



Independent Evaluation Office
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A decentralized evaluation system is more likely to be relevant, and therefore used, by local and national decision-makers

At UN Women, 90 per cent of evaluations are managed by field offices, reflecting the decentralized nature of the organization. This ensures that the evaluation function generates contextually relevant evidence that is most likely to be used by policymakers to inform national policies for gender equality and women's empowerment. However, it also poses a managerial challenge to ensure evaluations meet internationally agreed upon evaluation standards, such as the ones endorsed by the [United Nations Evaluation Group](#).

In order to address this challenge, UN Women has been implementing a systemic approach to enhance the decentralized evaluation function, as explained in the articles below.

I wish you an enjoyable reading.

Marco Segone, Director, Independent Evaluation Office

The UN Women decentralized evaluation function



The decentralized evaluation function in UN Women is guided by the UN Women evaluation policy. It aims to enhance accountability, inform decision-making and contribute to learning on the best ways to achieve women's empowerment and gender equality. Regional evaluation strategies provide a framework for an effective regional evaluation function that can inform and influence programming and decision-making at the regional and country levels.

Decentralized evaluations are conducted by external evaluators and managed by regional, multi-country and country offices in partnership with national stakeholders and other development partners. Regional evaluation specialists are members of the UN Women Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) deployed in the six regional offices in Panama, Cairo, Dakar, Nairobi, Istanbul and Bangkok.

They provide oversight and technical assistance to field offices to strengthen evaluation culture, build evaluation capacity, ensure the quality and use of evaluations, and help fulfill responsibilities under the UN Women evaluation policy. All decentralized evaluations are quality-assured through the Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System (GERAAS) and publicly available on the Global Accountability and Tracking of Evaluation (GATE) system along with their management responses.

For more information, please consult www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/evaluation/decentralized-evaluations.

To access the GATE system, please click [here](#).

To access GERAAS, please click [here](#).

For additional information, please contact

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Clear roles and responsibilities

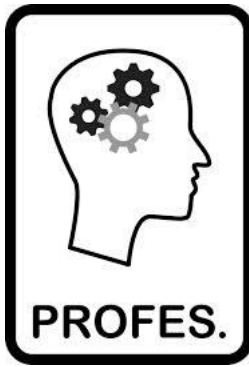
To ensure clarity on the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders in relation to the decentralized evaluation function, the evaluation chapter of the UN Women internal Programme and Operations Manual (POM) was revised. The revised chapter on evaluation outlines the systems established to strengthen the strategic planning, management, quality and use of evaluations. Webinars focusing on the new changes in the evaluation section have been organized in all regions by the regional evaluation specialists.

Please click [here](#) to access the evaluation chapter on the POM (password required).

Global and regional evaluation strategies

In accordance with the requirements of the UN Women evaluation policy and to ensure contextualization and operationalization of the [Global Evaluation Strategic Plan \(2014-2017\)](#), regional offices have taken steps to develop regional evaluation strategies for the period 2014-2017. In addition to strengthening and complementing existing accountability and oversight mechanisms, the purposes of the regional evaluation strategies are to: a) ensure effective decentralized evaluation systems, the performance of which are monitored through eight key performance indicators embedded in the Global Evaluation Oversight System (GEOS); b) promote UN coordination on gender-responsive evaluation; and c) strengthen national evaluation capacities for gender-responsive evaluation systems. The regional strategies are also expected to ensure a common approach on evaluation quality assurance and standards across UN Women field offices. Eastern and Southern Africa and Asia Pacific have already endorsed their strategies. Other offices are expected to finalize and endorse their respective strategies by late 2014 or early 2015. A participatory approach has been adopted for the development of the strategies.





Professionalization of evaluation

The IEO, Human Resources and the Training Centre are collaborating to develop a comprehensive, hands-on programme for UN Women staff to professionalize the evaluation function in UN Women. One aspect of this approach is the issuance of an Evaluation Handbook and a corresponding e-learning course “How to manage a gender-responsive evaluation at UN Women” leading to a certificate of completion. These products will be launched online in 2015 providing practical tools to help UN Women staff plan, manage and use gender-responsive evaluations by providing direction, advice and tools for every step in the evaluation process. Additionally, staff managing evaluations will participate in a coaching programme where they will work closely with a regional evaluation specialist throughout the management of an evaluation process. These staff members will receive certification as a “UN Women Gender-responsive Evaluation Manager”. This initiative to professionalize the evaluation function will complement other existing systems that strengthen quality of evaluations, ultimately leading to better use of evaluation for decision-making, accountability and learning on what works for gender equality and women’s empowerment.

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Arab States

Strengthening evaluators’ capacities on gender-responsive evaluation

UN Women conducted a workshop on gender-responsive evaluation during the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Evaluators Network conference, “Mainstreaming evaluation theory and practice in the MENA region”. The workshop focused on how to design, manage and use evaluations from an equity and gender-equality perspective. Participants included evaluators from civil society, bilateral and sister UN agencies.

For additional information, please contact mona.selim@unwomen.org.



Asia Pacific

Enhancing communication on evaluation findings and recommendations

A series of webinars have taken place in Asia Pacific to disseminate evaluation findings and strengthen evaluation use. The webinars include “2nd Evaluation Webinar on evaluability assessment of the project ‘Strengthening women’s capacity in disaster risk reduction to cope with climate change’ by the Viet Nam Country Office” and “3rd Evaluation Webinar on an evaluation of sustaining gains of foreign labour migration through protection of migrant workers’ rights evaluations by the Nepal Country Office”. For additional information, please contact yumiko.kanemitsu@unwomen.org.

Strengthening UN inter-agency evaluation capacities

The United Nations Evaluation Development Group for Asia and the Pacific (UNEDAP) conducted the 5th edition of an inter-agency evaluation training course “Regional course on evaluation in the UN context” on 22-26 September in Bangkok, Thailand. The objective of the course was to enhance the quality and effectiveness of the evaluation function in the UN in the Asia-Pacific region; 49 staff members of various UN agencies participated in the training. The course consisted of 11 modules, and UN Women, in collaboration with United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), facilitated the module on equity-focused and gender-responsive evaluation.

For additional information, please contact yumiko.kanemitsu@unwomen.org.

Eastern and Southern Africa

Strengthening UN Women capacities in planning, monitoring, evaluation, reporting and knowledge management



UN Women staff from 13 country offices in the Eastern and Southern Africa region gathered in Nairobi for a training workshop on planning, monitoring, evaluation, reporting and knowledge management, delivered by specialists from the regional office. With the central objective of enhancing participants' understanding of key programming principles and enabling them to implement corporate guidelines and tools at the field level, the training focused on providing practical how-to skills and good practices. Falling at a critical time of year shortly before the finalization of 2015 annual work plans, the focus was on providing concrete guidance, allowing colleagues to share their experiences, working through case studies and examples, and reflecting on challenges facing staff in country offices.

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Latin America and the Caribbean

Learning across regions

The UN Regional Interagency Working Group on Monitoring and Evaluation for Latin America and the Caribbean held a webinar on “One UN result monitoring system: Example from Tanzania” in July. The webinar showcased the new result monitoring and evaluation system developed with success in Tanzania. The objective was to learn from experiences from other countries that can be applied to Latin America and the Caribbean.

For additional information, please contact: laura.gonzalez@unwomen.org or ivan.touza@unwomen.org (from December 2014 to April 2015).

West and Central Africa

Bridging the gap between policy makers and evaluation

More than 300 participants from 31 countries attended the first International Francophone Forum on Evaluation (FIFE) organized in partnership with UN Women alongside other UN agencies and financial institutions such as African Development Bank. The event took place in Dakar, Senegal, from 27 to 30 October 2014, ahead of the Heads of States Summit of the Francophonie. Participants were not only experts and practitioners of evaluation, but also members of parliament, civil servants from the Auditor General's Office, representatives of various non-governmental organizations, and professionals from evaluation associations.

The forum was titled "Evaluation of public policies and good governance" and stressed the link between evaluation and development. Via training sessions on evaluation methods, panels and plenary discussions, the forum contributed to evaluation capacity development. It also provided a strong advocacy moment for institutionalization of evaluation as a vector of democracy and development among French speaking peoples around the world.

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UN Women internal Evaluation Community of Practice

The internal Evaluation Community of Practice for UN Women staff was launched last year to foster the exchange of experiences, lessons, good practices and news on evaluation among UN Women staff. The community has 172 members who share an interest in learning more about evaluation-related matters. The Evaluation Community of Practice welcomes contributions from internal UN Women staff. You can sign up by sending an e-mail to ictdesk.support@unwomen.org requesting to be part of the Evaluation Community Network (internal staff only).

If you have completed a new evaluation related to gender equality and/or women's empowerment, please send it to genderevaluation@unwomen.org to be considered for inclusion in the UN Women Gender Equality Evaluation Portal .

About the Independent Evaluation Office

The UN Women Independent Evaluation Office main purpose is to enhance accountability, inform decision-making and contribute to learning on the best ways to achieve women's empowerment and gender equality through normative, operational and coordination work. UN Women Independent Evaluation Office also strengthens capacities for gender responsive evaluation within UN entities, governments and civil society organizations.

UN Women is the UN entity dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women, focusing on five priority areas: increasing women's leadership and participation; ending violence against women; engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes; enhancing women's economic empowerment; and making gender central to national development planning and budgeting. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.

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