Biennial Evaluation Synthesis Report 2020-2021

Summary

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Evaluation Office of UNEP

- Adheres to UN Norms and Standards for evaluation
- Is independent of management (reporting line to the ED)
- Conducts evaluations (no monitoring)
- Mandate: All projects and programmes within the Programme of Work
- All evaluations have a management response and recommendation compliance process
- All evaluations are publicly disclosed
Overview

- **Evaluations completed in 2020-21:** 42 evaluations of UN Environment interventions – (projects mostly formally approved 2011-16)

- **Value of projects evaluated in 2020-21:** excess of **USD 213 million** of expenditure

- **Overall objective:** To generate evidence on ‘what works’ and ‘what doesn’t’ and provide feedback for improving design, planning and operational management processes

- **Evaluation criteria:** standardized (OECD-DAC), consistent with international good practice, and rated on a six-point scale from ‘Highly Unsatisfactory’ through to ‘Highly Satisfactory’

- **Comparison across biennia 2012 - 2021:** Performance against the evaluation criteria in the biennia from 2012 to 2021 produced consistent patterns despite the diversity of the interventions evaluated.
Evaluation Rating Scales

HS/S

- Highly Satisfactory
- Satisfactory
- Moderately Satisfactory
- Moderately Unsatisfactory
- Unsatisfactory
- Highly Unsatisfactory
The evaluations undertaken by the Evaluation Office are strongly influenced by project life-cycles. Evaluations are scheduled and initiated as projects approach, or reach, their operational completion. 2022 onwards moving to purposive sampling.
Evaluations by Region

Projects Evaluated in 2020-2021 by Region

- Global: 29%
- Africa: 19%
- Asia and the Pacific: 27%
- Latin America and The Caribbean: 23%
- Europe: 0%
SDGs targeted by the projects evaluated in MTS 2018-21

- Life on Land: 10%
- Life Below Water: 6%
- Climate Action: 9%
- Responsible Consumption and Production: 11%
- Sustainable Cities and Communities: 8%
- Affordable and Clean Energy: 9%
- Decent Work and Economic Growth: 1%
- Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure: 3%
- Reduced Inequality: 4%
- Peace and Justice Strong Institutions: 4%
- Partnerships to achieve the Goal: 9%
- No Poverty: 9%
- Zero Hunger: 3%
- Good Health and Well-being: 7%
- Quality Education: 1%
- Gender Equality: 0%
- Clean Water and Sanitation: 7%
Overall Project Performance 2020-21

There is a strong pattern of a large proportion of projects (>85%) attaining a rating for overall performance in the ‘Satisfactory’ range (MS, S or HS)

- The proportion of projects attaining a ‘Satisfactory/Highly Satisfactory’ rating for overall performance has decreased in the 2020-21 biennium.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Highly Satisfactory</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Moderately Satisfactory</th>
<th>Moderately Unsatisfactory</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
<th>Highly Unsatisfactory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Project Performance</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategic Relevance (Overall)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of Project Design</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effectiveness (Overall)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of Outputs</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement of Project Outcomes</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Likelihood of Impact</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Financial Management (Overall)</td>
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<td>37%</td>
<td>12%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Efficiency</td>
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<td>44%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>2%</td>
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<td>Monitoring &amp; Reporting (Overall)</td>
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<td>44%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>24%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sustainability (Overall)</td>
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<td>54%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preparation &amp; Readiness</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Management &amp; Supervision</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stakeholder Participation &amp; Cooperation</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responsiveness to HR/Gender</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td>5%</td>
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<td>Environmental &amp; Social Safeguards</td>
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<td>Country Ownership &amp; Driveness</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication &amp; Public Awareness</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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Evaluation – delivery 2020 –2021

Percentage of projects rated against these criteria achieving a ‘Satisfactory’ or better rating (S/HS)

Top rated evaluation criteria 2020-21

- 96% Strategic relevance
- 73% Stakeholders’ participation & cooperation
- 71% Availability of outputs

Areas for improvement

- 34% Likelihood of impact
- 34% Achievement of project outcomes
- 29% Human rights and gender equity
- 10% Sustainability (durability)

Overall Project Performance 2020-21

- Satisfactory, 37%
- Moderately Satisfactory, 51%
- Unsatisfactory, 7%
- Moderately Unsatisfactory, 2%
- Unsatisfactory, 2%
- Highly Satisfactory, 2%
39% of the projects evaluated achieved a rating of ‘Satisfactory’ or better S/HS in the assessment of their overall performance.

The alignment of the interventions intentionality (strategic relevance) remains the evaluation criterion that attains the highest ratings, with 96% rated as S/HS.

Up to 39% of projects were rated S/HS for their effectiveness in delivering their programmed outputs and achieving immediate and longer-term outcomes.

The delivery of outputs showed a higher level of project performance from last biennium 71% attain an S/HS rating (up from 57% in the 2018-19 biennium).

Performance at project outcome level is a critical indicator for effectiveness, currently 34% of projects attained an S/HS rating.

10% of the projects evaluated achieved an S/HS rating, 54% of projects were rated ‘MS’ in sustaining their outcomes i.e. project benefits continue after project completion.

The likelihood that interventions will influence the change processes that lead beyond project outputs to higher level results was considered ‘Likely’ or ‘Highly Likely’ in 34% of the projects evaluated in 2020-21.
Recommendation Plan Completion 2021 - 2022

Compliance on submitting Recommendations Implementation Plans (2020-21)

- Met requirement for submission: 45%
- Did not respond: 10%
- Plan submitted within 6-11 Months: 5%
- Plan submitted within 1-5 Months: 40%

Compliance on submitting Recommendations Implementation Plans (2018-19)

- Met requirement for submission: 25%
- Did not respond: 25%
- Plan submitted within 6-11 Months: 20%
- Plan submitted within 1-5 Months: 30%
Recommendation Compliance 2021 - 2022

Recommendation compliance status overall 2018-19 and 2020-21 biennia

- **Closed - Compliant**: 53%
- **Closed - No further Action Required**: 4%
- **Closed - Partially Compliant**: 10%
- **Closed - Not Compliant**: 28%
- **Open - Partially Compliant**: 26%
- **Open - Not Compliant**: 34%

- **2018-19 biennium**
- **2020-21 biennium**
Other aspects covered

- Key findings from selected evaluations
- Performance of the Evaluation Office
- Development of new Evaluation Policy and Strategy