



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

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Evaluation

Report on the evaluation function of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, 2012

Summary

In compliance with the evaluation policy of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the strategic plan 2011-2013, the Evaluation Office submits its annual evaluation report for 2012. The report highlights progress made by the evaluation function in 2012 and includes the finalization of the UN-Women evaluation policy, the planning and use of decentralized evaluations, and the progress achieved in strengthening evaluation capacities. In 2012, UN-Women undertook three independent corporate evaluations on the themes of preventing violence against women and expanding access to services; UN-Women's contribution to increasing women's leadership and participation in peace and security and humanitarian response; and joint programmes on gender equality in the United Nations system. These evaluations are to be completed in 2013. The first two corporate evaluations will be presented to the UN-Women Executive Board at its second regular session of 2013, to be held in September, and the third at the Board's first regular session of 2014, to be held in January. The report also highlights UN-Women's leading role in the harmonization of evaluation reporting through the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. Lastly, it sets out key issues emerging from decentralized evaluations completed in 2012 and steps that UN-Women will take to strengthen its evaluation function. Since the evaluation policy came into affect in January 2013, reporting on progress in the evaluation function in 2012 is measured against the milestones set in the report on the UN-Women evaluation function, 2011 (UNW/2012/8).

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The Executive Board may wish to: (a) take note of the present report and of the programme of work for 2013 proposed by the Evaluation Office; (b) welcome the efforts made by UN-Women and the progress achieved in upgrading the evaluation function; (c) commend the efforts of UN-Women to lead system-wide gender evaluation efforts; (d) request UN-Women to strengthen evaluation capacities and funding for evaluation; (e) request UN-Women to use lessons learned from evaluations for future programming.

I. Introduction

1. The evaluation function in the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) operates under the evaluation policy approved by the Executive Board in 2012. It strengthens the Entity's work and results-based management by contributing to organizational transparency, learning and accountability. Evaluation supports UN-Women in its efforts to produce better results for women by providing the Entity with timely and strategic information on the performance of its policies, programmes and initiatives. The UN-Women Evaluation Office provides leadership and support for the evaluation function throughout the Entity and throughout the United Nations system for gender equality and women's empowerment.

2. In 2012, UN-Women made significant progress in consolidating corporate and decentralized evaluation systems and played a prominent role in United Nations system-wide coordination and knowledge management on gender-responsive evaluation. The present report comprises five sections. Section II describes the evaluation function within UN-Women and refers to the recently approved evaluation policy. Section III focuses on key elements contributing to United Nations system-wide coordination of evaluation on gender equality and the empowerment of women. Section IV details actions taken to support national and regional evaluation, highlighting UN-Women's contribution to the United Nations Evaluation Group and EvalPartners, a new worldwide evaluation collaboration initiative. Section V describes key findings from 2012 decentralized evaluations and key issues emerging from ongoing corporate evaluations, such as efforts to build national ownership in evaluation processes.

3. Section VI sets out the work programme of the Evaluation Office for 2013. Annex I to the report contains a list of decentralized evaluations completed in 2012 and annex II contains evaluation activities conducted by the Fund for Gender Equality and the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women.

II. UN-Women evaluation function

4. The UN-Women evaluation policy establishes a framework to assess the Entity's performance in the pursuit of gender equality and the empowerment of women.¹

5. In order to promote coherence throughout the United Nations system and focus on gender equality results, the General Assembly, in its resolution 67/226, broadened the evaluation mandate of UN-Women to include a United Nations system-wide role.

6. UN-Women has strengthened its evaluation capacities, evaluation planning and use in line with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, the norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group, and the proposed revision to financial regulations and rules for UN-Women (UNW/2012/6).

¹ The evaluation policy is consistent with General Assembly resolutions 64/289 and 62/208 and is based on the mandates referred to in resolution 64/289, in which the Assembly established UN-Women, and in resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.

A. UN-Women evaluation policy

7. The evaluation policy governs the Entity's independent evaluation function and also applies to funds administered and initiatives supported by UN-Women. It is tailored to the unique mandate of UN-Women to conduct evaluations responsive to gender equality and women's rights and to support coordination, coherence and accountability with respect to gender equality and the empowerment of women in the United Nations system, specifically through its mandate to advocate for and monitor evaluative evidence on gender equality through the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

8. The Executive Board plays a critical role in supporting and guiding the evaluation function. Through the annual evaluation report, UN-Women informs the Executive Board of corporate evaluation plans, findings from corporate evaluations and the corresponding management responses. The Executive Board may also request corporate evaluation based on the eight parameters² defined in the evaluation policy, including joint evaluations with other United Nations agencies.

9. The Commission on the Status of Women and other intergovernmental bodies are able to draw upon findings, recommendations and lessons learned from UN-Women evaluations in the promulgation of policies.

10. The evaluation policy also defines the role and responsibilities of the independent Evaluation Office as the custodian of the UN-Women evaluation function accountable for independent corporate evaluations. The Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director is accountable for UN-Women results and is the main champion of evaluation within the Entity and ensuring an enabling environment for evaluation. Through the Deputy Executive Directors, the head of the Entity is ultimately accountable for the implementation of all decentralized monitoring, evaluation and research plans and the utilization of evaluation findings, recommendations and lessons learned through management responses and action plans.

B. Structure of the evaluation function and its human and financial resources

11. The Evaluation Office is the custodian of the UN-Women evaluation function, with specialized staff at Headquarters and at the regional level. Reporting directly to the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director, the Evaluation Office is both impartial and independent. In 2012, it comprised eight professionals and two support staff members. Three of the professional positions were based in the field (Bangkok, Nairobi and Panama). Four new positions were established in 2012, including a regional evaluation specialist for Arab States. Recruitment will be finalized in 2013.

12. Four regional evaluation specialists provide support at the regional and country levels. They are responsible for supporting strategic evaluation, regional

² The eight parameters are: relevance of the subject; risk associated with the intervention; significant investment; demands for accountability from stakeholders; potential for replication and scaling-up; potential for joint evaluation or United Nations Development Assistance Framework evaluation; feasibility for implementing evaluation; and knowledge gap.

evaluation capacity development, and quality assurance of decentralized evaluations. They also support the development of monitoring, evaluation and research plans at the country level.

13. Total UN-Women expenditure on evaluation in 2012, shown in table I below, depicts a marked increase in expenditure from 2011. This reflects an increase in completed evaluations and the recruitment of additional staff.

Table I
Expenditure on evaluation by year

(United States dollars)

	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>
Core programme	988 632	1 071 783
Biennial support budget	270 200	602 983
Cost-sharing resources under the initiative “Global knowledge management — capacity development through evaluation practice”	533 667	805 863
Decentralized expenditure ^a	687 553	1 277 768
Total	2 480 052	3 758 397

^a Refers only to expenditure on evaluation studies.

C. Corporate and decentralized evaluations

14. UN-Women evaluations cover the operational work of UN-Women at the global, regional and country levels, its normative support work and its coordination role within the United Nations system. UN-Women evaluations fall into two main categories, namely, corporate and decentralized.

Corporate evaluations

15. Corporate evaluations in UN-Women are independent assessments undertaken by the Evaluation Office with the support of external evaluators. They are carried out in consultation with national Governments and other stakeholders to ensure the validity of evidence and greater ownership of development results.

16. In 2012, the evaluation commitments set out in the programme of work approved by the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director and endorsed by the Executive Board were to launch three corporate evaluations on the strategic priorities of UN-Women, to be finalized in 2013. The corporate evaluations are:

- (a) Evaluation of UN-Women’s contribution to preventing violence against women and expanding access to services;
- (b) Evaluation of UN-Women’s contribution to increasing women’s leadership and participation in peace and security and humanitarian response;
- (c) Joint evaluation on joint programmes on gender equality in the United Nations system.

17. Emerging process issues from these evaluations are set out in section V below, and full findings from the first two evaluations will be presented to the Executive Board in a report submitted at its second regular session of 2013. The third evaluation will be submitted for discussion by the Board at its first regular session of 2014.

Decentralized evaluations

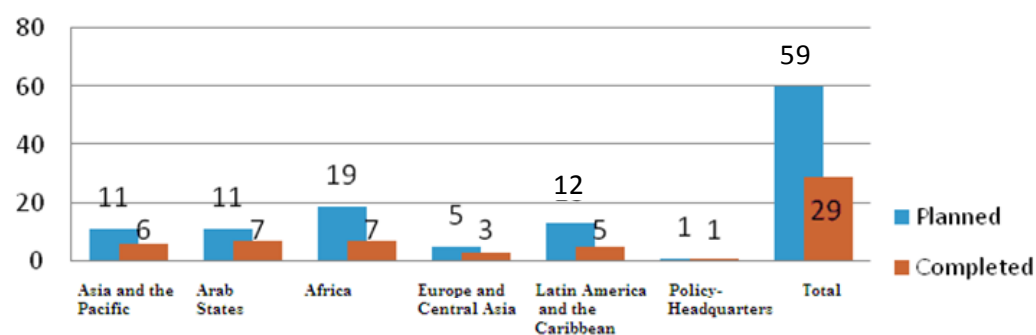
18. Decentralized evaluations assess important issues at the programmatic level and play a crucial role in tracking progress and building a results-based management culture. They are conducted by independent external evaluators and managed by programmatic offices in consultation with national stakeholders and United Nations agencies. While challenges in evaluation planning remain, the increase in completed evaluations in 2012 shows promising improvements in evaluation planning across UN-Women (see figure I below).

19. UN-Women plans and budgets for evaluations through the biannual corporate evaluation plan and biannual decentralized integrated monitoring, evaluation and research plans. In 2012, country and regional offices developed 55 plans, showing a commitment to planning for monitoring, evaluation and research activities.

20. As at March 2013, 29 decentralized evaluations had been completed. The greatest coverage was in Africa (seven) and in Arab States (seven), followed by Asia and the Pacific (six), Latin America and the Caribbean (five), Europe and Central Asia (three), and one evaluation at the Headquarters level, led by the Policy Division. Eleven of the total number of decentralized evaluations were joint evaluations.³ The rate of completion of planned evaluations (59) is 49.1 per cent, compared with the 2011 completion rate of 40 per cent.

Figure I

Planned versus completed evaluations in 2012, by geographic area



21. The data on decentralized evaluations for 2012 also show increased thematic coverage of violence against women (six), cross-cutting issues (six), including joint evaluation on gender equality and leadership and governance (six), followed by national planning and budgeting (four), economic empowerment (four) and peace and security (three).

³ Out of 11 joint evaluations, 6 are joint evaluations with the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund.

D. Evaluation capacity development and quality assurance

22. The Evaluation Office continued to strengthen internal evaluation and to build a culture that promotes evaluation use, learning and accountability. In 2012, it undertook a monitoring and evaluation needs survey to assess current capacities and knowledge of monitoring and evaluation and results-based management among UN-Women staff. The Evaluation Office also held training courses to improve internal evaluation capacity. Lastly, it revised its criteria for assessing reports to improve the quality and credibility of decentralized and corporate evaluations, based on a meta-evaluation completed in 2012.

Results of the monitoring and evaluation needs assessment survey

23. The survey showed that only 30 per cent of respondents were aware of the UN-Women online guide entitled “A Manager’s Guide to Gender Equality and Human-Rights-Responsive Evaluation” and that 60 per cent of staff had never participated in evaluation training. Major challenges identified by respondents include: (a) limited staff knowledge and expertise on monitoring and evaluation; (b) limited staff time for monitoring and evaluation; and (c) lack of clarity on responsibilities and processes.

24. In the case of results-based management, improvements should focus on understanding the components of results chains and monitoring principles and tools. In respect of strengthening evaluation capacities, respondents pointed to the need for evaluations to be gender-responsive and broadly disseminated.

25. Overall, the survey results demonstrated the need to improve and scale up monitoring and evaluation expertise among UN-Women staff and to strengthen internal dissemination. This is currently being addressed through the design of a gender-equality- and human-rights-sensitive evaluation training programme. Membership in the global evaluation network managed by the Evaluation Office increased from 100 members in 2011 to 124 in 2012.

Strengthening internal evaluation capacities

26. Expert support through regional evaluation specialists, training courses and technical resources was consolidated throughout 2012 to enhance internal evaluation capacities.

27. Eighteen evaluation training courses, including results-based management workshops, inter-agency training courses and webinars were held in 2012, with the active participation of over 609 UN-Women staff and partners. This is more than a 100 per cent increase in participants, compared with 2011. Two inter-agency training courses in the Pacific region and in South-East Asia and South Asia had more than 70 participants, and an evaluation dissemination workshop in South Asia was attended by more than 90 participants from different sectors across the region. The Africa and Latin America and Caribbean regions also benefited from numerous training courses on integrating human rights and gender equality dimensions into evaluation. Training courses in Arab States and Europe and Central Asia are planned as soon as regional evaluation specialists are recruited.

Table II
Partners and UN-Women staff trained in evaluation and results-based management in 2012

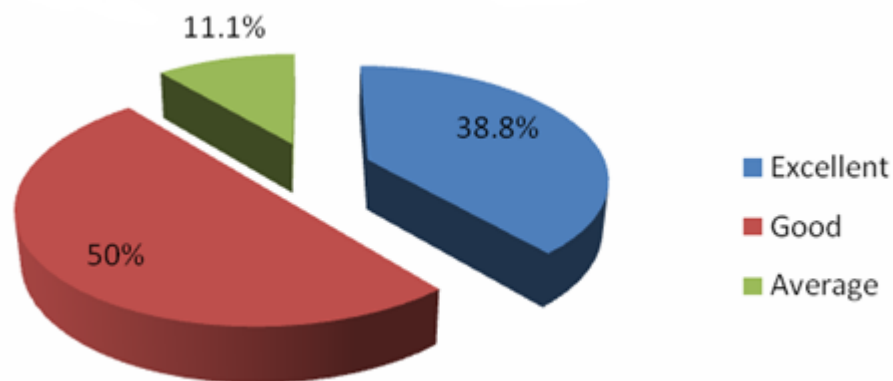
Persons trained	Region					Total
	Africa	Latin America and the Caribbean	Arab States	Asia and the Pacific	Europe and Central Asia	
UN-Women staff and partners	90	95	0	393	31	609

28. In 2012, the gender and evaluation consultant roster⁴ was launched to identify experts in evaluation and gender equality for corporate and decentralized evaluations. The roster is available in the six official languages of the United Nations and has received over 300 applications from across the world. This important resource will help to support the unique evaluation mandate of UN-Women.

Quality of evaluation reports: results from the meta-evaluation

29. The meta-evaluation conducted in March 2013 by an external consultant assessed the quality of decentralized evaluations. Results indicated that out of 18 reports scored,⁵ 39 per cent (seven reports) were “excellent”, 50 per cent (nine reports) were “good” and 11 per cent (two reports) were “average” (see figure II below). No evaluation reports were assessed as “weak” or “very weak”.

Figure II
Quality of UN-Women evaluation reports



30. This is a noteworthy change from the results of the 2011 meta-analysis. The report on the UN-Women evaluation function, 2011 (UNW/2012/8) indicated that out of 15 evaluation reports, 3 were rated as excellent, 5 as very good, 1 as good, 2 as average, 1 as weak and 3 as very weak.

⁴ Available from <https://evaluationroster.unwomen.org/>.

⁵ Out of 29 completed evaluations, 11 were joint evaluations and thus were not scored in the internal UN-Women quality assessment exercise.

E. Use of evaluation, disclosure and dissemination for improved performance

31. In compliance with the evaluation policy and based on audit recommendations, UN-Women developed the global accountability and tracking of evaluations system to track the use of evaluation, ensuring that knowledge gained from evaluations becomes an integral part of the UN-Women organizational learning process. Evaluation management responses are key components of the system that provide a mechanism for accountability and enable UN-Women to improve performance and the quality of its programmes and strategies. The system will be fully implemented in 2013.

32. Pursuant to the UN-Women strategic plan, all completed evaluations must include a management response. During the 2012 reporting period, 93 per cent of all completed decentralized evaluations (26 out of 29) included a management response, an increase from 62 per cent in 2011.⁶

33. The Evaluation Office conducted an analysis to identify the most recurrent themes in evaluation recommendations. Over one third of the recommendations (38 per cent) identified the need for UN-Women to take a more strategic approach and prioritize its work.

34. Other recurrent themes included the need for a more strategic identification of partnerships (14 per cent), the need for strengthened capacity-building efforts by partners (12 per cent), and the need for enhanced results-based management, including monitoring and evaluation (10 per cent).

35. Management responses included commitments for UN-Women to undertake 431 actions towards implementing the recommendations of evaluations. The system shows that 32 per cent of the actions have been reported as completed, 10 per cent ongoing, 27 per cent initiated, 17 per cent not initiated, and 15 per cent overdue, indicating good progress on the use of the results derived from the evaluations.

III. System-wide coordination on evaluation on gender equality and the empowerment of women

36. The General Assembly established UN-Women to strengthen United Nations system efforts in respect of gender equality and the empowerment of women. UN-Women plays a leading role in system-wide coordination and accountability in this area of work. In its resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, the Assembly called upon UN-Women to strengthen its role, specifically through evaluation.

⁶ One inter-agency evaluation does not have a management response. The joint evaluation of two years of implementation of the National Strategy on Gender-Based Violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was managed by UN-Women on behalf of other United Nations agencies. Since no UN-Women activities were evaluated, there will be no management response from UN-Women.

A. Promoting gender equality through the United Nations Evaluation Group

37. Continued leadership and engagement in the United Nations Evaluation Group is a critical way of contributing to United Nations coordination and accountability on gender equality. In 2012, UN-Women played a leading role in the Evaluation Group, continuing the integration of gender equality and human rights dimensions into substantive guidance on evaluation. The Entity played a pivotal role in the following areas:

(a) The Chief of the Evaluation Office chaired the United Nations Evaluation Group in 2012; contributed to the independent evaluation of the One United Nations initiative as a member of the management group; provided advice for the completion of the comprehensive review of the existing institutional framework for the system-wide evaluation of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, as mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/289; and supported Member State deliberations on evaluation during the quadrennial comprehensive policy review;

(b) In close partnership with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and nine other United Nations agencies, UN-Women co-led the completion of comprehensive guidance for the United Nations system to showcase methodologies to address gender equality and human rights dimensions in evaluation;

(c) UN-Women provided co-leadership for national evaluation capacity development by launching EvalPartners and ensuring that a gender perspective was mainstreamed in the initiatives;

(d) UN-Women ensured that all guidance includes reference to human-rights and gender-equality-responsive evaluation approaches in respect of how to conduct evaluation of normative work and how to conduct joint evaluations and impact evaluations.

B. Harmonizing reporting on gender equality throughout United Nations evaluation and promoting joint evaluations

Evaluation within the System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

38. UN-Women led the development of the System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women as an accountability framework to be fully implemented by the United Nations development system. Approved by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, the System-wide Action Plan requires that evaluations conducted by United Nations agencies meet the gender-related norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group and demonstrate the application of guidance on the integration of a gender perspective in evaluation.

39. The UN-Women Evaluation Office took an active role in developing an evaluation scorecard and in aligning and harmonizing system-wide reporting against the evaluation performance indicators. This was endorsed by the heads of evaluation

of all United Nations organizations, who constitute the United Nations Evaluation Group, in 2013.

Joint evaluation

40. Joint evaluation is defined as an evaluation that is co-commissioned and managed by UN-Women together with at least one other organization. In compliance with UN-Women's mandate of promoting United Nations system coordination and joint evaluation, the Entity has demonstrated its commitment by (a) actively participating in 11 out of 29 joint decentralized evaluations exercises conducted in 2012; and (b) leading one corporate joint evaluation on joint gender programmes with four United Nations entities and the Governments of Spain and Norway. The increased prevalence of joint evaluations goes hand in hand with increased joint programmes and multi-stakeholder partnerships.

C. Gender equality evaluation portal: evidence-based knowledge on the Internet

41. The gender equality evaluation portal, officially launched at the end of 2012, was established in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2011/6 and in line with the overall mandate of UN-Women to serve as a centre of knowledge on initiatives that promote gender equality and the empowerment of women.⁷ The portal serves as a tool to strengthen and promote the exchange of evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations to inform learning and improve policy design and programming in the area of gender equality.

42. At the end of 2012, the database contained 291 reports, the majority of which are from United Nations system entities (see figure III below). The evaluations focus on all regions of the world, with most emanating from Asia and the Pacific. Some evaluations take a global perspective (see table III below). The portal also enables documents to be classified according to the critical areas of concern identified in the Beijing Platform for Action. The majority of reports were classified as being related to area 8, institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women (107 reports), followed by area 6, women and the economy (53 reports).

⁷ See <http://genderevaluation.unwomen.org/Reports/Default.aspx>.

Figure III
Gender equality evaluations in the portal by type of organization

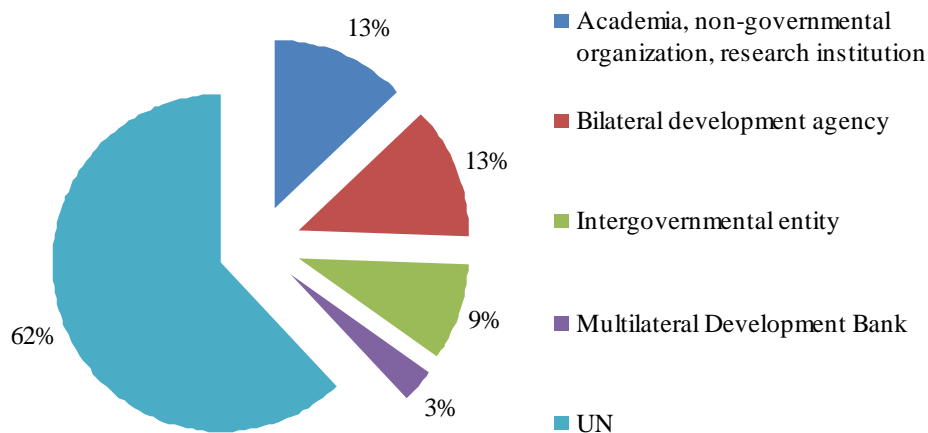


Table III
Gender equality evaluations by region, end of 2012

<i>Region</i>	<i>Evaluations</i>
Africa	44
Americas and the Caribbean	28
Arab States	24
Asia and the Pacific	77
Europe and Central Asia	31
Cross-regional	12
Global	75
Total	291

IV. Supporting national and regional evaluation capacity

43. Driven by principles of national ownership and the development of national capacities, UN-Women approached evaluation capacity development through partnerships and networks with evaluation associations, regional networks, think tank organizations, research institutions and United Nations agencies to effectively promote gender equality approaches to evaluation. Among its efforts in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Evaluation Office continued to partner with the Latin America and Caribbean Regional Monitoring, Evaluation and Systematization Network working group to facilitate the exchange of knowledge on evaluations on human rights and gender equality in Latin America. In Africa, the partnership with the African Gender and Development Evaluators Network resulted in training

courses for anglophones and francophones on human rights and gender-responsive evaluation in Burkina Faso, Ghana and Kenya and at the EvalPartners forum in Thailand. As a result, the African Gender and Development Evaluators Network increased its membership by 43 new members. The Network currently comprises 114 members from 26 African anglophone and francophone countries. The Network also produced the French version of the human rights and gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation toolkit.

44. At the global level, UN-Women has engaged as a core partner in EvalPartners, an innovative partnership of voluntary organizations for professional evaluation, United Nations entities and bilateral donor agencies, designed to strengthen the capacities of civil society organizations. The objective of EvalPartners is to enhance the capacities of voluntary organizations for professional evaluation to engage strategically in national evaluation processes, contributing to improved country-led evaluation systems and policies that are equity-focused and gender equality responsive.

45. UN-Women successfully advocated for the strategic placement of gender equality in the work priorities of EvalPartners, resulting in the establishment of a task force to coordinate these efforts, which will be co-chaired by UN-Women. The EvalPartners' Chiang Mai Declaration⁸ enshrines the central values of equity, gender equality and social justice as core principles for evaluation.

V. Key findings and lessons learned from evaluations

46. This section summarizes key findings and lessons learned from corporate evaluation processes conducted in 2012 and sets out key findings from completed decentralized evaluations. Given the limited number of evaluations, the findings should be considered as examples and not representative of the totality of the work carried out by UN-Women. A list of the decentralized evaluations is contained in annex I.

A. Corporate evaluations

47. As noted in Section I above, the three corporate evaluations undertaken in 2012 were not completed at the time the present report was drafted. Therefore, key emerging issues and lessons learned from the conduct of the evaluations are highlighted below. The Evaluation Office will present the corporate evaluation findings for consideration by the Executive Board at its second regular session of 2013 and its first regular session of 2014.

Joint evaluation on joint programmes on gender equality in the United Nations system

48. As described in Section III above, UN-Women led the joint evaluation of joint programmes on gender equality in the United Nations system, a collaborative effort with the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the Millennium Development Goals

⁸ Available from http://mymande.org/sites/default/files/Declaration_evalpartners_English.pdf.

Fund and the Governments of Spain and Norway. The evaluation focused on country-level joint programmes on gender equality; a final synthesis evaluation report will be issued in October 2013.⁹

49. The established management structure, political will and prioritization among partners were key enabling factors for the evaluation. An independent external evaluation team conducted the evaluation, managed by a joint evaluation management group composed of the evaluation offices of the partners. A steering committee (composed of senior managers) and headquarters and national reference groups provided input and feedback into the evaluation process and support for the use of the findings.

50. A joint management response is expected to be presented at the Executive Board's second regular session of 2013. The joint evaluation of joint programmes on gender equality in the United Nations system is an important step forward in inter-agency collaboration.

Enhanced engagement at the national level in corporate evaluations

51. One of the key priorities of UN-Women's evaluation function is to ensure full ownership and use of evaluation findings at the country level. In 2012, all corporate evaluations established national reference groups for country case studies to ensure that national stakeholders were actively participating in the evaluations:

(a) The corporate thematic evaluation on the contribution of UN-Women to preventing violence against women and expanding access to services included seven country case studies (Brazil, Grenada, Guatemala, Jamaica, India, Morocco and Mozambique);

(b) The corporate thematic evaluation on the contribution of UN-Women to increasing women's leadership and participation in peace and security and humanitarian response included five country case studies (Afghanistan, Colombia, Haiti, Kosovo¹⁰ and Liberia);

(c) The joint evaluation of joint programmes on gender equality in the United Nations system included five country/area case studies (Albania, Kenya, Liberia, Nicaragua and the State of Palestine).

52. Additionally, Evaluation Office staff and consultants supporting the evaluation management of corporate evaluations joined the independent external evaluation teams on several country visits. Their engagement resulted in an increased number of stakeholders consulted, a better understanding of key contextual information, and enhanced quality assurance.

53. Although challenges were encountered in securing the active participation of the national reference groups, lessons were learned from the country visits, including that such visits enhance consultation with government, civil society and other stakeholders in view of promoting national ownership.

⁹ Additional information on the evaluation, including the terms of reference, is available from <http://www.unwomen.org/about-us/evaluation/ongoing-strategic-evaluations/>.

¹⁰ References to Kosovo shall be understood in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

Promoting application of the theory-of-change approach

54. Challenges in articulating a theory of change for UN-Women programming efforts were encountered during the corporate evaluations undertaken in 2012. The theory-of-change approach is a powerful tool for supporting results-based management, since it makes explicit assumptions about how a programme is supposed to work and create social change, through the articulation of a causal chain of results between resources and objectives and medium-term and long-term goals.

55. The theory-driven approach creates a shared understanding among stakeholders on how a programme ought to be working. Utilizing key UN-Women strategic documents as a starting point, the evaluation teams reconstructed the theories of change in collaboration with UN-Women staff at both the corporate and country levels in an effort to explicitly identify how interventions contribute to intended results.

Consolidating systematic processes for the storage, tracking and reporting of UN-Women programme and project information

56. Corporate evaluations undertook comprehensive desk studies and portfolio analyses to determine the universe, characteristics and trends of UN-Women initiatives in the areas of ending violence against women, peace and security, and joint gender programmes. These studies identified the lack of systematic processes for the storage, tracking and reporting of UN-Women programmes and projects as a key challenge.

57. For example, the financial information system, Automatically Tuned Linear Algebra Software (ATLAS), was oftentimes incomplete and, in many cases, field offices could not provide sufficient supplemental documentation. Also, in a number of regional programmes and projects, the available documentation did not provide any information on the specific budget allocations, interventions or results aimed for (or achieved) in each of the countries involved in the initiative. The corporate evaluations made a substantive contribution to systematizing programmatic information under the areas of analysis. However, the evidence points to the need for UN-Women to prioritize the development of a corporate systematization of programme and project information and comprehensive monitoring and reporting system. The development of such a system will support more robust evaluation information.

B. Contributing to development results on gender equality: findings and conclusions from UN-Women decentralized evaluations

Ensuring national ownership

58. The findings and conclusions with respect to ensuring national ownership are:

(a) Lesson learned

For UN-Women to ensure national ownership, efforts must be grounded in the national context, represent the viewpoints of a broad cross-section of society, and be based on participatory and nationally driven processes;

(b) Positive findings

(i) The work of UN-Women was found to be consistently aligned with the national cultural and socioeconomic context and with the national and global priorities of Member States. For example, the evaluation of the programme on building capacities for gender equality in governance and protection of women's rights in the Sudan found UN-Women to be responsive to the changing political environment and country needs of the Sudan, as in 2010, it responded to the first multiparty elections in 20 years by developing election and referendum projects;

(ii) Evaluations identified examples of how UN-Women has effectively engaged civil society, vulnerable populations such as indigenous persons and women affected with HIV/AIDs, and government, to ensure a nationally driven approach. For example, the evaluation of the programme on livelihood protection and sustainable empowerment of vulnerable, rural and refugee communities in the Jordan Valley (occupied Palestinian territory) identified the use of participatory and local empowerment techniques. This approach began at the design stage through the involvement of stakeholders in the identification of needs and was institutionalized through the programme's management structure, the National Advisory Forum;

(c) Challenges

(i) Several evaluations identified challenges to ensuring ownership from some stakeholders seen as key for moving the agenda forward. For example, two evaluations of subregional efforts on ending violence against women undertaken in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and in the East and Horn of Africa subregion found that although the programmes were aligned with national priorities and closely linked to national development planning processes, there was limited engagement of national Government institutions;

(ii) While the evaluation of the programme on women's economic empowerment through increasing employability in the Republic of Moldova achieved a high level of ownership by the Prime Minister's Office, the level of ownership at operational levels, such as the ministerial level and civil society, was found to be insufficient for a nationally driven process.

Raising awareness through advocacy is on the right track

59. The findings and conclusions with respect to raising awareness through advocacy are:

Positive findings

(i) Several evaluations referenced the ability of UN-Women to successfully create an enabling environment for the institutionalization of gender equality commitments. The thematic evaluation of projects to end violence against women in the ECOWAS region found that awareness-raising activities such as campaigns, dissemination and sensitization activities contributed to heightened social awareness of issues, rights and legal provisions relating to violence against women;

(ii) Similarly, the gender-responsive budgeting programme in India contributed to increased awareness and understanding of such budgeting, resulting in its heightened significance within the country;

(iii) The evaluation of the programme on advancing the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security implemented in the Western Balkans found that advocacy efforts were an important aspect of UN-Women's work in the subregion. For example, UN-Women contributed to the establishment and support of civil society organizations, such as the Regional Women's Lobby for Peace, Security and Justice in South-East Europe, which undertook political analysis and advocacy to increase women's participation in and influence on political decision-making, thus contributing to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Strengthening the capacity of civil society has been effective, but increased sustainability is desirable

60. The findings and conclusions with respect to strengthening the capacity of civil society are:

(a) Positive findings

(i) Most evaluation reports point to the efforts by UN-Women to strengthen civil society organizations as a unique and effective way to achieve the goals of gender equality and women's empowerment. For example, the evaluation of a subregional programme involving Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama and Peru to strengthen existing processes of local, national and international indigenous women resulted in the strengthening of organizations working to promote the rights of indigenous women;

(ii) In Kenya, the evaluation of a joint programme on gender equality and women's empowerment reported that UN-Women, in partnership with the International Labour Organization, facilitated the training of 8,000 civil service economists and planners, including training of trainers in women's entrepreneurship development;

(b) Challenges

(i) Some evaluations identified challenges to ensuring the sustainability of efforts to strengthen civil society partners. For example, the evaluation of the Positive Women Network in India found that in the Network's early years, capacity development efforts were fundamental to its strengthening and expansion and enabled the Network to contribute to improved HIV/AIDS services in India. The evaluation notes that the Network requires continued technical support from UN-Women to further its commitment to combating HIV/AIDS;

(ii) The evaluation of the truth, justice and reparation programme in Colombia affirmed UN-Women's strength in partnering with civil society and the Colombian National Commission for Reparation and Reconciliation, but civil society partners expressed concern about the sustainability of those efforts.

Room for improvement in strengthening United Nations system coherence and coordination in gender equality and women's empowerment

61. The findings and conclusions with respect to strengthening United Nations system coherence and coordination are:

(a) Lesson learned

The evaluation reports acknowledge UN-Women's expertise and ability to support other United Nations entities and to harmonize efforts in the area of gender equality. UN-Women has worked well through coordination mechanisms, particularly the joint programmes on gender equality;

(b) Positive findings

Under the leadership of UN-Women, the joint programme in Uganda has become more efficient, organized and productive, creating an enabling environment for UN-Women and partners to work on violence against women. In Kenya, the evaluation of the joint programme on gender equality revealed that UN-Women's coordination role was comprehensive and coherent with United Nations support to national gender equality initiatives;

(c) Challenges

(i) Some evaluations noted room for improvement in terms of UN-Women's coordination among United Nations partners. Joint programmes were seen as a means for enhancing coherence, but were still faced with challenges regarding communication and duplication of work. For example, in Timor-Leste, the joint programme led to increased visibility in the area of gender equality, but the evaluation identified the need for greater coherence between the joint programme coordination and the United Nations country team;

(ii) UN-Women should ensure coherence and coordination of gender equality in all programming efforts. The truth, justice and reparation programme in Colombia made significant progress with respect to the harmonization of United Nations system programming processes for work on gender equality and women's empowerment, but coordination at the operational level needs to be strengthened to ensure complementarity with respect to institutional mandates;

(iii) The regional programme on gender equality in political governance, implemented in the Pacific region, had not developed a strategy or procedures to systemize collaborative engagements with partners, resulting in lost synergies and the duplication of efforts;

(iv) The evaluation identified development partners delivering training programmes at the national level to women already in leadership and existing coordination mechanisms at both the regional and national levels that were not being utilized. These exemplify the need for UN-Women to clarify strategies for coordination at all levels.

UN-Women should strengthen results-based management and operations

62. Across all evaluations, institutional weaknesses were identified in the areas of adequate theoretical results-based frameworks, comprehensive baseline information, and robust management tools to monitor and track changes in progress. Without

such key planning and monitoring instruments, evaluations are unlikely to provide strong evidence.

63. Weaknesses in the efficiency of UN-Women operations were identified, such as delays in the start-up phase of projects and in the approval and transfer of funds to partners, resulting in subsequent project implementation delays. However, six evaluations showed UN-Women's ability to deliver in a timely and cost-effective manner.

64. Overall, the capacity of UN-Women staff to manage and implement were reported as competent, but staff shortages and vacancies were noted. Some evaluations recommended that UN-Women plan more strategically in order to prioritize efforts, taking into consideration both internal and external capacity and resource constraints.

VI. Programme of work of the Evaluation Office for 2013

65. The programme of work of the Evaluation Office will focus on the following four areas:

(a) Corporate evaluations

UN-Women will evaluate the strategic areas of work to contribute to learning, decision-making and accountability concerning the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the Entity's work. It will conduct three corporate evaluations: (a) meta-evaluation of United Nations evaluations on gender equality; (b) assessment of country annual workplans; (c) thematic evaluation on women's economic empowerment. It will continue to strengthen the use of evaluation and follow-up on evaluation recommendations by implementing the global accountability and tracking of evaluations system and rolling out the implementation plan of the Evaluation Policy;

(b) Decentralized evaluations, together with internal capacity-building

UN-Women will support decentralized evaluations by promoting the implementation of the Evaluation Policy and the use of evaluation guidelines, providing quality assurance for evaluation design, and improving evaluation planning through regional evaluation specialists. The internal evaluation capacities will be strengthened through the roll-out of an evaluation capacity-building programme with the UN-Women research and training centre; the maintenance of an evaluation roster of experts with gender and human rights expertise; and systemic information-sharing on innovative evaluation methods;

(c) Leading the system-wide coordination on evaluation in gender equality and the empowerment of women

The Evaluation Office will consolidate its approach and will continue to assume its leading role in the system-wide coordination on evaluation in gender equality and the empowerment of women. It will play an active role in the United Nations Evaluation Group to ensure the integration of gender equality and will promote the use of its technical guidance on gender equality, including use of the system-wide action plan evaluation performance

indicators. It will maintain and further develop the gender equality evaluation portal and will promote meta-evaluations on gender equality;

(d) Strategic partnerships for national evaluation capacity development

UN-Women will promote the inclusion of gender equality and a women's rights perspective in national evaluation capacity development by developing partnerships with United Nations agencies and building on such existing innovative initiatives as EvalPartners.

Annex I**Completed decentralized evaluations**

<i>Region</i>	<i>Title of evaluation</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Evaluation type</i>	<i>Report quality^a</i>
Africa				
	Kenya human rights programme evaluation report	Kenya	Final	Good
	Evaluation of the joint programme on gender equality and women's empowerment	Kenya	Midterm	Good
	Evaluation of UN-Women action to end violence against women in the East and Horn of Africa subregion	Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania	Thematic	Good
	Evaluation of the contribution of Italian-funded projects to ending violence against women and promoting gender equality in ECOWAS Member States through the UN-Women West Africa Subregional Office with case studies in Mali and Sierra Leone	Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone	Final	Good
	Evaluation of the programme on building capacities for gender equality in governance and protection of women's rights in the Sudan	Sudan	Final	Good
	Joint evaluation: UN-Women/UNDP support to women's political participation in sub-Saharan Africa	Burundi, Nigeria, South Africa, South Sudan	Final	Not rated
	Joint evaluation of two years of implementation of the National Strategy on Gender-based Violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Final	Not rated

<i>Region</i>	<i>Title of evaluation</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Evaluation type</i>	<i>Report quality^a</i>
Arab States	Evaluation of the socially responsible women-run school canteens project	Occupied Palestinian territory	Final	Good
	Evaluation of the establishment, rehabilitation and activation of eight women's centres in the Gaza Strip and West Bank	Occupied Palestinian territory	Final	Average
	Evaluation of the Millennium Development Goals Fund joint programme on gender equality and women's empowerment in the occupied Palestinian territory	Occupied Palestinian territory	Final	Not rated
	Evaluation of the Millennium Development Goals Fund joint programme for culture and development	Occupied Palestinian territory	Final	Not rated
	Evaluation of the programme on livelihood protection and sustainable empowerment of vulnerable, rural and refugee communities in the Jordan Valley	Jordan	Midterm	Not rated
	Evaluation of the joint programme on cultural heritage and creative industries as a vehicle for development in Morocco, 2008-2012	Morocco	Final	Not rated
	Evaluation of the multisectoral programme on the fight against gender-based violence through the empowerment of women and girls in Morocco	Morocco	Final	Not rated

<i>Region</i>	<i>Title of evaluation</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Evaluation type</i>	<i>Report quality^a</i>
Asia and the Pacific				
	Evaluation of the gender equality and political governance project	Fiji	Final	Excellent
	Evaluation of UN-Women's work on gender-responsive budgeting in India	India	Final	Excellent
	Evaluation of UN-Women support to the Positive Women Network on HIV and AIDS projects in India	India	Final	Excellent
	Evaluation of the programme to support gender equality and women's rights in Timor-Leste	Timor-Leste	Final	Not rated
	Evaluation of the China Gender Facility for Research and Advocacy	China	Midterm	Excellent
	Evaluation of the project "Partnership for equality and capacity enhancement (PEACE): towards implementation of Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008)"	Nepal	Final	Good
Europe and Central Asia				
	Evaluation of the UN-Women programme on women's economic empowerment through increasing employability in the Republic of Moldova	Republic of Moldova	Midterm	Excellent
	Evaluation of the programme on advancing implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security in the Western Balkans	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, ^b Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Midterm	Good
	Evaluation of the joint integrated local development programme	Republic of Moldova	Midterm	Not rated

<i>Region</i>	<i>Title of evaluation</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Evaluation type</i>	<i>Report quality^a</i>
Latin America and the Caribbean				
	Midterm evaluation of the programme on truth, justice and reparation for women survivors in Colombia	Colombia	Midterm	Excellent
	Final evaluation of the inter-agency programme on the promotion of gender and ethnic-racial equality	Brazil	Final	Not rated
	Evaluation of the United Nations Volunteers programme component of the gender-responsive budgeting and citizenship programme: a contribution to democratic governance and gender equality in Latin America	Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Ecuador	Final	Not rated
	Evaluation of the indigenous regional programme “Working against ethnic-racial and gender discrimination: programme for the effective implementation of Latin American indigenous women’s rights”	Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Peru	Final	Excellent
	Project evaluation of safe cities free of violence for women and girls, Quito	Ecuador	Final	Average
Global				
	Integrating gender-responsive budgeting in the aid effectiveness agenda: end-of-programme evaluation September 2012	Global	Final	Excellent

^a The meta-evaluation of the quality of the evaluations was done by an independent external evaluation consultant.

^b References to Kosovo shall be understood in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

Annex II

Evaluation in trust funds managed by UN-Women

Fund for Gender Equality

1. The Fund for Gender Equality is the only global fund exclusively dedicated to women's economic and political empowerment. This partnership between UN-Women, regional, national and local women's organizations and Governments is an innovative approach to advancing women's empowerment. Since 2009, the Fund has provided targeted grants totalling \$55 million in support of 93 grantee partners in 57 countries.

2. In 2012, the Fund completed 3 formative evaluations of catalytic programmes, 11 evaluability assessments of implementation programmes, 1 final evaluation of a Fund for Gender Equality implementation programme in Cambodia and an evaluability assessment of the Fund for Gender Equality. The Fund experienced significant staffing changes during the reporting period, which presented challenges to the management of evaluations and resulted in the decision to move several evaluation commitments to 2013. Additionally, the aforementioned formative evaluations of catalytic programmes that began in 2011 encountered challenges in meeting the quality standards of the Fund. Therefore, the Fund prepared an assessment on the shortcomings of the evaluation reports and of the evaluation management process for accountability and learning purposes, and will utilize the reports to produce knowledge products.

3. The Fund made improvements to the evaluation function based on lessons learned from the past cycle. During the programme design phase, 53 new selected grantees were asked to budget 8 to 10 per cent of resources for evaluation and 2 to 3 per cent for monitoring. In addition, guidance documents were developed on the evaluation requirements for programmes financed by the Fund for Gender Equality, in accordance with the UN-Women Evaluation Policy.

4. The final evaluation of the project on strengthening economic livelihood opportunities for low-income and HIV-positive women implemented in Cambodia found the project to be largely successful in achieving its goal. Over 1,300 women living with HIV completed livelihood training and received small grants to establish livelihood activities. As a result, 93 per cent of the beneficiaries stated that they are now generating increased income to support their daily expenses and improve their livelihoods and that they have better food security and nutrition as a result of their own livelihood activities.

5. The endline survey conducted by the National AIDS Authority showed a reduction in the proportion of beneficiaries who could not afford to send their children to school, from 17 per cent to 7 per cent. The evaluation also found that increased access to health care was an important and successful outcome of the project.

6. Some of the lessons learned included:

(a) Financial and technical support, access to health-care services and an enabling environment can successfully support women living with HIV to undertake livelihood activities that improve the quality of their lives and those of their families;

(b) Livelihood support is likely to be ineffective in the case of very poor women living with HIV who have dependants, few resources and poor health;

(c) An exclusive focus on activities to support women living with HIV can greatly increase costs in terms of time and money, for both beneficiaries and the implementing agencies, and also risk alienating other poor(er) women in the target communities; and

(d) Project design that is based on partnerships should include a clear and shared management structure that facilitates coordination, joint planning and oversight, as well as ownership by stakeholders.

United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women

7. The United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women is a global grant-making mechanism exclusively dedicated to addressing violence against women and girls in all its forms. UN-Women administers the Fund on behalf of the United Nations system, working together with non-governmental organizations, Governments and United Nations country teams. To date since 1996, the Trust Fund has delivered more than \$86 million to 351 initiatives in 128 countries and territories. By the beginning of 2013, the Trust Fund's \$63.5 million active grant portfolio included 95 programmes covering 85 countries and territories, touching the lives of over 24 million women and girls and influencing over 5,000 formal and informal institutions.

8. Trust Fund grantees are expected to facilitate their own external evaluations, with oversight and technical support from the Fund secretariat and UN-Women regional offices. In 2012, 17 grantees completed final external evaluations. In order to increase the capacity of grantees in evidence-based programming and monitoring and evaluation, the Trust Fund convened a five-day capacity development workshop for 14 grantees in Mexico City in 2012.

9. In 2012, the Trust Fund made a number of enhancements to the evaluation function. A Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist post was created and filled with the aim of strengthening the Fund's monitoring and evaluation practices and providing greater support to grantees. The Trust Fund also developed guidance documents for managing evaluations in order to specify minimum requirements.

10. A new results and resources framework was introduced to place greater emphasis on achievement of project goals. The framework will form the basis for future final external evaluations of grantees, with the aim of truly assessing the extent to which each project impacted the lives of women and girls.

11. The Trust Fund and the Fund for Gender Equality are currently developing an online grants management system, which includes a specific module on evaluation to track the status of project evaluations by grantee, store evaluation terms of reference and final reports, and aggregate and analyse financial data (budget and expenditure) on evaluations.

12. The programme "Engaging men to prevent gender-based violence: A multi-country intervention and impact evaluation study" was implemented by Instituto Promundo in Brazil, Chile, India and Rwanda and ended in 2012. The programme was aimed at testing and evaluating an array of interventions that engage young and adult men in gender-based violence prevention, including in the

fields of sport, education and health and in the workplace. The programme was subject to an impact evaluation in 2012, which demonstrated a statistically significant change in attitudes towards violence against women and a statistically significant self-reported decrease in the use of violence against women partners. Qualitative results further affirmed decreased support for attitudes that encourage men's use of intimate-partner violence.

13. In India, the programme generated a decline in self-reported perpetration of intimate-partner violence among participants. In Jaunpur, there was a decrease in self-reported use of physical violence against women from 19 per cent at the baseline to 9 per cent at the endline. The evaluation also showed an increase in knowledge of laws pertaining to violence against women.

14. In Brazil, following the sport-based intervention with workshops, campaigns and tournaments, there was a significant decrease in the percentage of men who agreed that intimate partner violence was acceptable. Of the participants in the football tournament, half reported that they had learned how to interact with women differently and over 20 per cent said they had learned how to better control themselves when tempted to act violently.

15. In Chile, the health-sector intervention showed a significant positive change in participants' self-reported behaviour, including an increase in condom use. The evaluation also showed a significant increase in gender-equitable behaviour by participants, and over 80 per cent of the young people reported that the intervention had provided them with more tools to solve problems without resorting to violence.
