

Independent Evaluation Service (IES) | Independent Evaluation and Audit Services (IEAS)

REPORT ON THE EVALUATION FUNCTION

of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

2021 Annual Report



2022–2025 GLOBAL EVALUATION STRATEGY AND CORPORATE EVALUATION PLAN

KEY STRATEGIC AREAS OF WORK

1

Implementing strategic **corporate, regional and country portfolio evaluations**

2

Implementing effective **decentralized evaluation systems**

3

Supporting United Nations and national **stakeholder partnerships** on gender-responsive evaluation

4

Strengthening **evaluation use**

KEY PRIORITIES



Use of evaluation and follow-up of recommendations



Timely and relevant evaluative evidence



Demand for gender-responsive evaluations including through joint and system-wide evaluations initiatives

CORPORATE EVALUATION PLAN 2022-2025

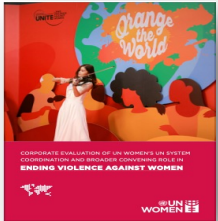
The evaluation function anticipates completing approximately 13 corporate evaluations and 30 regional and country portfolio evaluations.

13 corporate evaluations

30 regional and country portfolio evaluations

FOCUS AREA 1: CORPORATE EVALUATIONS, META-SYNTHESIS AND STUDY

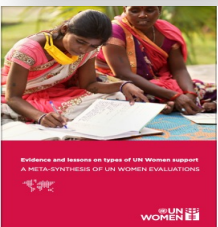
COMPLETED IN 2021



Corporate Evaluation of UN-Women's **UN System Coordination and Broader Convening Role in Ending Violence Against Women**



Corporate Formative Evaluation of UN-Women's **Approach to Innovation**



Meta-synthesis of UN-Women Evaluations: **Evidence and Lessons on Types of UN-Women Support**



Joint Study on **Gender Equality for Health and Well-Being**

INITIATED AND CONDUCTED IN 2021

→ Corporate Evaluation of UN-Women's **Policy Advocacy Work**

→ Corporate Formative Evaluation of UN-Women's Work in the Area of **Climate Change**

→ Corporate Evaluation of UN-Women's Work on **Capacity Development**

FOCUS AREA 2: DECENTRALIZED EVALUATIONS



STRENGTHENING EVALUATION QUALITY MECHANISMS AND INTERNAL CAPACITY BUILDING

Updated the UN-Women Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System (GERAAS) and rolled out the new disability inclusion criteria

Updated the Guide to Conducting Country Portfolio Evaluations (CPE)

Trainings and coaching for M&E focal points and UN-Women staff at the regional and country levels

PERFORMANCE OF THE EVALUATION FUNCTION IN UN-Women

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

Key performance indicator	Description	2018 (%)	2019 (%)	2020 (%)	2021 (%)	Target
Financial resources invested in evaluation function	Evaluation expenditure over UN-Women programme expenditure	2.2	2.0	1.9	1.8	Between 2%-3%
Human resources for monitoring and evaluation	Offices that appointed an M&E focal point or officer	95	98	98	98	100%
Evaluation coverage	At least one evaluation per Strategic Note cycle (2017-2021)	84	86	92	97	100%
Evaluation implementation rate	Percentage of evaluations being implemented (completed and initiated)	90	77	95	97	85%
Quality of evaluation reports	Percentage of evaluation reports rated "Good and above"	88	68	90	98	100%
Management response submission to GATE	Percentage of completed evaluation reports submitted with management response to GATE	97	95	95	97	100%
Implementation of management response	Percentage of management response key actions being implemented	87	85	89	85	80%
Use of evaluations	Percentage of offices that reported using evaluation	86	86	90	94	90%

Overall, progress on the key performance indicators of the UN-Women Evaluation Function has remained steady.

FOCUS AREA 3: UN SYSTEM-WIDE COORDINATION



UNEG

Co-convened the Gender Equality, Disability and Human Rights working group and led the development of guidance for the integration of disability inclusion. Continued to co-chair the UN Evaluation Development Group for Asia and the Pacific (UNEDAP).



UN-SWAP

Continued to serve as the Secretariat of the UN-SWAP evaluation performance indicator & prepared the annual report documenting progress and highlighting best practices for improving gender mainstreaming in evaluation.



17 joint evaluations either jointly managed or supported by UN-Women in 2021; participated in the Evaluation Advisory Group for the UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund (COVID-19 MPTF) and contributed to the COVID-19 Global Evaluation Coalition managed by the OECD. UN-Women contributed to several UNDAF/UNSDCF evaluation processes and delivered training to UN Country Teams (UNCTs) on evaluation.



UN COUNTRY TEAMS

UN-Women delivered training for participants from UNCTs on integrating gender perspectives in UNSDCF evaluations and on the UN-SWAP evaluation performance indicators.

FOCUS AREA 4: NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

EVALGENDER+

UN-Women continued to co-chair EvalGender+, a global partnership for promoting gender-responsive evaluations & launched a new small grants programme to increase use of the gender-responsive evaluation tool, methods and knowledge.

GLOBAL EVALUATION INITIATIVE (GEI)

UN-Women is in the process of joining a multi-stakeholder partnership committed to developing country-owned M&E frameworks and capacities

PARTNERSHIPS AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL AND NATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING

Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs) in WCA region; trainings provided to Tunisia Ministry of Women in AS region; Multi-stakeholder initiative to disseminate the National Evaluation Capacity Index (INEC) in AC region

2022-2023 PROGRAMME OF WORK

STRATEGIC EVALUATIONS AND ACTIVITIES AT THE CORPORATE LEVEL



Corporate evaluation of UN-Women's policy advocacy work

(completed)



Corporate formative evaluation of UN-Women's Work in the Area of Climate Change

(ongoing)



Corporate evaluation of UN-Women's Work on Capacity Development

(ongoing)



Corporate evaluation of UN-Women's support to Women's Economic Empowerment

(initiated)



Corporate evaluation of UN-Women's support to Civil Society

(initiated)



Corporate evaluation of UN-Women's work on gender statistics and data

(planned)



Joint system-wide synthesis of SDG 5 in collaboration with UNEG

(planned)



Corporate evaluation on financing for gender equality

(planned)

DECENTRALIZED EVALUATIONS

- Approx. 15 IES-led CPEs and regional evaluations
- Quality assurance and technical support to other decentralized evaluations
- Internal training and coaching of M&E focal points
- Evaluation systems (public evaluation database, external quality assessment, KPIs)

UN COORDINATION-NATIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

- UNEG
- EvalGender+ and selected regional partnerships
- Joint evaluations/UNSDCF evaluations

EVALUATION USE AND COMMUNICATION

- Leveraging key strategic processes and meetings
- Communications packages and webinars

CONCLUSIONS



Strong uptake of evaluation findings in key strategic and corporate processes

As UN-Women established its Strategic Plan 2022–2025, amid the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a strong uptake of evaluation findings around key strategic and corporate processes, and growing appreciation for evaluative evidence and knowledge.



Continuing progress made on UN-Women Evaluation Function's KPIs

Key performance indicators (KPIs) demonstrate that UN-Women's evaluation function has made significant progress; however, there are opportunities to improve on evaluation resources and follow-up on management actions to address evaluation findings and recommendations, particularly at the country level.



Integration of gender equality perspectives within UN System and beyond

There has been increasing interest and efforts towards system-wide joint evaluation initiatives in the context of joint programme or system-wide goals. UN-Women has proactively led or engaged in various initiatives and will further leverage key multi-stakeholder partnerships at the global, regional and country levels.

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CORPORATE EVALUATION OF UN WOMEN'S POLICY ADVOCACY WORK

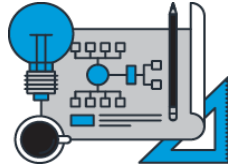
June 2022



KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS



To what extent is UN Women's policy advocacy work **effective at contributing to policy change** and relevant to country needs and global priorities?



To what extent does UN Women have the necessary **organizational, strategic and operational approaches** and capacity in place to efficiently and coherently perform its policy advocacy roles?

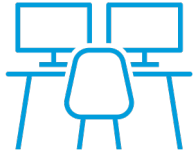


To what extent is UN Women effective at **translating normative policy advocacy successes** at the global level into regional- and country-level action?



How are **human rights, gender equality and inclusion** incorporated into UN Women's policy advocacy work?

DATA COLLECTION METHODS



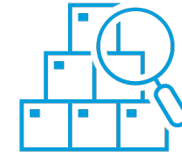
DESK REVIEW

- Desk review and **synthesis**
- **Portfolio analysis** and review of UN Women's management systems, reports and internal assessments



INTERVIEWS and SURVEYS

- **Semi-structured interviews** of UN Women staff and partners
- **2 surveys**: Internal survey of business units (48 responses; response rate of 49%) and survey with partners (71 responses; response rate of 18%); administered in four languages
- **Focus groups** with regional policy advisors & regional programme specialists



CASE STUDIES

- **Global**: UN Women's Progress of the World's Women Series; Key knowledge platforms; Commission on the Status of Women
- **Regional**: Regional care work in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), ERAW programme in the Pacific
- **Country**: Mexico, Burundi, Jordan, Vietnam, Mali, Georgia

143

stakeholders interviewed

5

focus group discussions

25

country portfolio analyses

11

case studies

+350

documents reviewed

2

online surveys

119

survey respondents

CONCLUSIONS

1



UN Women's integrated mandate enables it to have a strong policy advocacy role in advancing gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

However, there is an opportunity for UN Women to define policy advocacy and use the Strategic Plan to develop a coherent approach for planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting of policy advocacy.

2



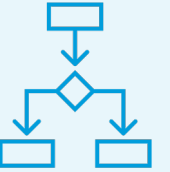
Evidence-based and credible knowledge is central to UN Women's policy advocacy work.

3



Partnerships, a strength of UN Women, are critical to ensuring a multiplier effect, leveraging resources, and having a holistic approach to policy advocacy work.

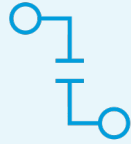
4



There is a need to clarify the organizational architecture for policy advocacy to form better coordination and communication linkages between headquarters and regional and country offices.

CONCLUSIONS

5



UN Women's monitoring and results tracking systems do not adequately capture policy advocacy results and lessons learned.

6



CONCLUSION

Current resources are not always adequate to carry out policy advocacy work to the Entity's full potential and there are capacity gaps in the availability of necessary personnel and expertise.

7



UN Women's policy advocacy work contributes to shaping and promoting government policies and legislation to address gender equality and empowering women. However, it does not always clearly lead to longer-term outcomes for women and girls for a variety of reasons, such as capacity, funding and internal coherence as well as external factors that are beyond UN Women's direct control.

8



UN Women is seen as an advocate for "leave no one behind" but translating this principle into practice continues to be a challenge. The process of implementing "leave no one behind" is often uneven and not systematically planned or monitored.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1



Leverage the Strategic Plan to enable coherent planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting of policy advocacy priorities.

2



Clarify and strengthen the Entity's policy advocacy architecture, including by strengthening the integration of policy advocacy across the organization, and ensuring meaningful participation of all divisions working directly or indirectly on policy advocacy.

3



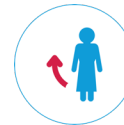
Strengthen data, knowledge generation and knowledge management systems as enablers for policy advocacy work and establish UN Women as a recognized knowledge broker on gender equality in the policy advocacy sphere.

4



Continue to strengthen relationships with national Governments, UN agencies, feminist movements and women's organizations to support policy change and implementation.

5

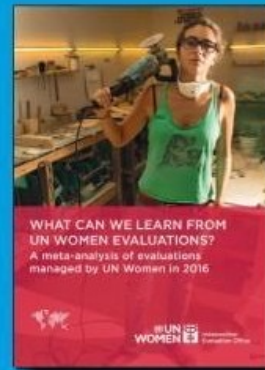


Strategically place policy advocacy specialists across the organization and ensure that regional and country offices have the appropriate level of social and political acumen and adequate capacity in terms of the number of personnel with technical expertise and knowledge of local context on gender issues.

6



Strengthen and improve mechanisms and processes within UN Women by developing guidance tools and best practices to effectively engage groups that are being left behind through policy advocacy work.



THANK YOU