Evaluation and Risk Management

Evaluation

UN Human Rights has established an evaluation function that is aligned with United Nations Norms and Standards for Evaluation, developed by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). The function is guided by an evaluation policy and plan that follow the UN Human Rights programming cycle. The goal is to increase the impact of UN Human Rights' interventions, and make them even more relevant, efficient, effective and sustainable.

In the mid-term, UN Human Rights seeks three outcome-level results:

1. The evaluation function is a well-developed and well-used component of the results-based management approach that UN Human Rights applies.

2. On the basis of evidence provided by evaluations, senior managers at UN Human Rights systematically review decisions on current and planned interventions and OHCHR's structures and processes.

3. UN Human Rights applies the evaluation resources of the UN System strategically to improve its relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

In 2022-2023, UN Human Rights will undertake at least two strategic thematic evaluations and five evaluations of particular areas of work (programmes or entities). A preliminary list includes: evaluations of UN Human Rights Country Programmes in Sudan, Ukraine, and Mozambique; assessments of the Regional Emergency Response to Covid-19 project and the Accountability in Iraq project; and evaluations of the Treaty Bodies' Capacity Building programme and the Annual Appeal/Report process.

Risk management

Risk is the effect of uncertainty on objectives. In the preceding Management Plan, UN Human Rights made risk management an integral component of programme management. As part of the overall risk management initiative of the UN Secretariat and in a wider effort to improve the Organization's governance and accountability framework, a UN Human Rights Risk Management Plan was developed in 2020. This plan includes a UN Human Rights Risk Register. This exercise was timely because Covid-19 underscored that corporate processes needed to anticipate, assess and evaluate risks and put controls and systems in place to avoid and mitigate them.

An Office-wide risk assessment process was organized to identify potential risks, root causes, drivers, existing internal controls and additional risk response measures. It identified 16 main risks. High and very high risks included: budget allocation, public perception and reputation, extra-budgetary funding, regular budget funding, General Assembly and Member States, political climate (external and internal), unique events (for example, the pandemic), crisis and contingency management, the information technology infrastructure, information technology security and access, information technology governance and cyber security, and Umoja requirements.

Following the methodology of the United Nations Secretariat, risk owners have been assigned to the very high and high risks and tasked to design, implement and report on their Risk Treatment and Response plans. Information on all 16 risks, including their mitigation measures, is compiled in a Risk Register, which will be reviewed regularly to monitor changes in risk profiles and identify risks that emerge.

At the level of programmes, based on the Risk Register and assumptions identified when developing different theories of change, OHCHR has named four types of risk category: strategic, environmental, operational, and financial. Risk management is monitored within programme performance monitoring, thereby strengthening the link between expected outcomes, results and evaluation.

Having completed its Risk Register, UN Human Rights complies with the requirement of the UN Secretariat, heeding calls from Member States to establish a risk management plan. It enables the Office to anticipate and mitigate new risks and challenges better, and thereby fulfil its mandate more effectively.