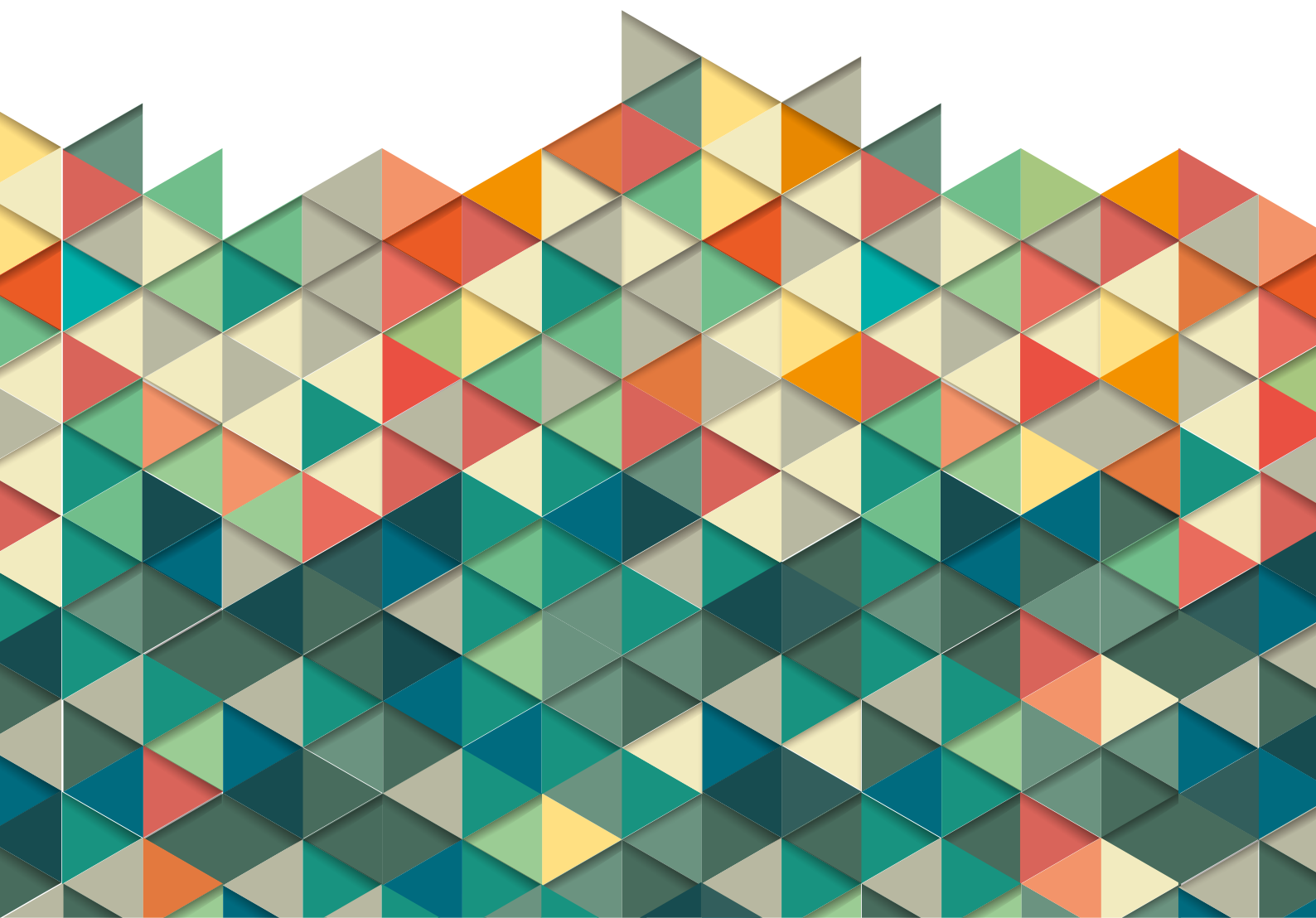# Developmental evaluation of results-based management at UNFPA

UNFPA

EVALUATION MANAGEMENT

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Foreword

The 2017 external independent evaluation review of the evaluation function at UNFPA recommended that the Evaluation Office should guide the evaluation function towards a better balance between accountability, decision support and learning purposes, adapting continuously its evaluation approaches and processes to best inform and support the attainment of the UNFPA mission in rapidly changing and challenging contexts, including by better integrating relevant developments in the theory and practice of evaluation. In response, in 2018, the Evaluation Office developed and rolled out the 2018-2021 Evaluation Strategy, which included, among others, the priorities of a) increase demand-driven evaluations, and b) diversify the offer of typology of evaluations, including through innovation. In this context, UNFPA Evaluation Office, responding to a specific demand by senior management, and in alignment to the 2018-2021 Evaluation Strategy, decided to experiment with this "developmental" evaluation of results-based management (RBM) at UNFPA.

Developmental evaluations help to identify innovative options in complex and dynamic conditions. Developmental evaluations are also forward-looking and utilization-focused, involving continuous real-time feedback and high level of engagement within all levels of the organization. In this sense, developmental evaluation was fit for purpose to fast track RBM to the next level at UNFPA, providing real-time evaluative input for decision-making and learning.

Since the introduction of RBM at UNFPA in 2000, considerable strides have been made on developing formal systems, frameworks and tools to report on results at UNFPA. However, challenges remain in using results for adaptation and driving organizational learning. In response, the evaluation framed and analysed five creative tensions (gaps and challenges) that led to the co-creation of six leverage points as possible solutions for the way forward. These include development of a shared conceptual framework on RBM; revising RBM system requirements, procedures and tools; increasing use of evaluations; revamping human resource competency and recruitment frameworks; behavioural transformation; dialogue with the Executive Board on accountability and reporting. UNFPA is currently using the evidence provided by the evaluation to chart the next steps to roll out the identified joint solutions.

Finally, the extensive participation of UNFPA staff across various business units has been central to the success of this evaluation. I'm grateful to all those who shared their valuable time and energy during this process. I also thank other United Nations agencies and development cooperation actors, particularly the Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning at USAID, the OECD-DAC Results Community, and the UNICEF Fields Result Group for sharing their RBM approach and experience, that have been critical to frame solutions for UNFPA.

We hope the high level of engagement and momentum created by the developmental evaluation across the organization will continue to be nurtured by UNFPA as it propels RBM to the last mile. After all, RBM is everyone's business.

Marco Segone
Director
UNFPA Evaluation Office
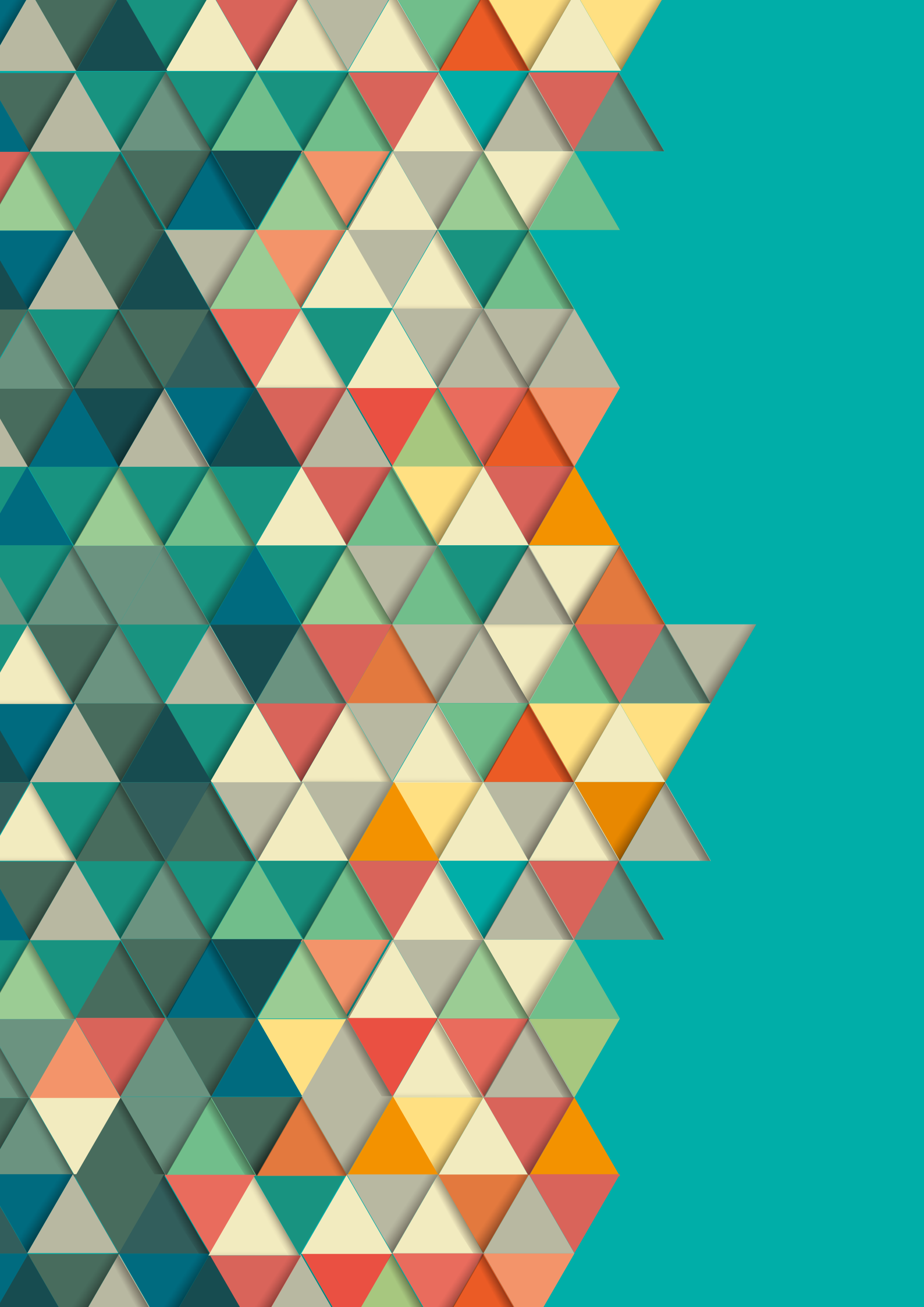
Independent audit of the developmental evaluation

Readers and users of this developmental evaluation report may appreciate having an independent assessment of whether the findings can be trusted, whether the evaluation was conducted appropriately, and whether the evaluation process was rigorous. Just as an independent auditor's review is essential in establishing the credibility of corporate financial information to investors, stockholders and the general public, this audit of the *Developmental evaluation of results-based management at UNFPA* speaks to the credibility of this evaluation for intended users, policy makers, international stakeholders, and the global public. Given the importance of results-based management in the United Nation system, this constitutes a high-stakes evaluation, so guidance on its fidelity to developmental evaluation principles and procedures, and adherence to generally accepted international standards of quality, is appropriate.

My audit has included reviewing the data collection process, the evaluation report, and evaluation feedback notes. I have also had occasion to discuss with key stakeholders the nature of developmental evaluation, as well as the evaluators how they conducted the evaluation, resolved issues they encountered, and reported their findings to key stakeholders in addition to this report.

In my opinion, the evaluation process was developed and implemented in accordance with developmental evaluation principles. Developmental evaluation occupies a unique and specific niche in evaluation. Its purpose is to support ongoing development and adaptation in the face of the complex realities of systems change. The findings and conclusions generated by the developmental evaluators adhere closely and rigorously to the evaluation evidence collected. The discussion of 'the way forward' deserves special attention. The concluding reflections are insightful and important, and consistent with a developmental evaluation approach.

In conclusion, this evaluation can be trusted and used in keeping with its developmental purpose. Notwithstanding inevitable limitations inherent in such a complex and comprehensive evaluation initiative, the analysis and way forward can be studied and used as meaningful and credible.

Michael Quinn Patton
Founder and Director
Utilization-Focused Evaluation

Michael Quinn Patton is author of *Developmental Evaluation*: *Applying Complexity Concepts to Enhance Innovation and Use* (Guilford Press, 2011), co-editor of *Developmental Evaluation Exemplars: Principles in Practice* (Guilford Press, 2015), and author of What is Essential in Developmental Evaluation? *American Journal of Evaluation* (2016. vol. 37, 2, pp. 250-265).

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Acronyms

ASRO	Arab States Regional Office
APRO	Asia and the Pacific Regional Office
COAR	Country office annual reports
ERM	Enterprise risk management
ERP	Enterprise resource planning
ESARO	East and Central Africa Regional Office
GPS	Global programming system
ILO	International Labour Organization
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System
LACRO	Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office
MOPAN	Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network
MYFF	Multi-Year Funding Framework
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OECD-DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the OECD
PSD	Policy and Strategy Division
QCPR	Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review
RBM	Results-based management
ToR	Terms of Reference
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIS	Strategic Information System
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDS	United Nations Development System
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WCARO	West and Central Africa Regional Office

Aim and structure of this report

The main purpose of this developmental evaluation of results-based management (RBM) at UNFPA was to provide useful evaluative input, for decision-making, for the development of the next stage of RBM in UNFPA. As presented in the inception report, this evaluative input includes two main streams: analysing the root causes of persistent challenges in RBM and bringing evidence for solutions, possible scenarios and courses of action in the area of RBM.

In this context, the primary purpose of this final report is two-fold: to provide an overall account of the evaluation exercise and to update primary users with the major developments that have emerged from the evaluation. This developmental evaluation embeds an initial intentional and organic transition towards the development of the next stage of RBM in UNFPA. The report seeks to summarize the main highlights of the exercise, rendering an account of what the developmental evaluation has led to with all its implications in terms of how the organization can take the lead in developing the way forward for the next stage of RBM.

The report is not intended to provide detailed explanations of all the analyses and considerations for the way forward. Comprehensive analysis of the findings was included in real-time feedback loops delivered throughout. Feedback has been provided regularly both orally and by written communication through a number of feedback notes, which are intended as an analytical resource base to inform organizational discussions.

The report is structured in three parts and has seven chapters. The three parts answer three essential questions respectively:

(i) Why undertake this developmental evaluation?
(ii) What has the developmental evaluation led to?
(iii) Where does this suggest that UNFPA should go next?

Part I focuses on the purpose of the developmental evaluation, explaining the RBM context and the challenges that framed this exercise. This first part also describes the long RBM journey covered by UNFPA to date and explains the rationale and methodological features that underpin this developmental evaluation.

Part II deals with the learning accrued from this developmental evaluation, starting at the scoping phase of the exercise. This part presents the main effects and changes that the evaluation process has produced and is still producing within and outside the agency in terms of organizational development.

Part III puts forward considerations on the way forward for the development of the next stage of RBM. This third part explains the leverage flow, which is the suggested sequence to kick-start work to resolve the current creative tensions in RBM. Part III introduces areas where small changes could lead to significant positive developments and hints at possible entry points that could bring RBM to its next stage of development. This last part also suggests a number of principles to guide the optimal implementation of this next stage of development.

The report also includes an annex featuring the evaluation inquiry framework (Annex 1) and a complete list of the vast number of interviewees and survey respondents who have kindly and generously contributed to this exercise (Annex 2).

Executive summary

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The primary purpose of this developmental evaluation of results-based management (RBM) at UNFPA was to provide useful evaluative input for decision-making in order to develop the next stage of RBM. This evaluative input included two main streams: identifying and analyzing the root causes of persistent issues in RBM; and bringing evidence for solutions, possible scenarios, and courses of action in the area of RBM. The evaluation put in place a data-driven evaluative process that has informed the analytical framing and decision-making process associated with organizational efforts to bring RBM to a new stage of development. The evaluation has provided initial input to the organizational development process required to advance UNFPA towards this new stage.

The scope of this corporate evaluation included all components and dimensions of RBM, and the evaluation process engaged business units across all levels in the agency. The analysis covered the country, regional, and global levels at UNFPA and looked at specific aspects of RBM in the United Nations development system and the broad development cooperation sector.

AIMS OF THE ACCOUNT REPORT: A DIFFERENT APPROACH

This report summarizes the main highlights of the evaluation to date. It explains what the developmental evaluation has led to and its implications in terms of how UNFPA can take the lead in developing the way forward for the next stage of RBM. In this context, the account report is not a final report presenting final conclusions and a number of related recommendations from the evaluation team. Instead, it is an overall account of the evaluation exercise, updating primary users with the major developments that have emerged to date. At the time of writing this report, the organizational development process is ongoing, and the evaluative input generated by the evaluation is being disseminated and discussed across the organization.

The detailed analysis and major findings are included in five feedback notes. The feedback notes include the specific findings and supporting evidence (evaluative input) and constitute the analytical resource base to inform the organizational discussions to be conducted and decisions to be made when developing a new stage of RBM at UNFPA. The feedback notes provide answers to all the priority questions included in the inquiry framework of the evaluation and address discussions in five core areas (called creative tensions): conceptual frameworks, information systems, capacity, culture, and tensions in accountability. Similarly, the emergent sequence of feedback and the considerations for the way forward are included in the numerous presentations used in working meetings and discussions with a wide array of business units across UNFPA.

RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT AT UNFPA

What is results-based management?

According to the United Nations Development Group RBM Handbook, adhered to by UNFPA, RBM is a management strategy by which all actors on the ground, contributing directly or indirectly to achieving a set of development results, ensure that their processes, products, and services contribute to the achievement of desired results (outputs, outcomes and goals).

The results-based management journey at UNFPA: key milestones

The journey began in 2000, with an RBM Policy Statement issued with the approval of the UNFPA 2000-2003 Multi-Year Funding Framework (MYFF). In 2004, the agency introduced results-oriented country office annual reports (COAR) as the primary reporting tool associated with the MYFF and launched the i-Track system. This system allowed country offices and headquarters to fill in their annual reports online. In 2011, UNFPA introduced its first Results-Based Management Policy. The Policy was mainstreamed through UNFPA strategic plans. UNFPA

Strategic Plan (2014-2017), for instance, incorporates an integrated results framework with management and development results.

In 2013, the UNFPA Policy and Strategy Division convened the Lusaka Group, a group of in-house monitoring and evaluation experts tasked with developing action plans to strengthen RBM in UNFPA. The pace of development of RBM formal systems and frameworks has been remarkable since 2010. Such progress was acknowledged by the 2014 Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) report, which highlights the adoption of a robust integrated results framework, theories of change, and improved country-level monitoring and evaluation. The UNFPA Strategic Plan (2014-2017) featured several new elements in RBM information systems infrastructure: the global programming system (GPS) implemented in 2014, the strategic information system (SIS), the enterprise risk management system (ERM) introduced in 2015, and the dashboard in 2017. This new infrastructure was aimed at enhancing UNFPA performance in delivering development results as well as enhancing UNFPA ability to account to donors for the utilization of funds.

The recent UNFPA Strategic Plan (2018-2021) further emphasizes the relevance of mainstreaming RBM across UNFPA policies, procedures, manuals, and systems. The plan commits to increasing these efforts to improve RBM in order to ensure RBM becomes a core capacity of all staff, at both the programme and operational level.

 Overall, the RBM journey in UNFPA has been characterized by intentional and incremental improvements responsive to demands from donors, the Executive Board, and external assessments. These assessments pointed out several aspects to be addressed at different points in time. In many instances, these issues were tackled and resolved. However, despite the aforementioned remarkable efforts in improving RBM in terms of architecture, frameworks, systems, and tools, a number of persistent challenges and problems have remained. These challenges tend to be systemic and are related to deeper structural aspects of organizational culture, confusion in the conceptual framework, measurement challenges, and tensions in accountability. This developmental evaluation is a direct result of the willingness of UNFPA to focus on the analysis of these persistent issues, their root causes, and the possible ways forward.

WHAT IS A DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION, AND WHY IS UNFPA CONDUCTING ONE?

Developmental evaluations help to explore possibilities and identify innovative options in complex, uncertain and dynamic conditions associated with the development of a new initiative (Patton, 2011). This was the case with the explicit will of UNFPA to evolve to the next stage of RBM.

There were three main reasons why a developmental evaluation approach was more suitable than a summative or formative evaluation. The first reason was that a developmental approach was a better fit, given the purpose of the exercise. Developmental evaluations contribute to initiatives that are being developed, and this concept was fully aligned with the purpose of the present exercise. The second reason was that a developmental evaluation was more suited to the nature of RBM at UNFPA, which was the subject of the evaluation. RBM operates in a systemic fashion, and developmental evaluations are based on the application of systems thinking and complexity theory. The third reason was the focus on utilization. UNFPA was seeking a demand-driven exercise that provided useful evaluative input, and developmental evaluations are placed within the larger context of utilization-focused evaluations, which are evaluations that focus on achieving "intended use for intended users" (Patton, 2011).

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The scoping mission resulted in the identification of five "creative tensions", which are five main areas where gaps and challenges prevent the current RBM system from optimizing its performance. The evaluation inquiry framework was developed based on the five creative tensions. This framework guided data-collection and analysis processes. Evidence and findings were then shared through feedback loops and presentations to UNFPA business units across the organization, leading to the identification of a number of leverage points. Leverage points are areas of a system where small shifts can produce significant improvements. At the time of writing this report, six leverage points had been identified, and UNFPA was reflecting on how to address them. Several entry points had also been put forward for consideration in UNFPA discussions on the way forward.

Tools for primary data collection encompassed: in-depth semi-structured interviews, focus groups, an online survey, and participant observation. The evaluation team conducted 144 interviews and ten focus group discussions, with a total of 290 people consulted. A total of 757 UNFPA staff, covering all UNFPA geographical regions and tiers, responded to the online survey. Participant observation and on-site consultations were applied in three UNFPA-led RBM workshops. Tools for secondary data collection encompassed the study of documentation and retrieval of information from existing datasets.

Tools for data analysis included: content analysis, systems thinking (tools such as systems maps, iceberg models, causal feedback loop diagrams and system archetypes), comparative analysis, brief case-study forms, and statistical analysis. The last of these included both basic statistical analysis (descriptive statistics) and inferential statistics, applied to the results of the survey.

WHAT HAS THE DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION LED TO SO FAR?

The point of departure for the evaluation was the organizational diagnosis of the RBM system conducted during the scoping phase in June-July 2018. This situational analysis of the issues, gaps, and bottlenecks that prevented and undermined the existing RBM system from optimizing its performance was the first primary finding of the evaluation. The situational, systemic analysis is explained through a system of five interrelated creative tensions preventing and undermining the current RBM system from fully optimizing its performance.

FIGURE: *The five results-based management creative tensions map at UNFPA*
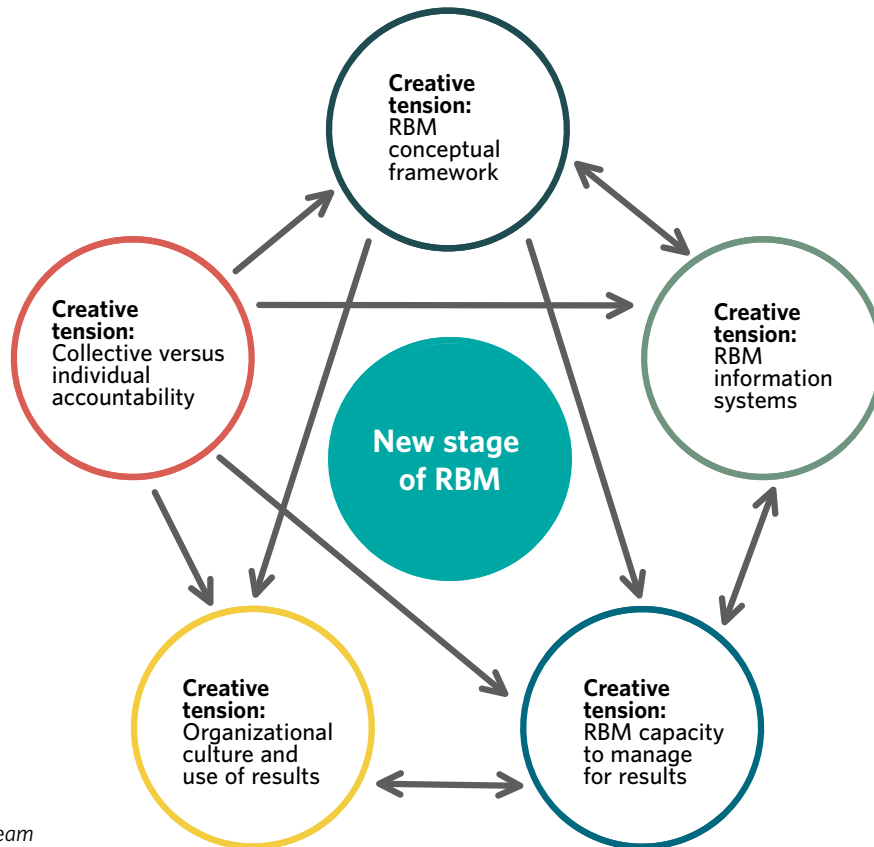
Source: Evaluation team

A creative tension designates a gap between a desired goal or idea (the way it should be) and a current state of reality (the way it is). A creative tension, which may also show gaps between different perspectives, always focuses on a gap that seeks to be resolved – that is why it is "creative". These five creative tensions are: confusion in the RBM conceptual framework (creative tension 1: RBM conceptual framework); unbalanced integration of multiple accountabilities (creative tension 2: collective versus individual accountability); a limited culture of using results information for decision-making (creative tension 3: organizational culture and use of results information); capacity constraints to manage for results (creative tension 4: capacity to manage for results); and information systems not fulfilling current demands (creative tension 5: RBM information systems). The five creative tensions are all interrelated, influencing and affecting each other either directly or indirectly, thereby reflecting a systemic nature. The evaluation departed from this systemic diagnosis to find out the root causes beneath the symptoms (the five creative tensions) that prevent the RBM system from performing optimally. This systemic diagnosis was also the point of departure for the identification of leverage points for potential solutions.

To date, the developmental evaluation has collected, analyzed and shared evidence on the root causes behind the five creative tensions and has contributed to the joint identification of "the way-forward", preparing the organization for the next stage of RBM. At the time of writing this report, UNFPA was immersed in an ongoing process of discussing and interpreting the evidence and findings provided by the evaluation. This process also included reflections on potential solutions to further develop the new stage of RBM.
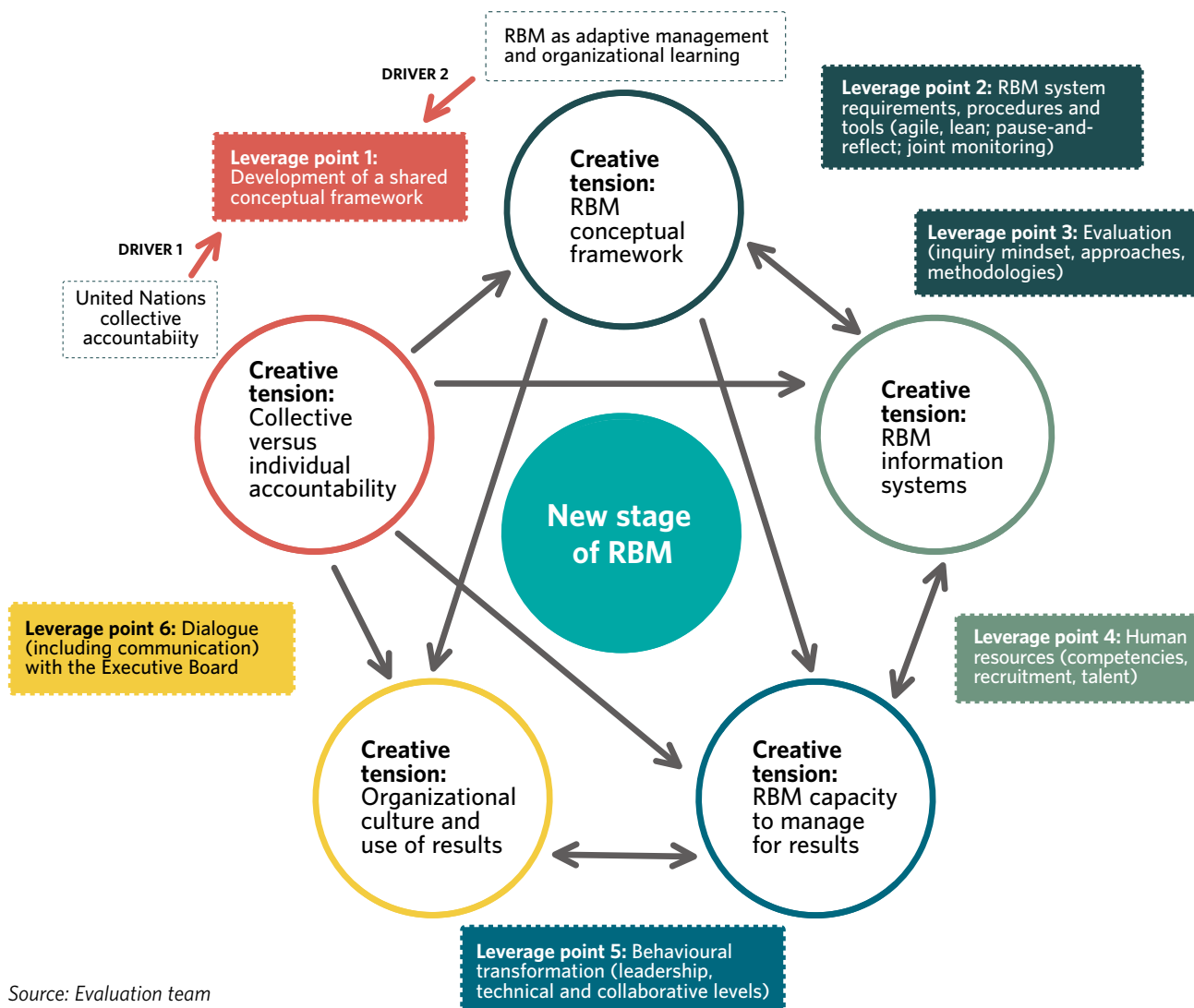
WHAT IS THE WAY FORWARD?

The leverage flow, shown in the figure, has emerged during the developmental evaluation as a model to guide the organizational development of RBM solutions and, therefore, to move to the next stage of RBM by making

sure solutions tackle the root causes of persistent RBM issues and challenges. The leverage flow model follows a logical sequence of causal influence between the five inter-dependent creative tensions and works out a framework to identify leverage point areas.

RBM as adaptive management and organizational learning

DRIVER 2

Leverage point 1: Development of a shared conceptual framework

Leverage point 2: RBM system requirements, procedures and tools (agile, lean; pause-and-reflect; joint monitoring)

Creative tension: RBM conceptual framework

Leverage point 3: Evaluation (inquiry mindset, approaches, methodologies)

DRIVER 1

United Nations collective accountabiity

Creative tension: Collective versus individual accountability

Creative tension: RBM information systems

New stage of RBM

Leverage point 6: Dialogue (including communication) with the Executive Board

Leverage point 4: Human resources (competencies, recruitment, talent)

Creative tension: Organizational culture and use of results

Creative tension: RBM capacity to manage for results

Leverage point 5: Behavioural transformation (leadership, technical and collaborative levels)

Source: Evaluation team

Leverage point areas are areas where small changes can produce large improvements in a system (results-based management in the present case). Six leverage points linked to the five creative tensions and their interrelationships have been identified during the developmental evaluation process to date: (i) the development of a shared conceptual framework; (ii) RBM system requirements, procedures and tools; (iii) evaluation (meaning the entire evaluation function across UNFPA as well as evaluation as an inquiring technique embedded in programmes); (iv) human resources; (v) behavioural transformation; and (vi) a dialogue with the Executive Board.

A number of possible actions that may be taken to start working on, and activate, the leverage points have also been identified. These actions, referred to as emergent entry points, are initial possibilities for consideration based

on the analysis conducted during the evaluation; they are not prescriptive indications or recommendations. To date, the six leverage point areas and the suggested entry points have been presented to all relevant business units at headquarters, to the Executive Committee and to the Asia and the Pacific Region in a webinar held on July 2019.

Leverage point 1. The development of a shared conceptual framework: This leverage point reflects the need to develop a clear, shared understanding of what the main purposes of RBM are and how to articulate them in practice in a new stage of RBM characterized by adapting programming and collective accountability. **Emergent entry points:** Setting up a multi-level, inter-divisional mechanism (for example, an RBM action group or taskforce team) to articulate the organizational development process associated with the transition to the new stage of RBM. This coordination

mechanism would optimally include headquarters, regional and country offices and involve all UNFPA business units in different ways. The sequence for the development of the shared vision would be to: discuss and agree on the purpose; develop principles and standards based on the purpose; translate principles and standards into clear operational definitions of key terms, scope of RBM and clear specifications on the different levels of results; and articulate an RBM framework or strategy or policy.

Leverage point 2. RBM system requirements, procedures, and tools: A number of current RBM gaps and bottlenecks preventing RBM from moving to a new stage are reflected in system requirements, procedures, and tools. Revising current system requirements in light of the analysis of root causes could bring significant changes. **Emergent entry points:** Consider business process reengineering by rationalizing existing RBM tools and processes based on their purpose and value to the user and focusing on making reporting more efficient to free up time to "pause-and-reflect" (one of the most critical aspects of learning for adaptation). Other entry points are: testing, piloting and experimenting with adaptive tools; incorporating pause-and-reflect in these pilots; and establishing collaborations, networks and institutional links with those exploring practical approaches and research on learning for adaptation.

Leverage point 3. Evaluation: "Learning for adaptation" in adaptive management is closely associated with the increasing use of evaluations and with the development of an inquiring mindset across the organization. "Evaluation" here refers to the entire evaluation function across UNFPA, as well as evaluation as an inquiring technique embedded in programmes. **Emergent entry points:** (i) Adopt corporate learning agendas (and the ensuing inquiry frameworks) to foster an evaluative mindset geared towards organizational learning. (ii) Explore targeted evaluation methods better able to capture the complexity and the value of the UNFPA business model, for example: outcome harvesting, process tracing, realist evaluation, and contribution analysis. (iii) Explore evaluation design approaches geared towards maximizing organizational learning, such as formative evaluations, developmental evaluations, participatory evaluations, and joint evaluation designs, whereby users take part in the design of the evaluation as well. (iv) Link these entry points with the new UNFPA Knowledge Management Strategy, which includes several elements very conducive to delivering thinking and adaptive programming.

Leverage point 4. Human resources: This leverage point is geared toward overcoming the current bottlenecks in RBM culture and capacity. The point focuses on staff competencies, recruitment strategies, and talent acquisition, which are proving essential to transitioning to the new stage of RBM. **Emergent entry points:** (i) Review the current human resources frameworks in light of evaluation findings such as staff job descriptions, the Competency Framework, the Human Resources Strategy, staff learning and career development, and current managerial certification programmes. (ii) Operationalize the United Nations Leadership Framework translating it into a specific UNFPA leadership development strategy. (iii) Use the RBM SEAL as a mechanism to map out and identify the competencies and skills that characterize "RBM champions" in the transition towards adaptive programming and collective accountability. (iv) Liaise with organizations currently working on developing a competency and recruitment framework linked to adaptive management.

Leverage point 5. Behavioural transformation. The new stage of RBM, characterized by collective accountability and adaptive management, implies a change in working culture, in leadership styles, and in optimizing collaborative intelligence. Behavioural transformation here refers to organizational ways of working, including team behaviour, leadership, practical RBM skills, and collaborative intelligence. **Emergent entry points:** (i) The organizational culture change initiative led by the Change Management Secretariat with support from the Gates Foundation offers a very opportune and consistent entry point. (ii) Implement fully fledged adaptive management and programming pilots (applying adaptive programming approaches from planning to evaluation) in selected country offices. (ii) Use the RBM SEAL to identify "championing" country offices and adaptive programming practices specific to UNFPA, that is, capturing what adaptive programming means to the UNFPA business model. (iii) Start implementing new ways of transferring practical RBM capacity beyond traditional training sessions, for example: learning-by-doing; reflection-in-action; peer-to-peer learning; coaching, mentoring and shadowing; and linking transferral of capacity to real RBM problem-solving, ongoing RBM processes and actual RBM deliverables. (iv) Monitor and assess RBM principles and standards.

Leverage point 6. Dialogue with the Executive Board: Some of the pervasive bottlenecks in RBM are due to systemic root causes that cannot be tackled by UNFPA alone. Embarking on the changes and transformations suggested by the leverage points requires framing the process in dialogue with the Executive Board. **Emergent entry points:** Engage in a discussion around the nature of inquiries by the Executive Board, particularly in terms of accountability as reporting. At present, inquiries are often not centred around organizational adaptation and learning, but rather on accountability for funding channelled through reporting. If adaptive programming and collective accountability are to be a reality, the demands from the Executive Board will have to evolve accordingly, and cater for both adaptation and learning, as well as accountability. This dialogue could also include crucial aspects, such as the UNFPA value proposition and business model vis-à-vis how to capture and to measure such UNFPA value and an in-depth discussion on current challenges in terms of availability of outcome data.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: THE EFFECTS OF THE EVALUATION

A distinct feature of developmental evaluations is that they are interventions in themselves. Developmental evaluations intend to contribute with positive changes to the organizational development processes they inform through evaluative input from the onset (through continuous feedback and a high degree of engagement).

Feedback has been provided in two main delivery formats: oral and written. Oral feedback mechanisms have included individual and group meetings, workshops, and webinars supported by visual presentations, and subsequent joint discussions. Written mechanisms have encompassed three types of feedback: requested, emergent, and consolidated.

A wide array of business units across UNFPA has been engaged with the evaluation to different degrees and in various formats: Change Management Secretariat, country offices, Division of Management Services, Executive Office, Evaluation Office, Human Resource Division, Information Technology Solutions Office/New ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) Initiative, Policy and Strategy Division, Resource Mobilization Branch, regional offices, and the Technical Division, including the Innovation Fund Secretariat.

The developmental evaluation has also engaged with several external actors beyond UNFPA, which brings relational capital to the organization. These include the Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning at USAID, the OECD-DAC Results Community, and the UNICEF Fields Result Group.

The most significant reactions, effects and changes perceived so far by the evaluation team are: (i) increased consensus; (ii) changing mindsets; (iii) high-level leadership engagement; (iv) breaking silos and aligning business units to a fully fledged, RBM-driven organizational development process; (v) shifting the focus from improvement to development; (vi) the outreach of influence beyond UNFPA, including other United Nations agencies and development cooperation actors; (vii) creating momentum to move to the next stage; (viii) organizational multi-level engagement; (ix) timeliness around the sense of urgency to move on; and (x) the organization incorporating elements of the developmental evaluation approach (purpose, scope and methodology).

PART I
PURPOSE:
Why a developmental evaluation?

1 BACKGROUND

IN BRIEF

Scope
This chapter presents the purpose of the evaluation and describes the background elements of results-based management and the key contextual factors (both internal and external to the organization) that influence and shape this management approach.

Highlight
Formal RBM systems are in place in UNFPA and perform well in terms of reporting on results. However, RBM has challenges in using results information for adaptation and driving organizational learning. The UNFPA attempt to understand these challenges as a first step to overcome them has largely influenced the rationale and purpose of this developmental evaluation.

The ultimate purpose of development cooperation is to achieve results. In the context of the United Nations, this means bringing about the committed and expected change reflected in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Agenda 2030) and achieving its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

UNFPA, in particular, is committed to contributing to Agenda 2030 by achieving three transformative results: (i) end preventable maternal deaths; (ii) end unmet need for family planning; and (iii) end gender-based violence and all harmful practices, including female genital mutilation and child, early and forced marriage.

For this to happen UNFPA applies results-based management as a corporate management approach to achieving results.[1] RBM is used by a vast number of agencies within and outside the United Nations system. This management approach helps organizations set clear, expected results, targets and indicators that are operationalized in a system aimed at planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating how the agency performs against pre-set goals. The results information generated by the RBM approach is intended for several purposes, including accountability, decision-making, learning and communication.

After almost two decades of RBM practice, UNFPA decided to conduct this evaluation for two reasons. The first reason was that the organization needed input to review its RBM policy and develop a new RBM strategy and action plan.[2]

The second reason was to conduct an evaluation that went beyond identifying recurrent RBM challenges and suggesting improvements already pointed out in previous RBM assessments. Rather, UNFPA decided to embark on an in-depth process of inquiry based on a developmental evaluation approach, aimed at providing useful evaluative input into the development of a new stage of RBM in the organization. This evaluative input includes analyzing the root causes of persistent challenges in RBM and bringing evidence for solutions, possible scenarios and options for forward courses of action.

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1 The OECD defines RBM as a management strategy focusing on performance and achievement of outputs, outcomes and impacts (OECD 2014. "Measuring and managing results in development cooperation: A review of challenges and practices among DAC members and observers").

2 In light of Agenda 2030 and the new UNFPA Strategic Plan (2018-2021), and also in line with the recommendations of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System (JIU) on RBM in the United Nations Development System (2017).

This reflects a real appetite to manage for better results; serving the purpose of accountability both to the Executive Board and to results-based decision-making and learning. Such an appetite to conduct a deep organizational reflection and move forward in a meaningful manner is exemplified by the fact that UNFPA decided to conduct a developmental evaluation. Choosing a developmental evaluation approach is a significant milestone for a number of reasons. First, this is the first fully-fledged evaluation on RBM at UNFPA.[3] Second, it is the first developmental evaluation in UNFPA.[4] Third, based on our best knowledge, it is the first corporate developmental evaluation in the United Nations system, which makes it relevant and innovative not only for the agency itself but for other agencies across the sector.

THE RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT CONTEXT

In the 1990s, the strong and widespread criticism on the difficulties faced by project aid (mostly low levels of ownership and unclear development results) paved the way for a renewed rationale and focus on results. This called for: (i) increasing contextualization to local needs and alignment with national development priorities and plans; (ii) regular monitoring of national, sector and programme performance at outcome level so that priorities could adapt over time in response to changing conditions; (iii) strengthening national performance assessment frameworks to support future policy and decision-making; and (iv) promoting a dialogue based on performance in order to foster ownership and joint understanding.[5]

Since the late 1990s most development agencies, and in particular United Nations agencies, adopted this renewed focus on managing for results as part of the United Nations reform agenda. The aim of the reform agenda was to achieve coherence on policy and operational matters across the United Nations system, strengthen accountability and enhance the impact of the United Nations. From that point, the evolution and widespread adoption of RBM practices have been directly influenced by two key interrelated factors. The first factor is related to effectiveness. The development sector started to inquire how to make aid more effective. As a result, and for the first time in the history of development aid, a global agenda with common goals emerged in 2000 with the United Nations Millennium Declaration. This declaration led to an increasing debate not only on what development cooperation had to achieve but also on how to achieve those goals. Momentum came with the 2005

Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, which adopted the results-based management perspective as an integral part of global development aid policy.[6]

The second factor is linked to accountability. It is directly related to agents that finance aid and expect a return on their investments from those that implement development cooperation programmes. Here, the issue that arises is: *how to be accountable* for the results achieved. Since 2010, the value-for-money concept has become more prominent in the development agenda, reflecting an increased global demand to demonstrate the results of development cooperation investments. As pointed out in a recent paper published in the journal of Project Management Research and Practice, "the increasing emphasis on aid effectiveness, accountability, and impact measurement in the international development and humanitarian sectors has generated a requirement for high-quality internal systems for managing programmes" (McKernan et al. 2016).[7]

This push is also reflected in the United Nations system. The increasing importance of managing for results was reinforced by a General Assembly resolution in March 2010. The resolution requested that the Secretary-General develop an RBM framework as part of reforms for governance and accountability, with a clear demand to accelerate the implementation of RBM and drive a sustained focus on results.[8]

Overall, the introduction and mainstream adoption of RBM systems is generally perceived as a success in the development industry, that is, improved policy coherence and planning, improved national monitoring systems, broadened support for aid, and increased culture on evidence-based management.[9]

RBM in the United Nations development system is at a mature stage.[10] The 2016 Report on RBM in the United Nations Development System concludes "entities in the UNDS have made progress in adopting results-based approaches in their operational activities for development, especially in improving their results frameworks and investing in the development of staff capacities for RBM".

RBM progress in the United Nations is also addressed by the 2017 Joint Inspection Unit report on "Results-Based

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3 Previous RBM assessments encompassed reviews, diagnostics and audits but not fully fledged evaluations.

4 Prior to this exercise, a number of assessments were carried out, but they were not evaluations and some of them covered RBM as a part of the analysis rather than as a main focus.

5 Vahamaki et al (2011). Review: Results Based Management in Development Cooperation.

6 In fact, one of the five principles of the Declaration is "results: developing countries and donors shift focus to development results and results get measured" (OECD)

7 McKernan et al. (2016). Adopting results based management in the non-profit sector: Trocaire's experience.

8 General Assembly Resolution "Towards an accountability system in the United Nations Secretariat" 29 March 2010.

9 Idem.

10 There is a general consensus on this as indicated by Bester (2016) and JIU (2017) assessments.

Management in the United Nations System". The report affirms that RBM systems and procedures are in place and mainstreamed in most United Nations agencies.

In terms of purpose, RBM has dual emphasis on organizational learning and accountability. To some authors the emphasis should first be on organizational learning and then on accountability. This is reflected in a paper by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Working Party on Aid Effectiveness and Harmonisation in 2003 written by Werner Meier.[11] In this paper the primary and secondary purposes of RBM are described as follows: "RBM is a management strategy aimed at achieving important changes in the way organisations operate, with improving performance in terms of results as the central orientation. RBM provides the management framework with tools for strategic planning, risk management, performance monitoring and evaluation. Its primary purpose is to improve efficiency and effectiveness through organisational learning, and secondly to fulfil accountability obligations through performance reporting."

RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT STRUCTURAL CHALLENGES

In spite of the progress on RBM, there are a number of structural challenges and difficulties that remain, even after years of practice, both inside and beyond the United Nations system.

As stated by the OECD in a discussion paper on results-based management in Development Assistance Committee member agencies, one of the main overarching challenges is that agencies are increasingly prioritizing the use of aggregated results information for accountability, communication and performance management over their use for learning and policy direction. When this happens, development cooperation results are detached from larger development results (which occur in complex contexts involving the work of a myriad of stakeholders). Agencies face six interrelated challenges. These are:[12]

- **Goals**: Linking results to goals and building narratives

- **Purpose**: Ensuring results-based management approaches are fit for purpose

- **Attribution/contribution**: Being realistic about attributing and aggregating results

- **Ownership**: Enabling country ownership of results information

- **Performance**: Linking results and performance information for better delivery

- **Culture**: Enhancing resources to build a learning culture.

Similarly, in the United Nations system, a number of challenges remain in relation to RBM. These challenges stem from:[13]

- The pressure from funding partners and governing bodies to attribute outcomes to United Nations agencies (as a consequence of the value-for-money approach)

- The need to extend capacity development to other staff beyond programming, planning and monitoring and evaluation

- The necessity to improve weak UNDAF reporting or system-wide results at country level

- The need to focus on the effective use of information for managing for results.

Currently, a major challenge of RBM in the United Nations development system is how to continuously improve and adapt to an ever-changing context. This situation will be largely influenced by the recent resolution on the repositioning of the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda and by the new generation of UNDAF in particular.[14] John Mayne already spotted the challenge of adapting to the changing United Nations reform in 2009, when he referred to "the challenge of operating within the vision of Delivering as One" and "UNDAF frameworks".[15] These challenges are reaching unprecedented levels of complexity given the scope and implications of the ongoing changes.

The fact that RBM structural challenges are long-standing, persistent and systemic does not only directly affect UNFPA (as discussed in the next chapter) but also all other United Nations and development agencies at large. This is a crucial contextual factor that has largely influenced the design of this evaluation in terms of approach and methods, as discussed in Chapter 3.

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11 According to Meier (2003). Results-based management: towards a common understanding among development cooperation agencies', discussion paper ver. 5.0, prepared for the Canadian International Development Agency, Performance Review Branch, for consideration by the DAC Working Party on Aid Effectiveness and Harmonisation; and Vahamaki et al (2011). Review: Results Based Management in Development Cooperation.

12 OECD (2017). Results in Development Cooperation: Strengthening the results chain: Synthesis of case studies of results-based management by providers: Discussion paper.

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13 These challenges are findings explicitly presented in Bester (2016) and JIU (2017) RBM assessments.

14 The UNDAF has recently become the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF).

15 Mayne (2007) "RBM challenges at UNFPA" p.3

2 THE RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT JOURNEY AT UNFPA

IN BRIEF

Scope
This chapter includes a brief outline of the main milestones, progress and developments in RBM at UNFPA since it was first adopted as a management approach in 2000.

Highlight
The RBM journey in UNFPA has been characterized by an intentional process of incremental improvements, including in response to demands from donors and the Executive Board. RBM architecture has been operationalized in functional frameworks, systems and tools.

UNFPA introduced RBM in 2000. Since then the organization has developed and made operational a number of RBM frameworks, information systems and tools (Figure 1). The journey began with an RBM Policy Statement issued with the approval of the UNFPA 2000-2003 Multi-Year Funding Framework (MYFF).[16]

The Statement conceived results-based management as an approach to improve programme and management effectiveness, efficiency and accountability by following the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) criteria, approach and terminology.[17]
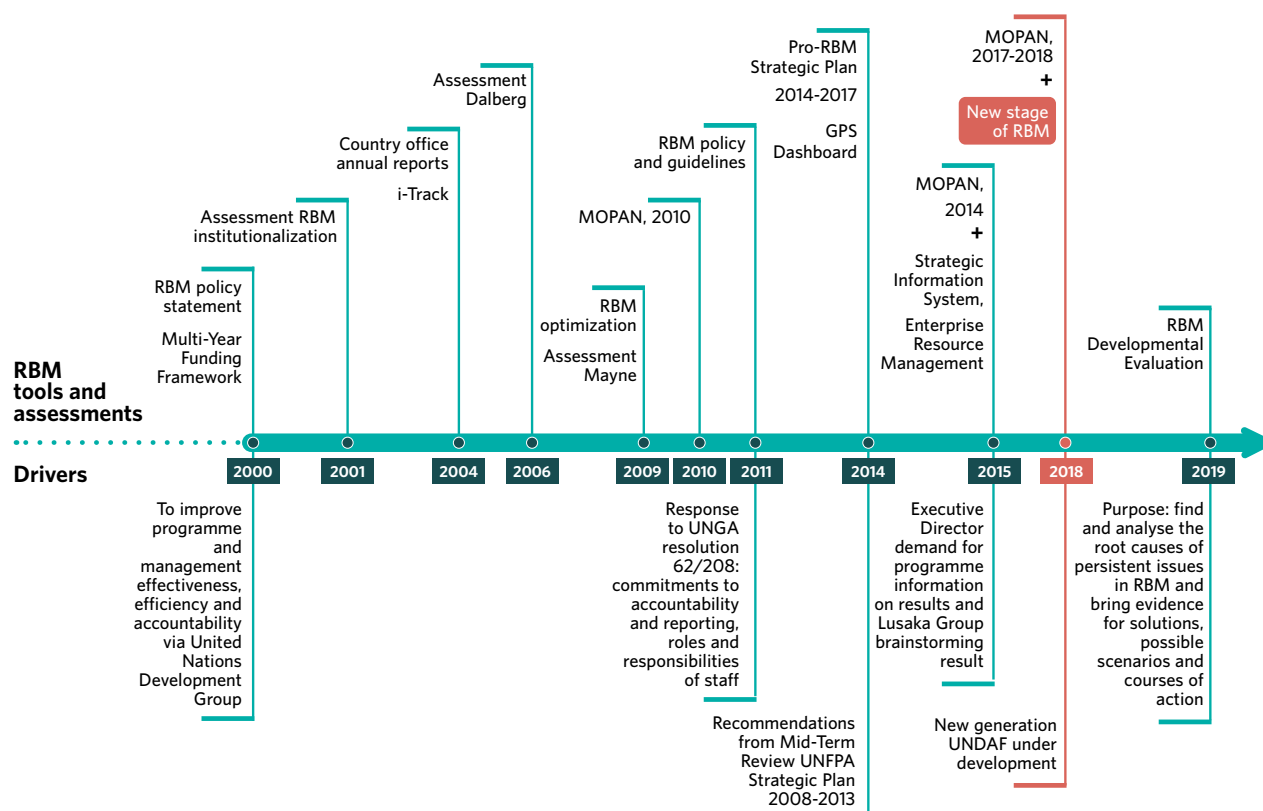
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16 MYFF was the key corporate reporting performance document before the strategic plans were introduced (strategic results, management results and integrated resources).

17 UNFPA Policy Statement on Results-Based Management (2000)

FIGURE 1. *The results-based management journey at UNFPA*

Source: Evaluation team

In 2004, UNFPA introduced country office annual reports (COAR) as the main reporting tool associated to the MYFF. COAR reported performance of country offices in line with the outcomes and outputs outlined in the MYFF, country programmes and annual work plans. At the same time the i-Track system was launched as a tool that allowed country offices and headquarters to fill in their annual reports online.

Since the establishment of RBM in 2000, several assessments have been conducted. These assessments include: an external assessment on the institutionalization of RBM within UNFPA in 2001; an assessment commissioned by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs conducted by Dalberg in 2006; and a diagnostic report on RBM challenges at UNFPA conducted in 2009 by John Mayne.

These three assessments pointed at four aspects to be addressed: the need for a stronger acceptance of credible results information as being essential to good management; more robust results frameworks; more solid measurement and reporting of results; and streamlining cumbersome RBM systems (at that time). The results of these reports were incorporated as inputs to the UNFPA RBM Optimization Initiative launched in 2009. The

Initiative focused on five action areas: 1) developing and communicating a clear vision of RBM; 2) fostering a culture of results; 3) enhancing RBM capacity; 4) developing practical measurement and reporting approaches; and 5) streamlining RBM information technology (IT) systems.[18]

External assessments have also featured the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) reports, which include a section on RBM. The first MOPAN report for UNFPA (MOPAN, 2010) acknowledged that UNFPA had increased efforts to improve its results-based management practices and taken steps to increase its capacity in monitoring and evaluation. This first MOPAN assessment also noted limitations in UNFPA results frameworks such as the definition of outputs and outcomes, the lack of clarity in the results chain, and the effects of these limitations on results reporting. By the time of the next MOPAN assessment in 2014, all these issues had been resolved.

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18 Management Systems International (2001) Institutionalization of RBM at UNFPA and Mayne (2009) Optimizing RBM at UNFPA, The Diagnostic Report: RBM Challenges at UNFPA.

In 2011, UNFPA introduced its first Results-Based Management Policy. The Policy directly responds to the General Assembly resolution 62/208 and adopts UNDG RBM terminology to facilitate the effort of adopting and implementing RBM approaches, frameworks and tools.[19] This Policy includes a set of RBM guidelines that support operational considerations for its implementation. The Policy also outlines six guiding principles, commitments to accountability and reporting, and RBM roles and responsibilities of UNFPA staff across the organization.[20] The operationalization of the RBM Policy introduced (i) tracking quarterly progress (through milestones) and (ii) RBM trainings for capacity building (through webinars, guidelines and training of trainers).

The 2011 Policy was mainstreamed throughout the strategic plans of UNFPA. The UNFPA Strategic Plan (2014-2017) incorporated an integrated results framework with management and development results, as recommended by the UNDG RBM Handbook. Overall, the development of this strategic plan was partly influenced by the 2012 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) mandates on RBM,[21] as mentioned in the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) 2017 RBM Review.

In 2013, the UNFPA Policy and Strategy Division convened the Lusaka Group, a group of in-house monitoring and evaluation experts tasked with developing action plans to strengthen RBM in UNFPA. This group, still in operation today, monitored the implementation of RBM and updated its action plans to address emerging issues on RBM.

Since 2010, the pace of development of RBM formal systems and frameworks has been remarkable. A quick comparison of the findings of the UNFPA MOPAN reports for 2010, 2014 and 2017-2018 clearly reveals these improvements. The aforementioned limitations identified in 2010 were overcome by 2014. The 2014 MOPAN report asserts that UNFPA had worked to instil a results-oriented organizational culture, including the adoption of a robust integrated results framework, theories of change and improved country level monitoring and evaluation.

The UNFPA Strategic Plan (2014-2017) was the first plan supported by a new information systems infrastructure featuring: a global programming system (GPS),[22] a dashboard (introduced in 2017), a strategic information system (SIS),[23] and an enterprise risk management system (ERM) (introduced in 2015). This new infrastructure aimed to enhance UNFPA performance to deliver development results as well as to enhance UNFPA ability to account to donors for the utilization of funds.

The recently published MOPAN 2017-2018 assessments conclude that RBM systems and tools are increasingly well entrenched across the organization and provide clear linkages from inputs and activities to outcomes and strategic results. The performance-management ratings in the report, which include most RBM architecture elements, are rated as highly satisfactory.

The UNFPA Strategic Plan (2018-2021) further emphasizes the relevance of mainstreaming RBM across UNFPA policies, procedures, manuals and systems. The plan commits to increase the efforts to improve RBM in order to ensure RBM becomes a core capacity of all staff, at both programme and operational level.

Overall, the RBM journey in UNFPA has been one of intentional incremental improvements responsive to demands from donors and the Executive Board. Over the last decade RBM architecture has been operationalized in functional frameworks, systems and tools. Despite these remarkable improvements, a number of persistent issues remain, some of which were pointed out in the Dalberg (2006) and Mayne (2009) assessments. These issues tend to be systemic and are related to deeper structural aspects of organizational culture, confusion in the conceptual framework, measurement challenges and tensions in accountability. The current evaluation focused on the analysis of these issues, their root causes and possible ways forward. Chapters 4, 5 and 7 of this report present a summary of that analysis and the five feedback notes delve into details.

Looking at these persistent issues is crucial at this time, as they are major impediments for UNFPA to move to the next stage of RBM.

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19 UNDG (2011) Results-Based Management Handbook.

20 UNFPA (2011) Results-Based Management Policy.

21 UN DESA (2016) Results-Based Management in the United Nations Development System: A report prepared for the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs for the 2016 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy.

22 The GPS was implemented in November 2014 to enhance work plan management at UNFPA. It supports the preparation, budgeting, approval, maintenance and system set-up of the work plans used by headquarters units and field offices to plan and manage programme implementation activities.

23 The SIS is a one-stop platform for key (operational) performance indicators. It was introduced as a demand from the Executive Director to enhance programme information on results, an idea that was brainstormed for design at the Lusaka Group in 2013.

3 RATIONALE AND FEATURES OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION

IN BRIEF

Scope
This chapter presents what a developmental evaluation is, how it differs from other types of evaluation and the reasons why it was chosen. The chapter also covers the main elements of the methodological approach, coverage, data collection and analysis, and methods and risks.
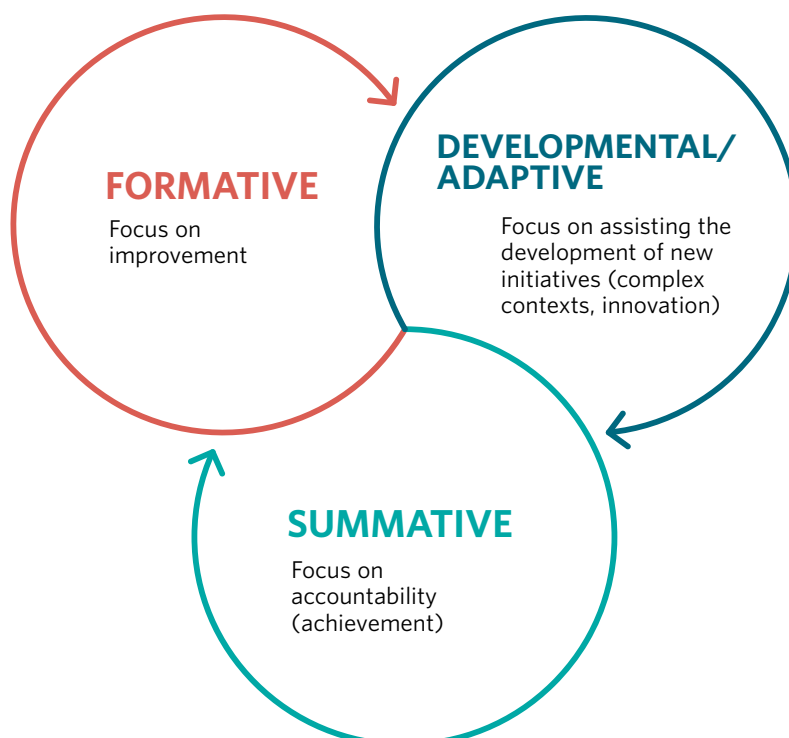
Highlight
The purpose of the evaluation, the nature of what was being evaluated and the intended utilization focus of the exercise made the developmental approach the best fit. The methodological approach was based on the framing and analysis of five creative tensions that led to the identification of a number of leverage points as suggested options for the way forward.

WHAT IS A DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION?

There are many types of evaluation, depending on the purpose of the evaluation, on the object to be evaluated, and on the methodology to be applied. According to their purpose, evaluations may be summative, formative or developmental (Figure 2). These three types of evaluations do not exclude one another but are complementary.

FIGURE 2. *Types of evaluations according to their main focus*

FORMATIVE
Focus on improvement

DEVELOPMENTAL/ ADAPTIVE
Focus on assisting the development of new initiatives (complex contexts, innovation)

SUMMATIVE
Focus on accountability (achievement)

Source: Evaluation team

Whereas the purpose of summative evaluations is mainly associated with judgments of the overall merit, worth, value and significance of a programme, formative evaluations mainly seek to improve the programme or fine-tune the model behind a programme's design. Developmental evaluations help identify options in complex, uncertain and dynamic conditions associated with the development of a new initiative (Patton, 2011).[24]

THE REASONS WHY DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION WAS CHOSEN

A developmental evaluation was more suitable than a summative or formative evaluation for three reasons: the purpose of the evaluation; the nature of what was being evaluated (RBM transitioning to a new era); and the desired focus on utilization.

The first reason: A developmental approach was a better fit for the purpose of the exercise. As stated by Michael Quinn Patton in his book on developmental evaluation, "the distinguishing characteristic of developmental evaluation is contributing to something that's being developed. That's the purpose: development" (Patton, 2011: 305). This is fully in line with the purpose of the present exercise, which is to support the development of a new stage of RBM in UNFPA.

A summative evaluation would have been less appropriate, on two grounds. The first ground is that there was no consolidated UNFPA RBM framework in place against which to assess RBM. A key condition for a summative evaluation is a well-defined intervention supported by an explicit and testable theory of change (Patton 2011). The second ground is that, even if an assessment framework had been available, the purpose of the exercise was not testing, proving or validating the effectiveness of a particular RBM approach (summative lens), but supporting the positioning of UNFPA in the new era of RBM in a rapidly evolving reform context.

A formative evaluation could have been an option, but it was disregarded and superseded by the developmental approach for one reason: formative evaluations focus on improvements, and that requires a draft programme model to be fine-tuned, and criteria for quality implementation to guide and focus process improvements (Patton, 2011). None of these elements were available given that the intervention focuses on what is actually being developed.

The second reason: This was the nature of what was being evaluated, which is RBM at UNFPA. The nature of RBM at UNFPA has two main characteristics. The first is that

RBM operates in a systemic manner.[25] This makes systems thinking and systems analysis highly suitable approaches to apply. Systems thinking and analysis are both at the core of developmental evaluations. The second characteristic is that RBM in UNFPA is undergoing a transformation, transitioning from one stage of development to the next. This incorporates a complexity perspective, an element that is also distinctive of developmental evaluations (developmental evaluations allow for emergence and incorporate a much higher degree of flexibility and adaptation than summative and formative evaluations).

The third reason: This was the focus on utilization. Developmental evaluations are placed within the larger context of utilization-focused evaluation, which are evaluations that focus on achieving intended use for intended users (Patton, 2011). This is precisely the essence of the present evaluation, which fully aligns with the first two overall strategic priorities of the UNFPA Strategy for Evaluation (2018-2021): demand-driven evaluation processes and products; and diversification and innovation of evaluation processes and products.

Although the quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan for 2018-2021 included this evaluation from the onset, the Policy and Strategy Division at UNFPA requested the exercise explicitly with the aim of providing useful evaluative input to support the development of a new stage of RBM at UNFPA.

THE ORGANIZATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF A DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION

Conducting a developmental evaluation has a number of implications for the organization in comparison to other evaluation approaches. The main ones are that a developmental evaluation:

- Implies a higher level of engagement through the continuous process of data collection and the regular sequence of feedback loops (See the section on feedback in Chapter 6)

- Implies a higher level of openness, receptiveness and flexibility, given that it is not a predictable process easily planned from the onset. It is based on emergence

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24 Patton, M. Q. (2011). *Developmental evaluation: Applying complexity concepts to enhance innovation and use.* Guilford Press.

25 RBM is referred to as a system in the UNFPA Strategic Plan (2018-2021) (paragraph 89); in the JIU Report (2017) and in the report RBM in the UNDS prepared for the QCPR in July 2012. Moreover, even if referred to as a management strategy, RBM includes policies and approaches (how to plan, report, measure), supporting information systems, and a mindset and culture (principles and philosophy required to manage for results), thereby operating as a system (a set of interrelated elements that have a common purpose).

- Implies a higher level of ownership and decision-making. Findings, conclusions and implications for next steps are presented by the evaluation team and jointly discussed in feedback events (ad-hoc meetings, workshops). It is the organization that takes the lead in deciding what is important and what actions to take, on what issues, and how to design these actions. In a summative evaluation the final decision is also made by the organization, but it is the evaluation team that frames, selects, formulates and prioritizes the recommendations for the most part. In this regard, a developmental evaluation implies a shift in evaluation culture. The organization is mature enough to take full responsibility and decide what it wants and how it wants it. The evaluation team just supports and facilitates that process.

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This section includes a brief outline of the methodological approach. The details of the methodology are described in depth in the inception report, which includes extensive explanations on the theoretical and conceptual foundations of the developmental approach.

FIGURE 3. *The methodological approach to the evaluation*
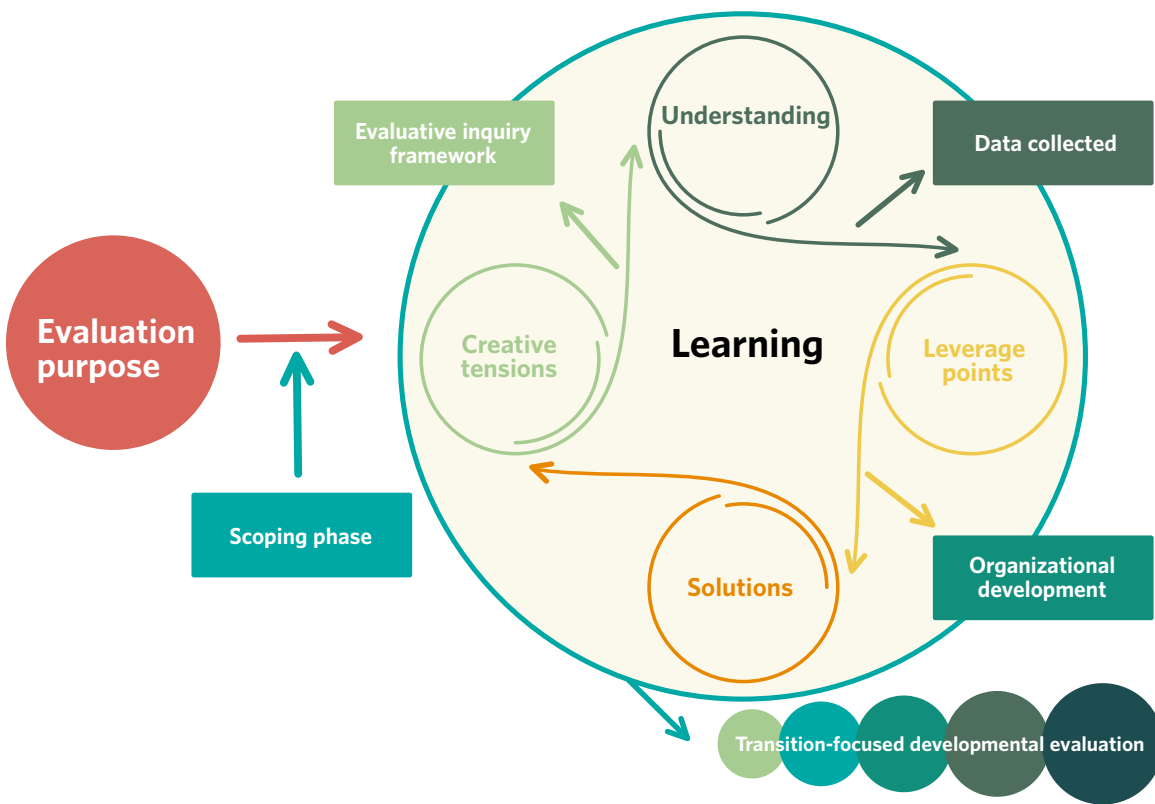
Source: Evaluation team

The starting point to develop the methodological approach was the purpose of the evaluation: to assist the development of a new stage of RBM at UNFPA by providing useful evaluative input (Figure 3). The scoping mission resulted in the identification of five creative tensions. These are five main areas where gaps and challenges prevent the current RBM from optimizing its performance. Creative tensions are generated by juxtaposing the vision (what the organization wants) with a clear picture of the current reality (where the organization is, relative to what the organization wants).

The evaluation inquiry framework (Annex 1) was developed based on the five creative tensions. This framework guided the data collection and analysis processes. Evidence and findings were then shared through feedback loops and presentations and led to the identification of a number of leverage points. Leverage points are areas of a system where small shifts can produce large improvements. At the time of writing this report, a number of leverage points had been identified and UNFPA was reflecting on how to address them. Chapter 7 of the report includes a number of suggestions for points of entry into such leverage points. These suggestions have been put forward for consideration in UNFPA discussions on the way forward.

THE ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK – THE INQUIRY FRAMEWORK

The analytical framework for the evaluation is reflected in the inquiry framework presented in Annex 1. The inquiry framework, which guided the process of data collection and feedback loops, was organized by creative tensions and helped establish where the evaluation put focus and what issues were to be explored. The framework specifies the scope of the inquiry, the priority questions, the lead inquiries and the sources of information.
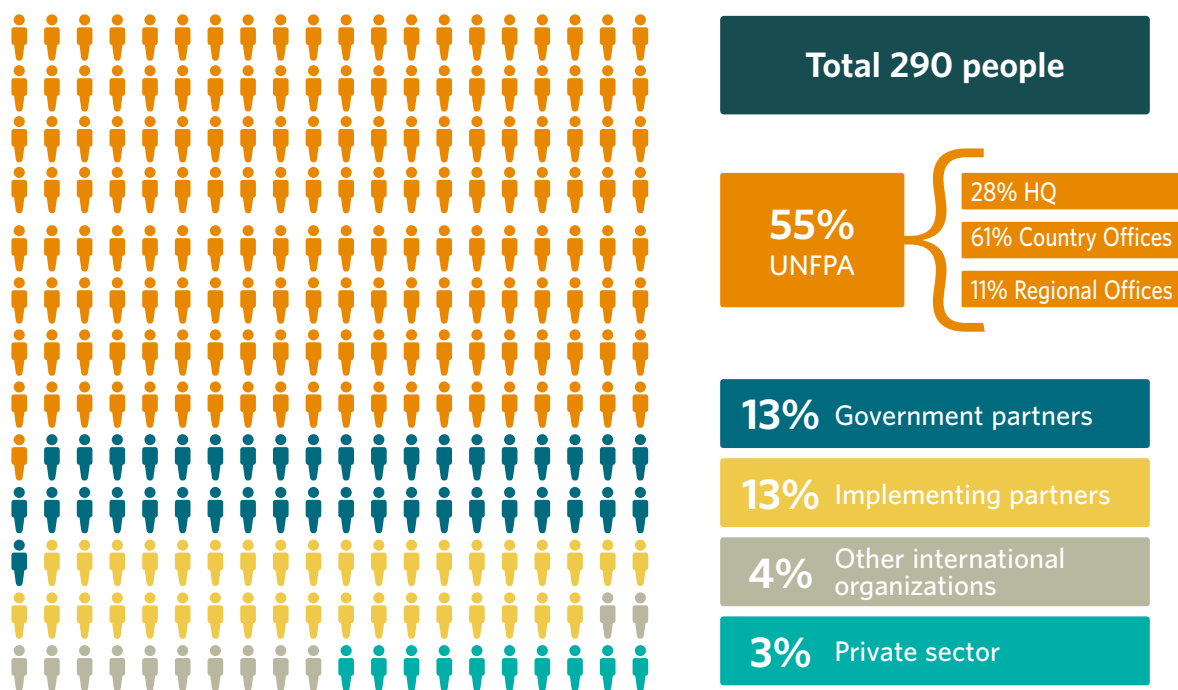
The evaluation team has answered all the priority questions (which are equivalent to evaluation questions in a summative evaluation) in the feedback loop notes for each creative tension. The takeaways explicitly written in the feedback notes specify which priority questions they provide answers to.[26]

TOOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION

Tools for secondary data collection involved the study of documentation as well as the retrieval of information from existing datasets, for example, the GPS database, SIS, and the evaluation database. The study of documentation included UNFPA documents as well as external documents from other international agencies and academic research papers. Tools for primary data collection encompassed four methods: interviews, focus groups, an online survey and participant observation. In-depth semi-structured interviews with key informants, including consultations with RBM experts, was the main tool for data collection.

FIGURE 4. *People consulted by type of stakeholder*

Total 290 people

55% UNFPA
- 28% HQ
- 61% Country Offices
- 11% Regional Offices

13% Government partners
13% Implementing partners
4% Other international organizations
3% Private sector

The evaluation team conducted 144 interviews and 10 focus group discussions during the data-collection phase.[27] A total of 290 people were consulted through interviews and focus groups. Figure 4 presents a breakdown by type of stakeholder.

The online survey, which was sent to all UNFPA staff, was another method for primary data collection. The survey, administered by the Evaluation Office, was responded to by 757 UNFPA staff and covered all UNFPA geographical regions and tiers (country, regions and headquarters).

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26 The main feature of the inquiry framework is that it is a flexible framework that can be adjusted throughout the exercise. In this evaluation, however, there was no need to adjust the priority questions, which remained relevant throughout the inquiry.

27 Eight focus groups with UNFPA country office staff were conducted in Armenia, Bangladesh, the Caribbean sub-region, Jordan, Kenya, Nigeria, Vietnam and Zambia. Two focus groups were also conducted in Kenya: one with civil society implementing partners and one with government partners.

Participant observation and on-site consultations were applied in three UNFPA RBM workshops (Cairo, Kiev and Johannesburg) in which the evaluation team was invited to participate.[28] The regional workshops in Cairo and Johannesburg included direct consultations with participants through group work.

TOOLS FOR DATA ANALYSIS

Content analysis was applied to the qualitative information collected through interviews and to the open questions retrieved through the online survey. Systems-thinking tools, such as systems maps, iceberg models,[29] causal feedback loop diagrams and systems archetypes,[30] were used to identify trends, patterns of behaviour, underlying structures and mental models.

Comparative analysis was applied to examine RBM practices in United Nations agencies and other public and private organizations and to identify patterns. Peer review tables were utilized to identify and synthesize emergent patterns for solutions to relevant bottlenecks affecting the development of RBM at UNFPA. Brief case study forms were used to identify and examine cases of interest (for example USAID, International Labour Organization (ILO), Asia Foundation).

Basic statistical analysis (descriptive statistics) was applied to the results of the online survey and to the analysis of the available datasets. Inferential statistics were also applied to the results of the online survey to test for salience.

RISKS AND LIMITATIONS

Four potential risks and limitations were identified and presented in the inception report:

- Risks associated with the introduction of a new approach

- Commitment to, and acceptance of, the developmental approach

- The timeline of the evaluation in a developmental context

- The potential tension between co-creation, engagement and independence.

None of the risks identified have materialized or posed any significant challenges. The only risk/limitation that remains is the fact that a full-fledged RBM developmental evaluation would accompany the entire process of transition to the new stage of RBM. However, that is not possible given the nine-month timeline for data collection, analysis and provision of feedback.

The methodological note that will follow this final account report will delve into the four aspects above, as well as into other issues that have emerged throughout the evaluation and which were not identified from the onset. The purpose of the methodological note is to draw lessons from this pioneering experience (a corporate evaluation in a United Nations agency using the developmental approach) and contribute to the discussion on the implications and effects of implementing developmental evaluations in United Nations agencies.

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28 Arab States Region's Results-Based Management and Programming for Results Training Workshop (10-13 September 2018); Training of trainers and technical consensus on key results-based management related concepts and processes (18-21 September 2018). Kiev, Ukraine; and East and Southern Africa Region, Results-Based Management and Programming for Results Training Workshop, (5–9 November 2018).

29 Iceberg models use the iceberg metaphor for developing an understanding of the deeper structure of a system. This tool helps distinguish problem symptoms from underlying or root causes.

30   In systems thinking, systems archetypes are classic stories that describe common patterns of behaviour and structures that occur repeatedly in organizations.

PART II

LEARNING:
What has the developmental evaluation
led to?

4 POINT OF DEPARTURE: THE SYSTEMIC DIAGNOSIS

IN BRIEF

Scope
This chapter explains the systemic diagnosis of the RBM system in UNFPA. This diagnosis was taken as the starting point for designing the methodology of the evaluation, collecting the evidence and sharing it with the users in feedback delivery loops throughout the exercise.

Highlight
A system of five interrelated creative tensions undermines the current RBM system, preventing it from fully optimizing its performance: creative tension 1 deals with the RBM conceptual framework; creative tension 2 deals with collective versus individual accountability; creative tension 3 deals with organizational culture and use of results information; creative tension 4 deals with the capacity to manage for results; and creative tension 5 deals with RBM information systems.

The point of departure refers to the organizational diagnosis of the RBM system in UNFPA that the evaluation team conducted during the scoping phase in June-July 2018. This point of departure was not predetermined. It is the primary finding of the evaluation and the result of the situational analysis of the main issues, gaps and bottlenecks that undermine the current RBM system and prevent it from optimizing its performance.

Conducting a situational analysis of RBM at UNFPA was a response to the developmental evaluation team's need to understand the systemic nature of RBM. This aspect was identified as fundamental during the preparatory phase. Hence, the team started the scoping phase guided by two main framing questions:

- Why are there still some recurrent issues and bottlenecks in RBM despite the progress made to date?

- What can be done to develop the next stage of RBM at UNFPA?

The first question frames the analysis in order to identify the root causes of bottlenecks in RBM in UNFPA. The second question focuses attention on bringing evidence, from inside and outside the agency, to develop solutions, forward-looking scenarios and options for courses of action to transition to the next stage of RBM at UNFPA.

The result of this exercise is a map of five interrelated creative tensions (Figure 5) that set out the point of departure prior to further developing the evaluation's methodological approach. Creative tensions have two functions.[31] First, they capture the complex dynamics between the issues that undermine the optimal performance of RBM and its future development. Second, they identify the gap between the desired or envisioned goal and the current reality. Being aware of the gap between aspirations and performance or, in other words, being aware of the aspirational focus of creative tensions helps an organization to resolve these tensions, from both a critical and a creative standpoint. The point of this developmental evaluation is to address persistent RBM tensions and develop solutions that drive RBM forward.

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31 See section 4.2 of the inception report for a detailed explanation of what creative tensions are.

FIGURE 5. *The five results-based management creative tensions map at UNFPA*
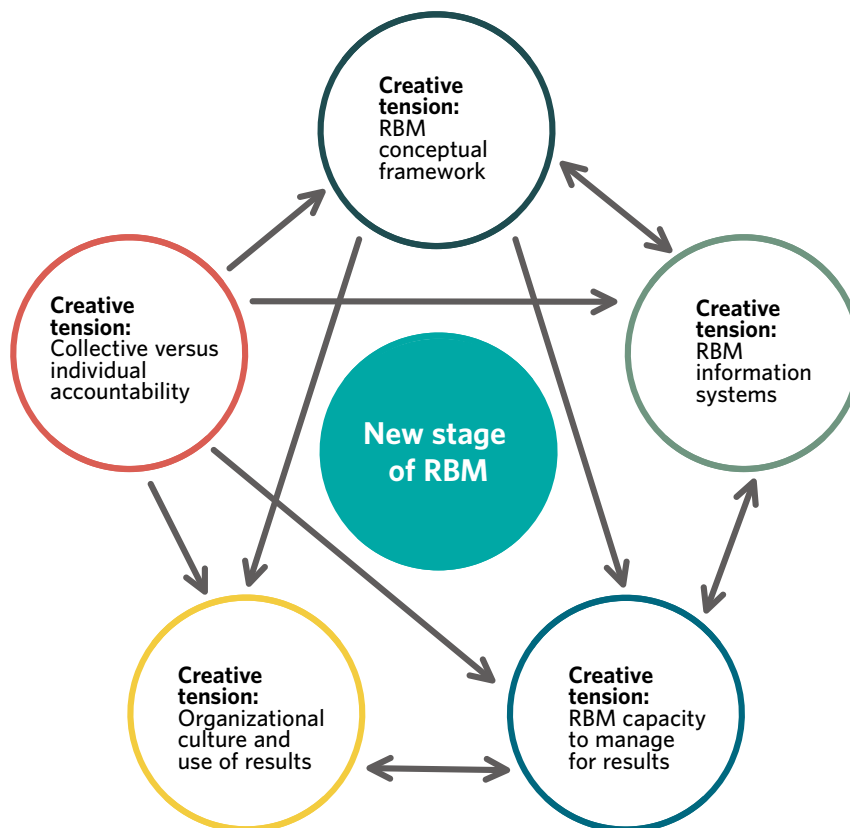
Source: Evaluation team

The five creative tensions are all interrelated, influencing and affecting one another either directly or indirectly, thereby reflecting their systemic nature. The creative tensions map depicts the systemic diagnosis of the implementation of RBM in UNFPA, which is explained as follows:

The first creative tension is centred on the RBM conceptual framework. The analysis in the scoping and inception phases revealed that there are differing views on, and understandings of, the concept and purpose of RBM at UNFPA. Yet, at the same time, there is a clear organizational demand to co-create a shared vision and a conceptual and operational framework that could guide and foster the practice of a high-impact RBM approach in UNFPA.

This first creative tension is strongly influenced by creative tension 2 on collective versus individual accountability, which incorporates the evolution of the United Nations reform. In particular, the effects of the recently approved United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) will require the adoption of joint RBM approaches and systems across United Nations agencies. The speed, intensity and depth in implementation of the new UNSDCF will influence many aspects of the RBM conceptual framework.

At the same time, creative tension 1 strongly influences core dimensions of the remaining three tensions: the design and implementation of evolutionary information systems (creative tension 5: RBM information systems), the identification of the key areas in developing RBM capacity (creative tension 4: capacity to manage for results) and the approaches in fostering a culture of use of results across all levels of the organization (creative tension 3: organizational culture and use of results information).

The second creative tension (creative tension 2: collective versus individual accountability) reflects two external drivers affecting the organization. One of the drivers is the move towards collective accountability advocated by the reform agenda of the United Nations Secretary-General. This entails joint RBM approaches in planning, measuring and reporting results. The other driver is the demand for individual accountability (requested by Board Members and donor agencies) often associated with value-for-money, attribution lines and high levels of granularity when reporting results.[32]

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32 This tension reflects both differing stakeholder interests and competing interests within specific stakeholder groups.

This second creative tension directly affects the creative tension on the conceptual framework (creative tension 1: RBM conceptual framework), given that creative tension 2 determines the type of RBM that is desired, as well as the type of RBM that is feasible. Similarly, creative tension 2 directly affects the creative tension on culture and use of results (creative tension 3: organizational culture and use of results information), as most high-level inquiries on results originate in requests for accountability from the Executive Board and donor agencies. The creative tension on collective versus individual accountability (creative tension 2) also influences, indirectly, the architecture of RBM information systems (creative tension 5: RBM information systems) and the capacity to manage for results (creative tension 4: capacity to manage for results). Actually, how this creative tension evolves and resolves itself is crucial for the development of the new stage of RBM. It is so crucial in fact that it acts as a precondition for the development of a new stage of RBM.

It is worth noting that resolving this tension does not depend on UNFPA alone. It involves the Executive Board (including donors) and more broadly, all relevant actors involved in the current debate on the public trust and buy-in to development aid. This creative tension is a highly complex and systemic one: UNFPA has limited control over how it may evolve, but its evolution is a determining factor for the new stage of RBM in UNFPA.

The third creative tension is centred on the organizational culture and use of results information for decision-making. The analysis in the scoping and inception phases revealed that UNFPA has the vision and the mandate (reflected in the RBM Policy) to foster a strong culture of results. UNFPA intended to do this by mainstreaming the use of results across all levels of the organization and directing such use towards organizational learning and adaptation. However, the current results culture is largely influenced by a focus on accountability for funding and reporting. This has unintended consequences in terms of fostering the use of results and the engagement and motivation of staff to manage for results.

Creative tension 3 is highly interrelated with creative tension 4 on capacity to manage for results. Organizational culture and capacity strongly influence one another when managing for results. Current capacity has a direct influence on the type of organizational culture sought in order to foster the use of results and the move to the next stage of RBM. Simultaneously, the current culture (behaviours and mindsets) is a factor determining the ability of the organization to manage for results.

Creative tension 3 on organizational culture and use of results information is also influenced by the creative tension on the conceptual framework (creative tension 1: RBM conceptual framework). The conceptual framework on RBM determines how the organization understands results, which ultimately, contributes to shaping the results culture in the organization.

Last, but not least, creative tension 3 is also influenced by creative tension 2 on collective versus individual accountability. Demands for individual accountability (showing agency results to donors and Member States) combined with the current move towards collective results urged by the United Nations reform, have an important influence on organizational behaviours (culture) associated with the use of results information.

The fourth creative tension focuses on capacity to manage for results. The analysis in the scope and inception phases of the evaluation pointed to a disparity between the expected and the actual ability of current RBM procedures to allow effective management for results at all levels of the organization. In particular, a tension was identified between (i) tools and procedures setting high normative standards and (ii) practical implementation, which seemingly faced technical, conceptual and attitudinal gaps. At the same time, there were indications of a gap between country contexts in programme countries and the ability of RBM tools and procedures to adapt and respond to such contexts – this appeared as a main challenge in managing for results, given that delivery in UNFPA occurs at country level for the most part.

Creative tension 4, on capacity, is highly interrelated with creative tension 3, on organizational culture and use of results information. In addition, capacity requirements are notably influenced by the creative tension on collective versus individual accountability (creative tension 2), which incorporates the evolution of the United Nations reform. Similarly, capacity requirements are also influenced by creative tension 1 (on the RBM conceptual framework), which incorporates the move towards adaptive management, with important implications for capacity. Creative tension 4 and the creative tension on RBM information systems (creative tension 5) are also interconnected in a bi-directional fashion, given that effective management for results requires a fit between information systems and capacity.

The fifth creative tension focuses on RBM information systems. The analysis in the scoping and inception phases revealed that, despite the fact that information systems are in place to plan, implement, monitor and report on results, they do not satisfy current pressing demands. In particular, they do not satisfy the demand for a single, integrated, real-time corporate information system allowing for deeper levels of granularity that can also accommodate compatibility requirements with collective systems in the framework of the new UNSDCF.

This fifth creative tension is strongly influenced by creative tension 1 on the RBM conceptual framework and vice versa. On the one hand, the fragmented nature of information systems (creative tension 5) is a result of enhancements that have been added to existing systems over the years, responding to a pressing demand from donors to report on results (accountability as reporting, captured in creative tension 1: RBM conceptual framework). On the other hand, the approach used to capture information by the formal information systems (creative tension 5: RBM information systems) determines (and often limits) the scope and depth of the conceptual framework (creative tension 1: RBM conceptual framework) and the type of results-based decisions that senior management in country offices can make.

Creative tension 5 has a direct influence on creative tension 4 (on capacity to manage for results). Adding new information systems and procedures from planning and programming results requires building higher normative standards that demand higher capabilities and skills in order to report and monitor for results. Simultaneously,

the skill set of staff also levels up or down the possibilities of developing information systems that facilitate decision-making in the field - where the action happens and where results are achieved (principle of subsidiarity). In this regard the situation in creative tension 4 affects the situation in the creative tension on information systems (creative tension 5).

This fifth creative tension on RBM information systems is also influenced by creative tension 2 on individual versus collective accountability in the framework of the new UNSDCF. The United Nations reform requires information systems to align with common frameworks and systems at the UNDS level in a way that responds to national development agendas and the attainment of the SDGs.

The evaluation departed from the systemic diagnosis above to find out the root causes explaining the symptoms (the five creative tensions) that prevent the RBM system from optimally performing. This systemic diagnosis was also the point of departure for the identification of leverage points for potential solutions. This is explained in Chapter 6.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: THE EFFECTS OF THE EVALUATION TO DATE

IN BRIEF

Scope
This chapter includes a sequence of the main events that occurred (factual development) as well as an outline of the feedback sequence and the main effects generated by this developmental evaluation in terms of engagement and transformations in the organization. It covers the period May 2018 to July 2019.

Highlight
The developmental evaluation has evolved from a demand by one business unit to improve business processes to a high-level leadership initiative aimed at transforming the organization to better manage for results and develop a new stage of RBM at UNFPA.

FACTUAL DEVELOPMENT – TIMELINE OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION

The timeline in Figure 6 is a summary of the sequence of main events that have taken place along the developmental evaluation from its launch in May 2018 to July 2019. This period includes the following phases: preparatory, scoping, inception, data collection, data analysis, and feedback provision and discussions. In line with the real-time nature of developmental evaluations, data collection and data analysis have taken place simultaneously throughout the exercise, rather than in a sequential fashion.

To date, the developmental evaluation has collected, analyzed and shared evidence on the root causes behind the five creative tensions and has contributed to the identification of potential solutions ("the way forward"), preparing the organization for the next stage of RBM. At the time of writing this report, UNFPA was immersed in an ongoing process of discussing and interpreting the evidence and findings provided by the developmental evaluation to date. This also included reflections on potential solutions with the aim of further developing the new stage of RBM.

FIGURE 6. *The timeline of the developmental evaluation of results-based management at UNFPA*
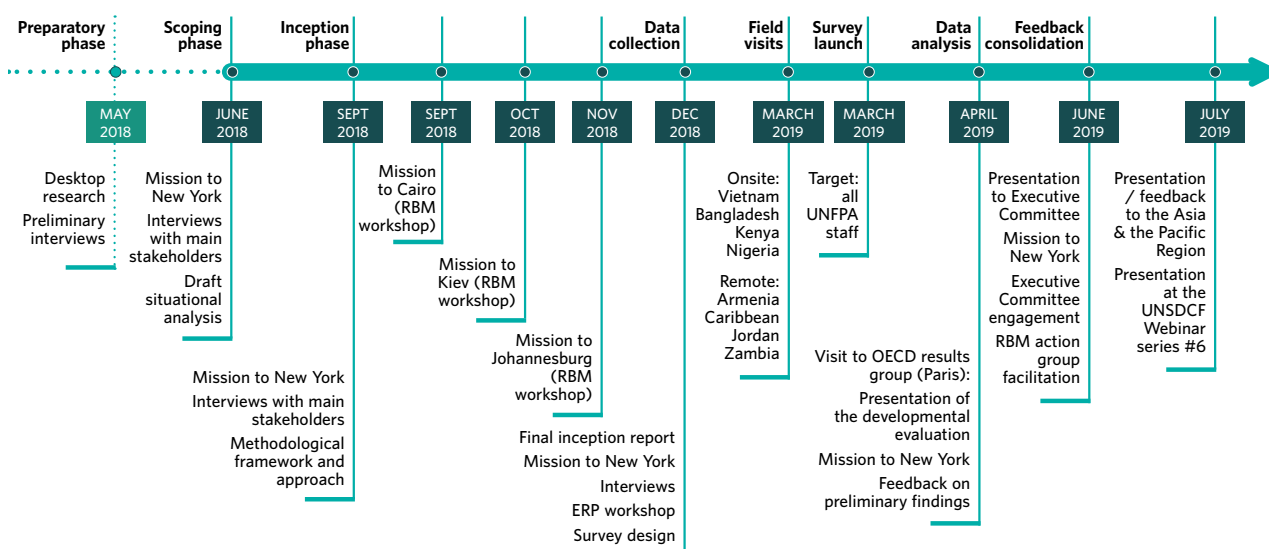
Source: Evaluation team

PROVISION OF FEEDBACK

Utilization focus and timely feedback are two of the eight essential principles of a developmental evaluation.[33] To date, feedback on findings has been provided throughout the evaluation exercise in a varied array of formats, through several rounds and to a wide range of stakeholders.

Feedback mechanisms. Feedback has been provided in two main delivery formats: oral and written. Oral feedback mechanisms have included individual and group meetings, workshops and webinars supported by PowerPoint presentations, and subsequent joint discussions. As described in Table 1, written mechanisms have encompassed three types of feedback: requested, emergent and consolidated.

TABLE 1. *Written feedback mechanisms and outputs*

Consolidated feedback
Comprehensive analysis systematized and delivered through feedback notes by the evaluation team. These loops explain systems behaviours, trends and main findings on root causes of persistent challenges, opening the ground for the identification of leverage points for further RBM organizational development.
Outputs: Five feedback notes, one for each creative tension.

Requested feedback
Specific on-demand request of information coming from the organization that, aligned with the inquiry areas outlined in the inception report, requests the evaluation team to provide input on any of the RBM processes under development during the time of the evaluation.
Outputs:
● One feedback note requested by the Policy and Strategy Division on the RBM policy update and development (June, 2019)
● Feedback comments on the document: Version 1 of the results-based management principles and standards 2+5 framework for self-assessment (June, 2019)
● Feedback comments on the annual results report quality assessment checklist (November, 2018)
● Feedback comments on the initial concept notes of the RBM Fund and the Results SEAL[34] (September, 2018)

| Emergent feedback |
|---|
| Brief on-the-go pieces of information that the evaluation team considered relevant to share with the organization given that such information had implications for the timely development of current RBM processes. |
| **Outputs:** Two emergent feedback notes, one on the RBM guiding principles being developed by the OECD-DAC Results Community and another on the results and implications of the OECD-DAC Results Community workshop held in April in Paris. |

Oral feedback to UNFPA has taken place through remote presentations, remote meetings and webinars as well as by on-site presentations and on-site meetings in the headquarters in New York and in some of the eight countries covered by the field visits. These several rounds of feedback have built on one another and have followed the sequence delineated in Figure 7.

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33 The other six essential elements (or principles) are: a developmental purpose, evaluation rigor, innovation niche, complexity perspective, systems thinking and co-creation.

34 The RBM SEAL is a corporate initiative that intends to capitalize on innovative ways of institutionalizing a results culture in UNFPA.

FIGURE 7. *Sequence of oral feedback to UNFPA (internal)*
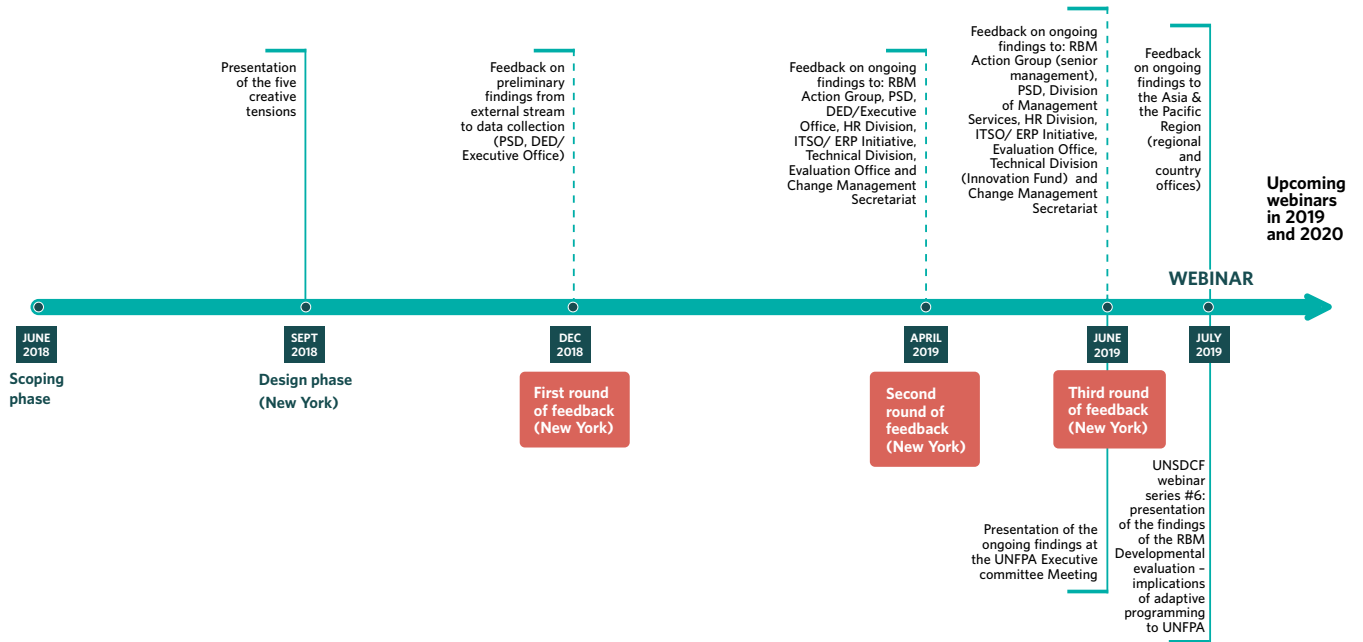
Source: Evaluation team

Figure 7 shows that the feedback delivery process has followed a continuous sequence. In line with the nature of the exercise, data collection, analysis and feedback were conducted in a continuous manner rather than in a sequence of steps. Data have been collected continuously, throughout the exercise.

As presented in the inception report, the evaluative input provided by the evaluation included two streams: finding and analyzing the root causes of persistent issues in RBM (internal stream) and bringing evidence for solutions, possible scenarios and options/courses of action (external stream). Once the evaluation had undergone a first, deep understanding of the persistent RBM issues in UNFPA (Figure 3), the first round of data collection focused on the external stream.

During this process a number of experiences and organizations addressing some of the challenges faced by UNFPA were identified (for example, adaptive management, strategy testing, new RBM capacity-development approaches). Sharing some of these experiences was the main focus of the first round of feedback in December 2018. The reactions from UNFPA were taken on board and guided the subsequent data-collection process.

The second round of oral feedback sessions in April 2019 focused on the presentation of findings by creative tension. Also in April, the evaluation team shared the preliminary findings of the evaluation with Dr John Mayne, the consultant collaborating with the Policy and Strategy

Division in the development of the RBM principles and standards to be applied to the RBM SEAL

Prior to the third round of feedback, the senior management at UNFPA requested a presentation to the Executive Committee with a focus on main scenarios, UNFPA position/situation and emerging leverage points. Subsequent to this presentation senior management requested that the evaluation team develop suggestions on possible entry points. The third round of feedback focused on discussions around entry points to the leverage point areas identified.

At the time of this report, the feedback process was ongoing and a number of webinars were scheduled for September 2019; one covering UNFPA regional offices and another addressing external stakeholders that have contributed to the evaluation exercise.

In addition to the internal feedback, the evaluation also had exchanges and provided feedback to external exercises that were ongoing at the time of the developmental evaluation.

The first group of exchanges featured those related to the participation of the evaluation team at the OECD-DAC Results Community workshop in April 2019. At the event, the developmental evaluation team was asked to address two aspects of interest to workshop participants:

● The developmental evaluation addresses RBM as an interconnected, evolving system: what does that mean for the desirable nature and status of RBM guiding principles?

- The developmental evaluation focuses on "creative tensions" that appear between theory and practice: how can guiding principles reflect and help to solve these tensions?

The second group of exchanges took place with the UNICEF Field Results Group. The evaluation team had a number of exchanges with the team carrying out the ongoing "independent assessment of the effectiveness of the UNICEF results-based management capacity-building strategy to inform the new generation of RBM learning".

ENGAGEMENT GENERATED

A wide array of business units across UNFPA has been engaged with the evaluation to different degrees and in different formats. The Policy and Strategy Division (PSD) has had a particularly high degree of engagement throughout the exercise, given their particular competencies in the development of the RBM architecture within the organization. Moreover, the Policy and Strategy Division is the unit that requested the RBM evaluation. At the time of launching the exercise, the Policy and Strategy Division was working on the revision of the RBM Policy and was planning to develop an RBM strategy and action plan, including RBM capacity development. The findings of the evaluation were planned to be an input into these processes from the onset.

The Executive Office, through the two Deputy Executive Directors, has also been engaged from the onset and has played a key role in the dissemination of the findings of the exercise and in further engaging business units in their discussion. The role of senior management has been crucial in a context where the developmental evaluation approach was an innovation. The buy-in and support of senior managers at headquarters, regional and country offices has been of the essence (Box 1) in a context where the embedded, co-creation-based, utilization-focused approach of the developmental evaluation was being applied for the first time.

Since the early stages of the evaluation design, the evaluation team stance is that RBM operates in a systemic manner. For this reason, the scoping mission covered a wide number of business units beyond the Policy and Strategy Division at UNFPA.

Box 1. Standing on the shoulders of giants

One of the challenges of external evaluations is to get to the heart of organizations and be acquainted with what the real problems are. Interviews and focus groups are a means to get to the heart but they give a fragmented view. The developmental evaluation team requested participating in an internal three-day RBM regional workshop in Cairo in which RBM progress, challenges and bottlenecks were to be discussed. The participation of an external evaluation team in an internal event of these characteristics was unheard of in UNFPA. Thanks to the leadership of the regional director of the Arab States Region, who took the risk and allowed the evaluation team to participate in the event, the team was able to understand the bottlenecks and challenges first hand. This allowed the evaluation to "stand on the shoulders of giants" (the organization's internal knowledge of the problem). This opened up the door to the participation of the evaluation team in another two highly relevant RBM workshops (held in Kiev and Johannesburg respectively).

From the scoping phase in June 2018, the evaluation process has been characterized by a gradual and incremental degree of engagement. At the time of writing this account report, the process was gaining even further momentum, with webinars for regional offices and country offices planned in September 2019. Table 2 presents an account of the various UNFPA business units involved and the areas of engagement.

TABLE 2. *UNFPA business units engaged in the developmental evaluation*

Business units	Areas/topics of engagement with the evaluation
Change Management Secretariat	• Interviews during the scoping phase • Specific inputs and discussions on organizational culture (creative tension 3) • Regular updates and discussions on the findings of the evaluation and its implications
Country offices	• Interviews during the data-collection process • Retrieval of perceptions through the online survey • Discussions on the findings of the evaluation and its implications through webinars
Division of Management Services	• Interviews during the data-collection process • Discussions on the findings of the evaluation and its implications
Executive Office	• Interviews during the scoping phase • Regular updates and discussions on the findings of the evaluation and its implications
Evaluation Office	• Direct involvement throughout the developmental evaluation process, including facilitation, institutional linkages and ensuring buy-in for the evaluation across the organization • Discussions on the findings of the evaluation and its implications
Human Resource Division	• Interviews and team meetings during the scoping phase • Regular updates and discussions on the findings of the evaluation and its implications
Information Technology Solutions Office/new enterprise resource planning (ERP) initiative	• Interviews during the scoping phase • Specific inputs and discussions on the plan-to-report work stream of the new ERP initiative • Regular updates and discussions on the findings of the evaluation and its implications
Policy and Strategy Division	• Interviews and team meetings during the scoping phase • Specific inputs and discussions on RBM Policy, RBM Strategy and Action Plan; RBM standards; RBM capacity development (RBM training modules and online learning modules); and implications of the UNSDCF for the new stage of RBM • Regular updates and discussions on the findings of the evaluation and its implications
Resource Mobilization Branch	• Interviews during the scoping phase • Discussions on the findings of the evaluation and its implications
Regional offices	• Interviews during the data-collection process • Retrieval of perceptions through the online survey • Discussions on the findings of the evaluation and its implications through webinars
Technical Division, Innovation Fund Secretariat	• Interviews during the scoping phase • Discussions on the findings of the evaluation and its implications

Note: Business units are displayed in alphabetical order.

EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

As inferred from the previous feedback section, the developmental evaluation has also engaged with a number of external actors beyond UNFPA. Such an engagement has not only been characterized by the need to collect data but by two additional elements. The first element is that the UNFPA decision to apply a developmental approach to a corporate evaluation on RBM has been regarded as an innovative exercise that has generated interest across most of the organizations consulted during the evaluation (Figure 8).

FIGURE 8. *Organizations consulted during the evaluation*

At the time of writing this account report the UNFPA Evaluation Office was working on dissemination actions to ensure that the findings and experience of this pioneering exercise is shared across external organizations engaged in the process.

The second element is that this transition to a new-stage of RBM process that UNFPA has embarked upon is being experienced to different degrees by a number of other organizations. In this regard, the evaluation has put particular emphasis in connecting UNFPA with these other organizations and their experiences. Some examples of the linkages made to date include connecting the UNFPA Strategy and Policy Division with the Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning at USAID, with the OECD-DAC Results Community, and with the UNICEF Fields Result Group. The Division for Human Resources at UNFPA has also been connected with the Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning at USAID.

In line with the organizational development nature of the exercise, the relational capital accrued throughout the evaluation will be put at the full disposal of UNFPA by means of a database of contacts.

REACTIONS, EFFECTS AND CHANGES

This section explains reactions, effects and changes that the developmental evaluation, as an intervention,[35] has started to generate to date. This includes the entire exercise, from the design process (scoping and inception phases), throughout the process of collecting and analyzing data, and up to the sharing of the findings and evidence with business units across UNFPA. The following paragraphs summarize the most significant effects as perceived by the evaluation team:

1. **Increased consensus**: It is difficult to start a co-creative process in a complex multi-country United Nations organization. As previously mentioned, the culture of United Nations organizations is characterized by modest risk-taking, bureaucracy, and being norms-based. In this scenario, a gradual consensus has been generated that a developmental evaluation is an innovation that needs experimentation - in terms of the concept, the methods implemented and the implications of the exercise in the short and long run. Stakeholders and UNFPA business units directly involved with the evaluation have increasingly assumed the risks and accepted the challenge of working with a different evaluation approach.

35 In developmental evaluation methodology, the evaluation is considered an intervention in itself, given that it seeks to bring about positive developments, and thus positive changes, in the organization.

2. **Changing mindsets:** At the individual level, the progressive implementation of the evaluation has increased the motivation of, overcome resistance by, and fostered the engagement of, direct stakeholders. This is exemplified by the behavioural change observed in key decision-makers through their gradual and ongoing participation in, and engagement with, the exercise. Staff with rather sceptical positions at the beginning of the evaluation, gradually understood the essence of the exercise and a number of them ended up championing the need for change in the journey to a new stage of RBM. This began particularly with the first rounds of provision of feedback.

    At the time of writing this report, the evaluation team was not aware of the extent to which UNFPA had implemented specific changes in RBM systems and related processes and areas within the short timeline of this evaluation. This aspect could be more fully tracked in a subsequent phase or in a next iteration of the developmental process started with this evaluation.

3. **High-level leadership engagement**: The developmental evaluation started as a request by a single business unit to the Evaluation Office with the objective of improving departmental business processes. This was the organizational starting point. However, the developmental approach gradually increased the involvement of high-level senior managers, who saw and understood this exercise as an organizational opportunity to better manage for results at all levels of the organization (inter-departmental- engaging different business units with one another, and multi-level- engaging at headquarters and field level).

4. **From fragmentation to alignment**: The developmental evaluation has contributed to create a sense of ownership, awareness and urgency around the need to develop different but interrelated solutions to further develop RBM (including people's understanding of the systemic nature of RBM). For instance, the initial organizational demand for this evaluation emerged as a need to gather input for the development of the new RBM Policy. This original demand has evolved to a current demand to inform a fully fledged RBM-based organizational development process. This has been widely understood and appreciated by a number of business units that, at the beginning of the evaluation, tended to operate in isolation in relation to the developmental process.

5.

This awareness has helped to link and align different RBM-related business processes, which had not been launched with the same purpose in mind and which did not initially entail inter-departmental coordination around the development of a new stage of RBM. Examples include: RBM policy and strategy, change management, information and communication technology transformation, human resources, evaluation, operations, resource mobilization and innovation.

6. **From improvement to development**: This exercise started with specific requirements to benchmark best practices from other organizations and see what could be taken as a reference in order to improve RBM processes in UNFPA (for example policy and information systems). However, the gradual deployment of the developmental process and its uptake by UNFPA business units transcended the initial aims and transformed them into an actual organizational development process.

7. **Timeliness**: The developmental evaluation-led alignment of RBM-related business processes has facilitated a general understanding that this is a timely exercise, contextualized in a period characterized by the emergence of both internal and external drivers of change (for example, internal: the development of a new enterprise resource planning (ERP); external: the uncertainties around the launching of the new UNDAF in the context of the United Nations reform).

8. **Outreach influence**: The developmental evaluation has also raised interest from other United Nations agencies and organizations across the development cooperation sector. This was partly generated by systematically explaining the purpose and methodology of the exercise in all interviews and exchanges with external stakeholders. Development actors have been interested mostly in the degree of innovativeness of the exercise (it is the first time that a corporate developmental evaluation has been conducted in the United Nations systems), in its purpose, and in its scope and systemic approach and methodology to address long-standing RBM challenges. The fact that the OECD Results Group invited the UNFPA evaluation team to share the developmental evaluation in a workshop in Paris is a consequence of such interest.

9. **Momentum:** The fact that this is a timely exercise reflects the interest of a wide array of development stakeholders that are also inquiring on how best to improve RBM. Overall, there is an internal and external sense of appreciation that this is the right momentum to move on to the next stage of RBM. In UNFPA, this momentum is an opportunity but also a risk. It is an opportunity because there is an explicit appetite for change now, but also a risk because the organization may take excessive time to react and to develop new solutions. Losing momentum now could generate a sense of frustration and powerlessness internally, should expectations not be properly managed and addressed.

10. **Multi-level engagement**: The evaluation started as a clear demand from headquarters as a means to develop a new RBM policy. However, as the exercise unfolded and evidence was collected and shared at field level, it generated a substantial amount of interest and engagement from regional and country offices. The exercise itself has brought a sense of hope that UNFPA will further develop RBM, both in headquarters and at field level, where the need to effectively manage for results is particularly felt. Staff, overall, perceive the organizational process that the evaluation has helped to open up as an opportunity to leverage change from and at field level, facilitated and supported by headquarters and regional offices.

11. **Continuous learning**: Organizational learning is an integral feature of the developmental evaluation. The evaluation team's perception is that it has occurred throughout the exercise. In contrast to other types of evaluation (summative, formative), developmental evaluations are intended to generate learning from the onset, as they are an intervention in themselves. This is one reason why the inception report devotes particular efforts to explaining the rationale, concepts and approaches that will be applied. In this regard, learning prior to the provision of feedback has been mostly related to the innovation and nature of the evaluation, its purpose (the effects generated on why the developmental evaluation is conducted), scope (the effects related to the aspects covered by the evaluation) and the methodology (the effects related to the systemic methods applied for capturing and analyzing RBM complexity).
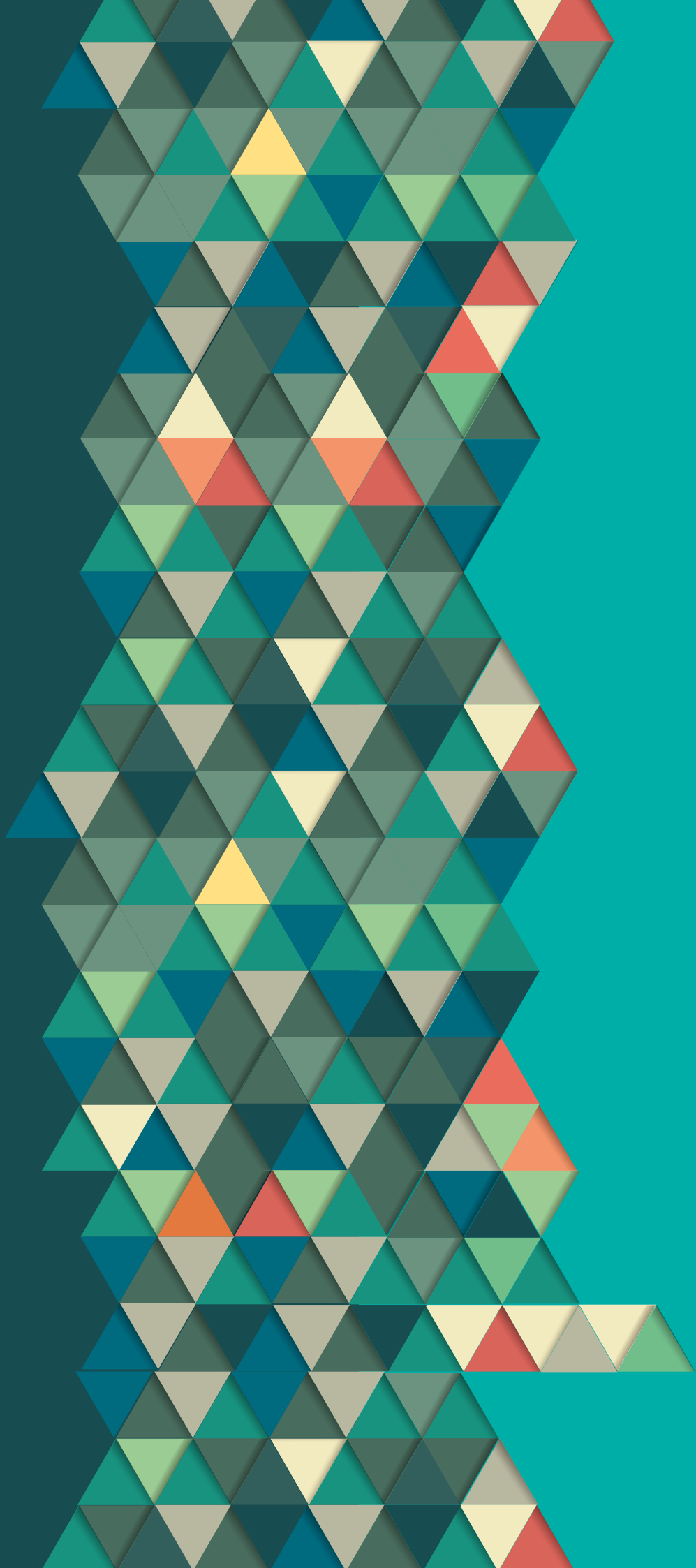
PART III

The way forward

6 LEVERAGE FLOW

IN BRIEF

Scope
This chapter introduces the change pathway that emerges from the analysis conducted during the developmental evaluation to date. It also presents six leverage point areas and suggests a number of entry points to start working on small changes that help resolve the creative tensions.
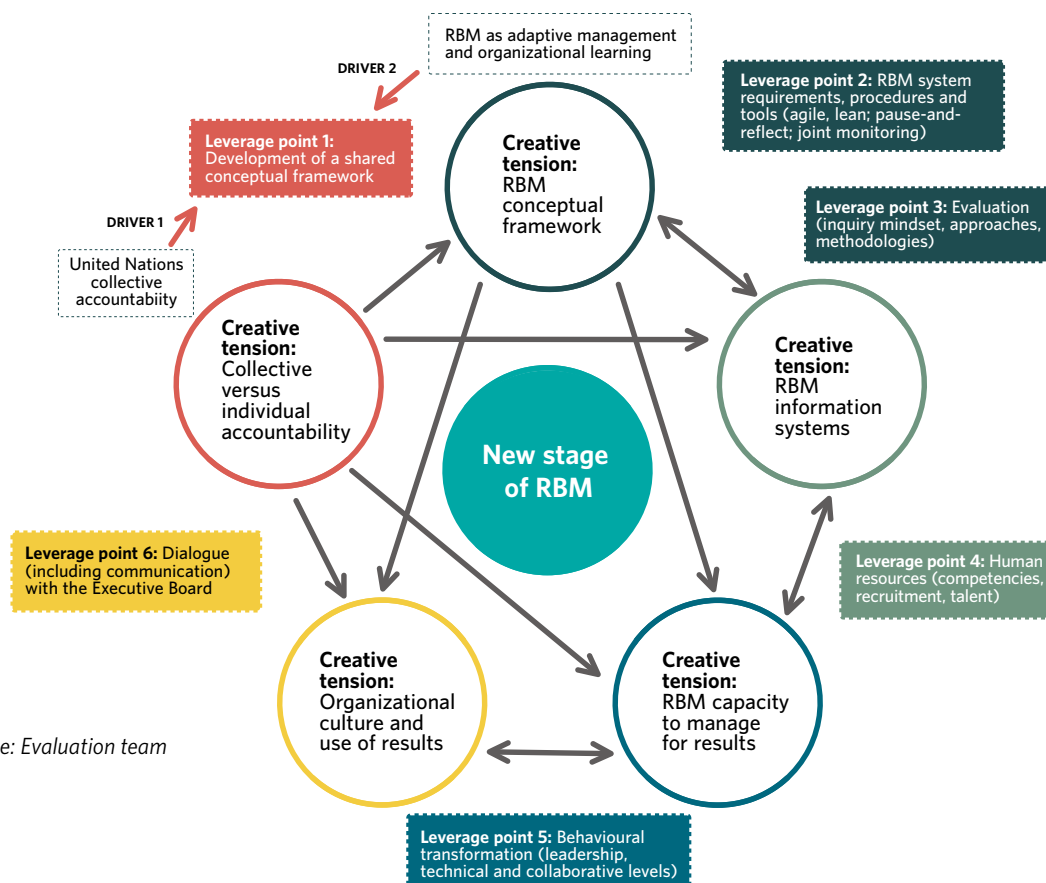
Highlight
As a result of the developmental process six leverage point areas have been identified: the development of a shared conceptual framework; RBM system requirements, procedures and tools; evaluation; human resources; behavioural transformation; and setting up a dialogue with the Executive Board.

RATIONALE OF THE SEQUENCE

The leverage flow, which has emerged during the developmental evaluation, is a model for guiding the development of RBM solutions and, therefore, for moving to the next stage of RBM. The model follows a rationale based on a logical sequence of causal influence between the five inter-dependent creative tensions (Figure 9).

**FIGURE 9.** *The leverage flow: identifying the change pathway*

DRIVER 2

RBM as adaptive management and organizational learning

Leverage point 1: Development of a shared conceptual framework

DRIVER 1

United Nations collective accountabiity

Leverage point 2: RBM system requirements, procedures and tools (agile, lean; pause-and-reflect; joint monitoring)

Creative tension: RBM conceptual framework

Leverage point 3: Evaluation (inquiry mindset, approaches, methodologies)

Creative tension: Collective versus individual accountability

New stage of RBM

Creative tension: RBM information systems

Leverage point 6: Dialogue (including communication) with the Executive Board

Leverage point 4: Human resources (competencies, recruitment, talent)

Creative tension: Organizational culture and use of results

Creative tension: RBM capacity to manage for results

Source: Evaluation team

Leverage point 5: Behavioural transformation (leadership, technical and collaborative levels)

Two overarching drivers determine the evolution of RBM and the possible scenarios. The first one is the increase in collective accountability driven by the current evolution of the United Nations reform. This driver is linked to creative tension 2 (collective versus individual accountability). The second driver is the move towards adaptive management within and outside the United Nations development system. This driver is linked to creative tension 1 (RBM conceptual framework) as adaptive management is a trend that responds to current gaps on how to understand the focus and scope of RBM.

FIGURE 10. *Scenarios for the new stage of results-based management*
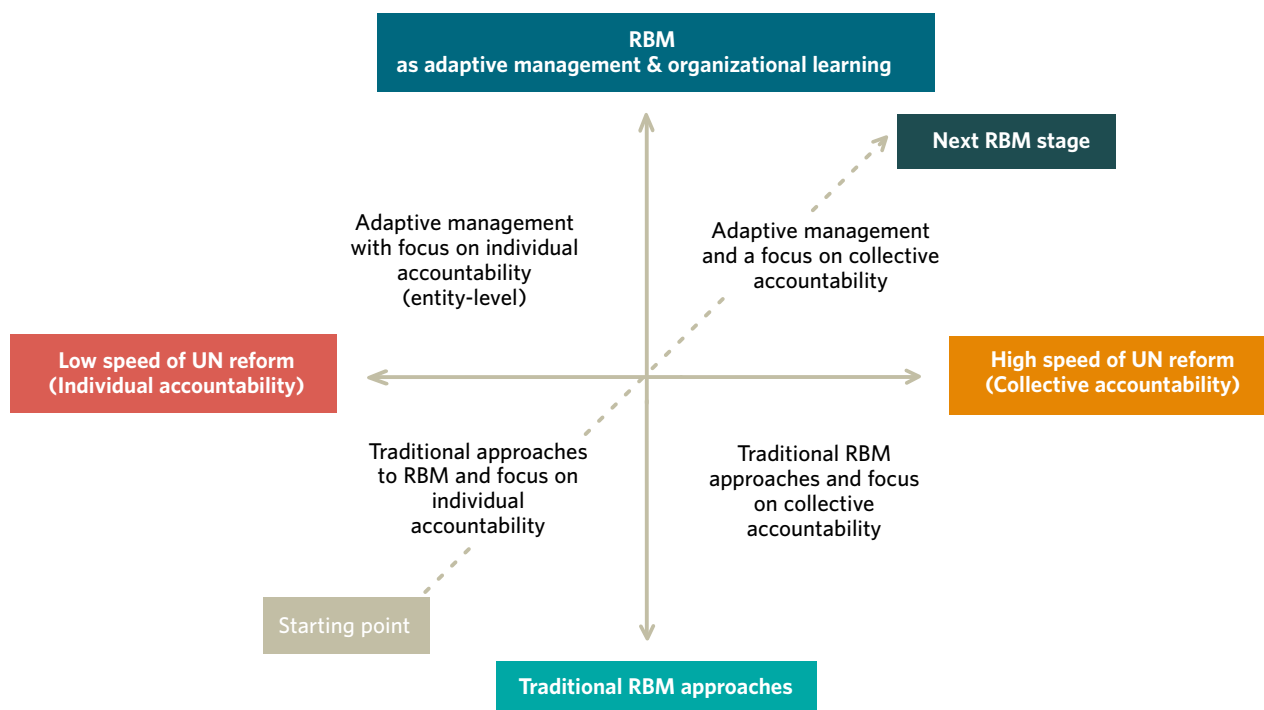
Source: Evaluation team

As shown in Figure 10, these two drivers interact at the intersection between the two tensions, given that adaptive management is also embedded in the deployment of the new UNSDCF (a key element of the reform of the United Nations development system). Therefore, first organizational efforts to develop the next stage of RBM should focus on the development of a shared conceptual framework: the first leverage point.[36] Taking into account the norms-based nature of United Nations agencies, the development of a clear purpose (that aligns the organization towards a shared vision around RBM) would be the first step for building the foundations for the next stage.

The resulting conceptual framework should inform the second leverage point: the development of RBM information systems (creative tension 5) that strike a balance between (i) an agile, standard, one-size-fits-all system that serves the purpose of accountability for funding through corporate reporting and (ii) adaptive, field-level, customized information systems that allow learning for adaptation to be operationalized and that serve the purpose of accountability for learning.

The third leverage point also emerges at the intersection between the RBM conceptual framework (creative tension 1) and information systems (creative tension 5). This leverage point is about mainstreaming evaluative thinking and the substantive (as opposed to formal) use of evaluations across all levels of the organization, especially in the field (regional and country offices), where results are implemented. This leverage point is closely related to the conceptual framework, given that the evaluation function is a constitutive pillar of RBM. This leverage point is also related to information systems, given that the adaptive, data-driven, learning-focused nature of evaluations in adaptive management is linked to new methods, approaches and tools, and ultimately linked to information systems.

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36 A leverage point is an area where a small change can yield large improvements in a system.

The fourth leverage point is placed in the area of human resources. This leverage point emerges at the interplay between the conceptual framework (creative tension 1) and the capacity to manage for results (creative tension 4), given that the competency requirements for recruiting new talent and training current staff on RBM should build upon the updated RBM concepts and be aligned with the RBM purpose.

Once talent requirements and updated competencies are clear, UNFPA will be ready to work intensively on the fifth leverage point. This leverage point deals with the development of normative tools and behavioural skills aimed at incentivizing the behavioural transformation required in order to foster a results culture (in terms of technical, leadership, and collaborative skill sets). The point emerges at the intersection between the creative tensions related to capacity (creative tension 4) and culture (creative tension 3). The evidence found throughout the evaluation has revealed a sequential logic by which individual capacity to manage for results, is a prerequisite to developing a results culture in the organization.

The fifth leverage point is about behavioural transformation, that is at the interplay between organizational culture and organizational capacity and refers to leadership, practical RBM skills and collaborative intelligence. This leverage point is closely linked to the previous one (leverage point 4).

The sixth and last leverage point, engaging the Executive Board in a dialogue that makes them part of the way forward, is a prerequisite that cuts across and influences the development of all the other leverage points. This dialogue should input to the development of the next stage of RBM. This leverage point also takes into account the increasing awareness of donors that they play a crucial part in the solutions to the current challenges.

The following two sections discuss in detail the leverage points and identify potential entry points to start working in the development of solutions towards the next stage of RBM.

EMERGING LEVERAGE POINT AREAS AND ENTRY POINTS

Leverage point areas are areas where small changes can produce large improvements in a system (results-based management in the present case). The developmental evaluation process has identified six leverage points linked to the five creative tensions and their interrelationships.[37] The six leverage point areas are: (i) the development of a shared conceptual framework; (ii) RBM system requirements, procedures and tools; (ii) evaluation; (iv) human resources;

(v) behavioural transformation; and (vi) setting up a dialogue with the Executive Board.

Some of these leverage points have emerged during the evaluation as a result of the identification and analysis of the root causes of persistent issues in RBM (for example, shared conceptual framework; RBM systems requirements, procedures and tools). Other leverage points have emerged because they have been identified as such in agencies that have already taken the path towards adaptive management (for example, evaluation, human resources, behavioural transformation). Some others have emerged because the organization is already working on them and they have been widely recognized as areas for leverage during the discussions held (for example, behavioural transformation, human resources). Others have emerged and have been validated during the feedback discussions in UNFPA (for example, setting up a dialogue with the Executive Board).

Entry points are possible actions that may be taken to start working on, and activate, the leverage point. The entry points described below are initial possibilities for consideration; they are not prescriptive indications or recommendations.

Subsequent to the feedback presentation to the UNFPA Executive Committee on the 18 June 2019, the senior management asked the evaluation team for an initial list of suggestions or entry points in order to kick-off the organizational development process ("the way forward"). The suggestions presented below are a starting point for discussion between headquarters, regional offices and country offices. It is expected that new entry points will be added and that some of the ones below could be modified or disregarded following the forthcoming discussions.

The following sections outline the rationale for each leverage point and briefly describe the initial suggestions for entry points by leverage point area.

### Leverage point 1: Development of a shared conceptual framework

What could be possible entry points?

Setting up a multi-level, inter-divisional mechanism (for example, an RBM action group or taskforce team) to articulate the organizational development process associated with the transition to the new stage of RBM could be a possible entry point. This coordination mechanism would optimally include headquarters, regional and country offices and involve all UNFPA business units in different ways.[38]

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37 At the time of writing this report these six areas have been presented to (and discussed with) all relevant business units at the headquarters, to the Executive Committee and presented to (and discussed with) the Asia and the Pacific Region, as part of the ongoing efforts to present and discuss the leverage points with all regions.

38 The degree of involvement could vary according from active involvement to business units being consulted.

FIGURE 11. *Entry points to the development of a conceptual framework*
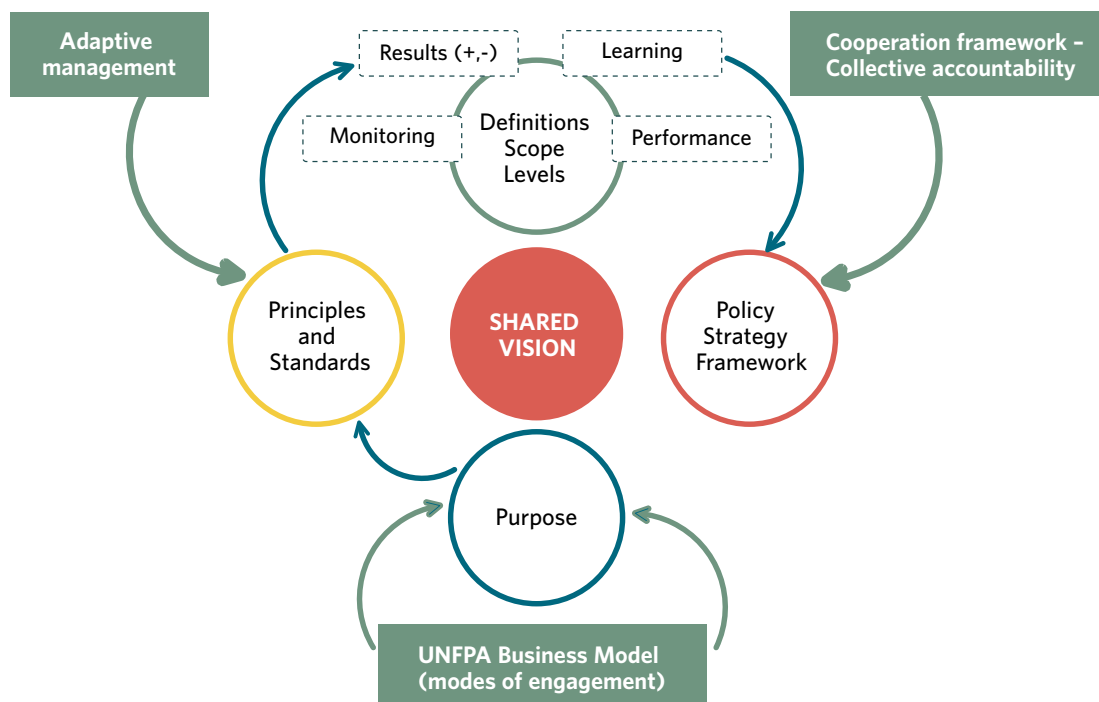
Source: Evaluation team

This RBM action group or taskforce team would be in charge of outlining the road map for the transition to the new stage of RBM and articulating work in the development of a shared RBM vision for the organization.

Figure 11 shows some of the possible entry points in the development of a shared vision. The green boxes depict the external factors framing the vision, that is to say, adaptive management, UNFPA business model (modes of engagement) and the collective accountability requirements of the Cooperation Framework (the UNSDCF). A suggested sequence for the development of the shared vision would be to: discuss and agree on the purpose; develop principles and standards based on the purpose;[39] translate principles and standards into clear operational definitions of key terms, the scope of RBM and clear specifications on the different levels of results (and thus different levels of monitoring); and then, once scoping and operational terminology is clear, proceed to articulate an RBM framework or strategy or policy (as deemed relevant).

Leverage point 2: RBM system requirements, procedures and tools

What could be possible entry points?

● **Re-engineer business processes:** Rationalize current RBM tools and processes based on their purpose and value to the user. This process should focus on making reporting more efficient so that time is freed up to "pause-and-reflect", which is one of the most important aspects of learning for adaptation.

● **Test, pilot and experiment with adaptive tools:** There is a wide array of adaptive tools already tested by other organizations that could be piloted in the context of UNFPA. Some of these tools are: strategy testing (Asia Foundation), data-driven adaptive management (UNDP), complexity-aware monitoring (USAID) and causal-link monitoring (USAID).[40] Testing and experimenting with outcome data-collection systems would also be very appropriate, given that outcome-data availability is crucial for a meaningful results-based management approach. An option such as lean data could be of interest. Inside UNFPA there are also interesting approaches that could be further explored, such as the community-based information systems with

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39 At the time of writing this report UNFPA had just launched the first version of the RBM Principles and Standards to be applied in the RBM SEAL.

40 These and other adaptive methods are briefly described in the feedback notes for creative tensions 1 and 2.

implementing partners in Kenya. It would be advisable to link with the Innovation Fund in the framework of the UNFPA Innovation Initiative Phase II Strategy, which recognizes the need for more agile and lean monitoring approaches, done on a more frequent and real-time basis, as well as the need for methods that allow outcome monitoring by capturing for intended as well as unintended effects.

- **Incorporate pause-and-reflect in the piloting:** Interviews with organizations that have been exploring adaptive management approaches (USAID, the Asia Foundation) revealed that proper pause-and-reflect practices are at the core of organizational learning strategies for adaptation. Piloting pause-and-reflect practices would be thus of primary importance. In this regard it could be particularly interesting to take advantage of the recently launched RBM SEAL (a corporate initiative aimed at fostering a results culture in UNFPA) to identify adaptive pause-and-reflect practices across UNFPA.

- **Establish collaborations:** It is important to network and establish collaborations and institutional links with those exploring practical approaches and research on organizational learning for adaptation. There are a number of organizations exploring and experimenting on practical ways to implement adaptive management approaches. These include the Global Learning for Adaptive Management Initiative, the UNDP innovation hubs, USAID and Oxfam International.

Leverage point 3: Evaluation

The term "evaluation" here refers to the entire evaluation function across UNFPA as well as evaluation as an inquiring technique embedded into programmes. Interviews with organizations that have been exploring adaptive management approaches (for example, USAID, Oxfam) highlight that organizational learning is intrinsically linked with evaluation. In particular, adaptive management is closely associated with the increasing use of evaluations and with the development of an inquiring mindset across the organization.

The UNFPA Evaluation Strategy (2018-2021) opens good prospects in this regard. Three of the strategic priorities of the evaluation strategy are: (i) enhanced use and utility of UNFPA evaluation, (ii) diversification and innovation of evaluation processes and products, and (iii) demand-driven evaluation processes and products in an attempt to better integrate accountability and learning.

What could be possible entry points?

- **Include corporate learning agendas:** An option to foster an evaluative mindset geared towards organizational learning is to use a corporate learning agenda and the ensuing inquiry frameworks. Expanding the tools for

evidence base beyond country programme evaluations would also help foster an evaluative mindset. In this regard, the evidence gathered by country programme evaluations could be expanded with combined evidence from applied research, studies, reviews and ad-hoc assessments in order to build an evidence base at the service of organizational learning.

- **Explore targeted evaluation methods:** Another entry point would be exploring which evaluation methods are more appropriately able to capture the value of the UNFPA business model as well as capturing complexity. Some examples of these methods include outcome harvesting, process tracing, realist evaluation, and contribution analysis.

- **Explore learning-focused design approaches:** It would be advisable to explore evaluation design approaches geared towards maximizing organizational learning, such as formative evaluations, developmental evaluations, participatory evaluations and joint evaluation designs, whereby users take part in the design of the evaluation as well.

- **Liaise with knowledge management:** It would be advisable to link the entry points with the UNFPA Knowledge Management Strategy launched in December 2018. The Strategy includes several elements very conducive to delivering thinking and adaptive programming.

Leverage point 4: Human resources

Capacity to manage for results does not only hinge on technical knowledge and tools and procedures but also on attitudinal behaviours and mindsets and collaborative intelligence. Organizations working on adaptive management and organizational learning highly stress the importance of aligning behaviours and mindsets in the organization in order to make RBM work. In this regard staff competencies, recruitment strategies and talent acquisition are essential to transition to the new stage of RBM.

What could be possible entry points?

- **Review the current frameworks in light of the analysis brought forward by the evaluation:** Staff job descriptions, the Competency Framework, the Human Resources Strategy, staff learning and career development and current managerial certification programmes.

- **Operationalize the United Nations Leadership Framework:** This could be translated into a specific leadership development strategy for UNFPA.

- The **RBM SEAL** offers good possibilities as a mechanism to map out and identify the competencies and skills that characterize "RBM champions" in the transition towards adaptive programming and collective accountability.

- **Learn from other organizations** that have valuable experience in implementing adaptive management.

Leverage point 5: Behavioural transformation

While leverage point 4 focuses on the capacity requirements for individual staff, behavioural transformation is related to the organizational ways of working and team behaviour, that is to say, in the actual capacity of business units to operate RBM effectively and efficiently beyond individual capacities.

What could be possible entry points?

- **The organizational culture change initiative** led by the Change Management Secretariat with support from the Gates Foundation offers a very opportune and consistent entry point to begin tangible work on behavioural transformations.

- **Implement fully fledged adaptive management pilots in selected country offices:** These pilots would include applying adaptive programming approaches from planning to evaluation. The pilots could cover different UNFPA country quadrants (pink and red country quadrants at least) so that the specificities of the different modes of engagement may be captured and observed. The full-fledged pilots could include crucial aspects such as the creation of systematic spaces to pause-and-reflect, the design and operationalization of outcome-based monitoring systems and testing real-time, joint monitoring systems.

- **Utilize RBM SEAL:** The RBM SEAL could be used intentionally to identify "championing" country offices as well as to identify adaptive programming practices specific to UNFPA. In other words, practices that capture what adaptive programming means and implies in the specific context of the UNFPA business model.

- **Implement new ways of transferring practical RBM capacity beyond traditional training sessions: Examples of this could be:** learning-by-doing; reflection-in-action; peer-to-peer learning; coaching, mentoring and shadowing; and approaches that link the transferral of capacity to real RBM problem-solving, ongoing RBM processes and actual RBM deliverables.

- **Monitor and assess RBM principles and standards:** The recently drafted RBM Principles and Standards to be applied in the RBM SEAL delineate a range of behaviours and RBM practices whereby results information is used for informing learning. Monitoring and assessing (including through evaluations) these RBM principles could provide very useful information on the evolution of transformational behaviours towards the new stage of RBM in UNFPA. The availability of methodologies to evaluate principles (principles-focused evaluation) makes this possibility even more feasible.

Leverage point 6: Dialogue with the Executive Board

A number of the persistent challenges in RBM are due to systemic root causes that cannot be tackled by UNFPA alone. Moreover, it would be highly risky to embark upon changes and transformations without framing the process in a dialogue with the Executive Board.

What could be possible entry points?

Engage in a dialogue around the nature of inquiries by the Executive Board. The nature of the inquiries points to the type of demands and requirements made from the Executive Board to UNFPA, particularly in terms of accountability as reporting. At present, inquiries are often not centred around organizational adaptation and learning but rather on accountability for funding channelled through reporting. If adaptive programming and collective accountability are to be a reality, the demands from the Executive Board will have to evolve accordingly, and cater for both adaptation and learning, as well as accountability.

The dialogue would also include a dialogue on crucial aspects, such as the UNFPA value proposition and business model vis-à-vis how to capture and measure such UNFPA value, and; a dialogue on current challenges in terms of availability of outcome data.

7 GUIDING PRINCIPLES TO DEVELOPING THE NEXT STAGE
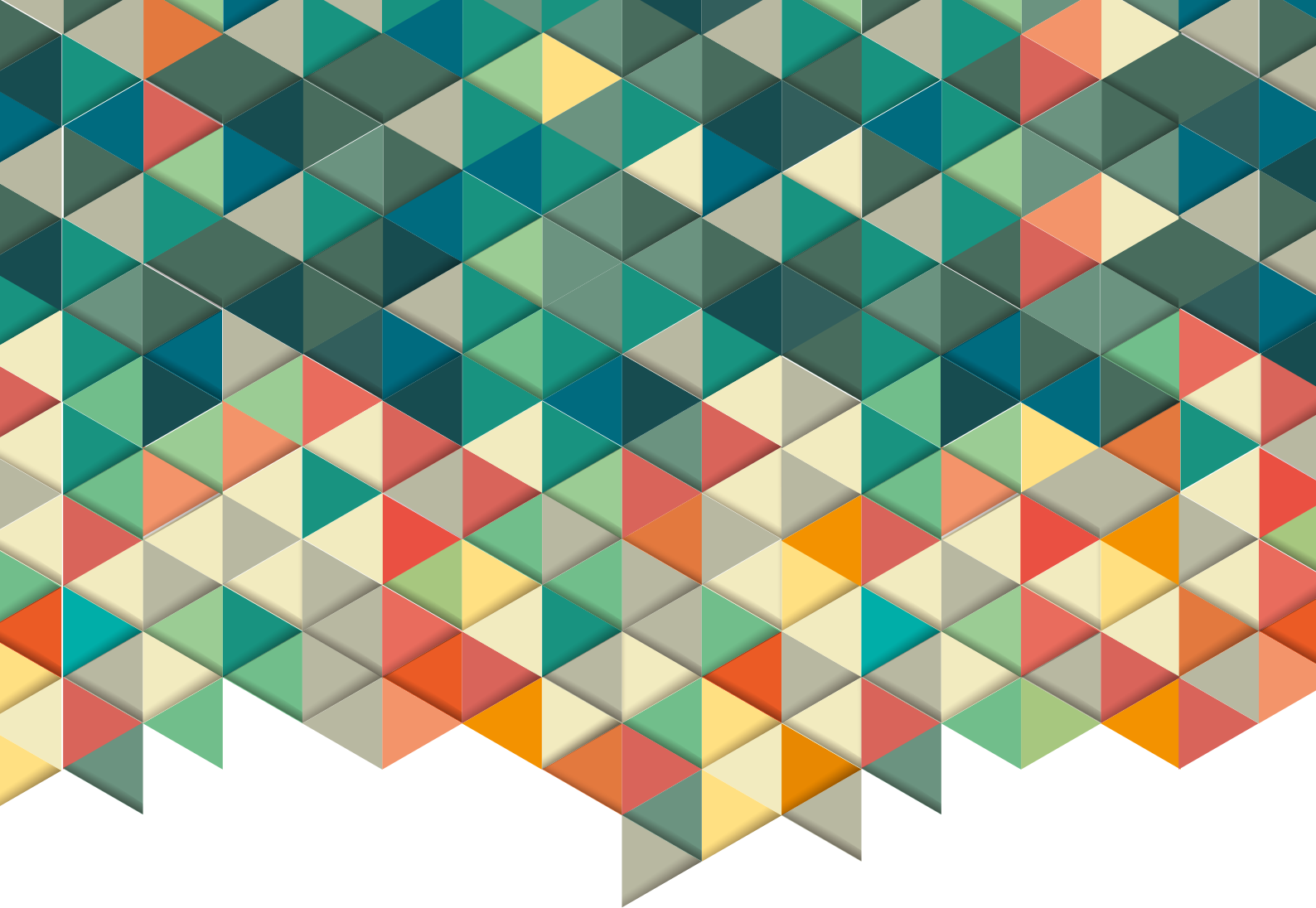
IN BRIEF

Scope
The process started by the developmental evaluation does not end with this report. This developmental evaluation is a first phase that has informed the organization to kick-start the transition to the next stage of RBM. This chapter briefly presents a list of five principles to guide and frame the remainder of the transition.

Highlight
The momentum generated by the developmental evaluation is an opportunity and also a risk. Managing expectations (inside and outside UNFPA) and capitalizing on the engagement generated with a quick response and clear actions, is critical for success in developing the next stage of RBM.

The evaluation team, based on the knowledge and expertise developed during the exercise, suggests UNFPA consider the following five principles aimed at guiding the ongoing organizational development process required to transition to the next stage of RBM.

1. **Keep a clear and strong leadership by senior management:** Senior management should actively engage in, and lead the set-up of, an organizational mechanism that can foster and sustain the change process throughout the entire transition and across all the spectrum of RBM developments. This would include securing resources for the process, identifying RBM "champions", ensuring engagement from regional and country offices, and making sure that the effects of the process are communicated across all levels of the organization and beyond.

2. **Make use of the evidence and feedback provided:** UNFPA should continue using the evidence and analysis provided by this evaluation, which should be used to debate and discuss root causes and the way forward in terms of developing tailored solutions to the RBM challenges and opportunities identified.

3. **Capitalize on the momentum:** The biggest risk at this point would be losing the current degree of engagement, appetite for reflection, and motivation to undergo changes – in other words, not fulfilling the expectations that the developmental process has generated so far. Quick responses and actions led by senior management are essential in order to capitalize on the momentum generated.

4. **Ensure genuine co-creation:** The evidence provided by the evaluation reinforces the view that RBM is everybody's business (inter-departmental, multi-level). It is crucial to nurture continuous engagement with, and participation of, all key stakeholders involved in the co-creation and development of solutions. This goes beyond consultation and should include field level staff in particular. This principle of co-creation is relevant beyond UNFPA and should include engaging other United Nations and non-United Nations agencies that have already been identified and involved during this exercise.

5. **Leverage on experimentation:** Most of the leverage and entry points for developing the next stage have not yet been introduced or mainstreamed in UNFPA RBM processes. Some imply applying new tools and approaches for which there are limited proven experiences even in the development cooperation sector. UNFPA could adopt experimental and innovation approaches to design, introduce, test, refine and scale new developments in RBM.