



Independent  
Evaluation Office

Newsletter – Issue # 14 – July 2016

**“Close scrutiny can be uncomfortable, but we know it is an essential aspect of well-managed progress”.**

*UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo Ngcuka, UN-Women Executive Board Annual Session (June 2015)*

The year 2015 marked an exceptional year for the global evaluation community. While the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda included the call for the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) follow-up and review mechanisms to be informed by country-led evaluation and to strengthen national evaluation capacities, the principles of gender-responsive evaluation were also included. UN Women contributed to these achievements thanks to the leadership role in chairing the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and EvalPartners until few months ago. This strategic positioning allows UN Women to contribute to strengthening gender-responsive capacities within the UN system, as well as at the national level.

In this framework, the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of UN Women reported on its 2015 overall performance by presenting its Annual Report to the UN Women Executive Board. This Newsletter provides information on the performance of the evaluation function at corporate and decentralized levels, as well as UN Women’s contribution to UN system-wide coordination and national capacity development for gender-responsive evaluation, among other achievements, during 2015.

I wish you an enjoyable reading.

Marco Segone,  
Director, Independent Evaluation Office, UN Women  
Chair, United Nations Evaluation Group

## News



**UN Women's Executive Board welcomes progress:  
Strengthening the evaluation function, leading UN  
system-wide gender responsive-evaluation efforts, and  
fostering innovative partnerships**

On 28 June 2016, the [Independent Evaluation Office \(IEO\)](#) presented its Annual Report of the evaluation function at the [Executive Board Annual Session](#).

The [Executive Board](#) welcomed the progress achieved in various areas of IEO's work, including its leadership of UN system-wide gender-responsive evaluation efforts and innovative partnerships for national evaluation capacity development. It also recognized a strong evaluation function in light of the recent positive review of its evaluation policy and recommended the policy be reviewed again in another three years.

The Executive Board, however, identified the following areas for improvement: further strengthening the coverage of decentralized evaluations, improving implementation rate of planned decentralized evaluations, and encouraging submission of management responses. The Board urged UN Women to enhance financial resources invested in the evaluation function and use evaluation recommendations in its work. It finally requested IEO to make further efforts to meet the requirements of the Evaluation Performance Indicator of the UN-SWAP on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

The management of UN Women acknowledged the five positive assessments of UN Women's evaluation function from 2014-2015. Management also recognized that IEO is making a difference at the system-wide and organizational levels, and expressed the need for evaluation to be "gender-responsive, of high quality, relevant, contributing to strategic directions and informing continuous improvement".



**Within the 2030 agenda, UN Women leads UN system-wide gender-responsive evaluation efforts for “No one left behind”**

2015 was a watershed year for evaluation. Gender equality and the empowerment of women were recognized as central to sustainable

development, while SDG follow-up and review mechanisms were requested to be informed by country-led evaluation. In addition to gender equality being included as a stand-alone SDG and integrated across all other goals, the UN General Assembly underlined the [special importance of evaluation within the transformative 2030 agenda](#). This is an important achievement in evaluation and gender equality.

These achievements were made possible also thanks to the advocacy role of [UNEG](#) and [EvalPartners](#), which were both chaired by UN Women in 2015. The advocacy strategy focused on declaring 2015 as the first ever [International Year of Evaluation](#), during which EvalPartners facilitated the organization of 92 events all over the world. This strategy created a global bottom-up movement strengthening capacities to demand, supply and use evaluation, including gender-responsive evaluations.

The International Year of Evaluation culminated in the first ever global evaluation week held in Nepal. There, more than 100 parliamentarians, ministers and global evaluation community members identified key priorities to ensure evaluation is “fit for purpose” in the context of the 2030 Agenda, with the vision of promoting gender-responsive evaluations. Seizing the momentum, UN Women, and others, organized a [high-level event on evaluating SDGs with a “No one left behind” lens in March 2016 in New York City](#).

## **UN Women co-leads new initiative for national evaluation capacities: EvalGender+**

Responding to the SDG principle of ‘No one left behind’, UN Women’s IEO, within the umbrella of [EvalPartners](#), is co-leading [EvalGender+](#) - a global multi-stakeholder partnership to strengthen national capacities for gender-responsive evaluations. EvalGender+ has launched an initiative to support countries on how to evaluate SDGs with a gender-responsive and an equity-focused lens. The project includes: the development of a guidance document

on evaluating the SDGs with a “No one left behind” lens and technical assistance to 11 countries.

## UN Women coordinates United Nations system-wide gender-responsive evaluation

As Chair of UNEG since March 2015, UN Women is leading efforts to strengthen evaluation systems within and beyond the United Nations as well as advocating for a stronger enabling environment for gender-responsive evaluation. In 2015, UN-Women intensified its support of system-wide coordination on gender-responsive evaluation through its leadership and support to [UNEG](#), the [UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women \(UN-SWAP\)](#), the [Independent System-Wide Evaluation](#), joint evaluations and knowledge management systems.

The Evaluation Performance Indicator (EPI) of the UN-SWAP has proven to be a great opportunity to track progress and enhance gender-responsive evaluation. In 2015, of the 46 entities that reported against the indicator, only about half are “meeting” or “exceeding” requirements - although it was noted that comparisons need to be made with caution because of variations in reporting methods between entities. As UN-Women evaluations were rated at the top end of "approaching requirements", IEO is committed to working to ensure truly gender-responsive evaluation and believes that the launch of the [Professionalization Initiative](#), the [Gender Evaluation Consultant Database](#), the [country programme evaluations](#) and [decentralized evaluations](#) quality assurance process standards are expected to help improve results by the end of 2016.



## **UN Women Executive Board and Global Evaluation Advisory Committee agree: evaluation function strengthened in 2015**

Key Performance Indicators and external and internal assessments, including the review of the [evaluation policy](#), point to a strong evaluation function at UN Women.

In February 2015, the UN Women Executive Board commended UN Women for establishing a “strong enabling environment for evaluation, for its leadership in promoting gender equality and responsive evaluation through coordination efforts within the UN system, and for fostering innovative partnerships for national evaluation capacity development”.

In December 2015, the [Global Evaluation Advisory Committee \(GEAC\)](#), serving as a corporate advisory mechanism to the Executive Director and the IEO, reported that UN Women has a “strong central evaluation office that performs well against evaluation standards of independence, credibility and utility, and in comparison with other UN organizations”.

By implementing the five recommendations issued by the GEAC, UN Women is in the process of enhancing the use and benefit of evaluation, focusing on the transformative nature of gender-responsive evaluation, and intensifying efforts towards engendering the SDGs through strategic partnerships.

## **Global Evaluation Oversight System finds steady performance progress in evaluation function**

To measure performance of the evaluation function, the [Global Evaluation Oversight System \(GEOS\)](#) reviews progress against nine indicators – including a new performance indicator on the use of evaluation that was introduced in 2015. The overall results show a positive and sustained

progress on six out of nine key performance indicators. Despite slight improvements in evaluation implementation and coverage, GEOS did note that additional efforts are needed to ensure adequate programme coverage and better evaluative evidence to inform decision-making and contribute to organizational learning and accountability.

## **100% implementation rate for corporate evaluations**

In 2015, 100 per cent of planned corporate evaluations were being implemented, with three completed and another five on track. IEO presented five evaluative studies to the Executive Board, including two corporate evaluations on [UN Women's contributions to women's economic empowerment](#) and [UN Women's normative support work and its operational linkage](#); and three reviews on [Policies and practices to promote gender-responsive evaluation systems](#), [Corporate gender equality evaluations in the United Nations system](#), [Meta-analysis of evaluations managed by UN-Women in 2014](#).

## **Guidance and training strengthen the decentralized evaluation function**

To ensure the strategic planning, credibility, quality and use of [decentralized evaluations](#) (which account for 90 percent of UN-Women evaluations), IEO continues to partner with the Programme Division and regional offices to develop evaluation plans, regional evaluation strategies and quality assurance processes.

Acting upon a GEAC recommendation to increase the number and quality of strategic decentralized evaluations, IEO developed [guidance on how to manage country portfolio evaluations \(CPEs\)](#). Piloted in three countries in 2015, the CPE programme will be rolled out in 2016.

To strengthen capacities to manage gender-responsive decentralized evaluations and overcome the challenge of identifying good evaluators, IEO

launched a new evaluation [Professionalization Initiative](#) and developed a [Gender Evaluation Consultant Database](#) in 2015.



**How to Manage Gender-responsive Evaluation**

 Learning Modality: **Self-paced**

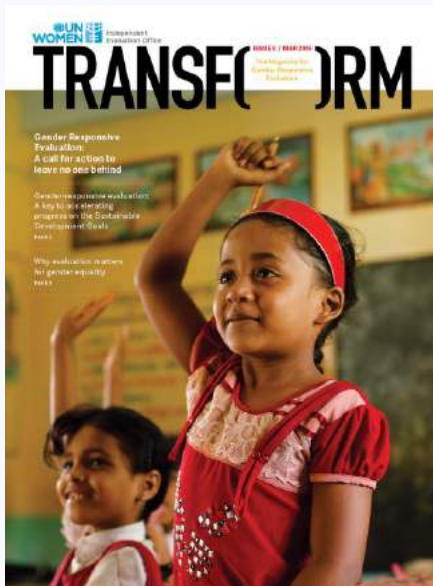
 Duration: Approximately 9 hours (see below)

 Language: English

 Cost: Free

**Have you received your eLearning course certificate?**

You can gain knowledge on "How to manage gender responsive evaluation" by enrolling today in the [eLearning course](#). To date, 116 UN Women staff have enrolled, and 48 per cent have received the certificate of completion. Contact your respective Regional Evaluation Specialist for more details.



## **TRANSFORM: A year of innovative communication**

Join us in celebrating the anniversary of [TRANSFORM](#), the first online and print magazine exclusively dedicated to gender-responsive evaluation. Published by the IEO, it aims to communicate good practices on gender-responsive evaluations and evaluation findings.

Showcasing facts, graphics, evaluation conclusions, and recommendations from

evaluation, TRANSFORM makes what works in gender equality accessible and shareable. Features include UN Women corporate evaluations and meta-analyses, as well as topical issues specifically dedicated to gender-responsive evaluation.



Check the latest issue of [TRANSFORM #6](#) on the role of gender-responsive evaluation in the framework of the 2030 Agenda to ensure "No one is left behind".

[Download TRANSFORM #6 in PDF version.](#)

[Read TRANSFORM #6 on your computer or mobile device.](#)

Check all past issues of TRANSFORM [here](#).

## News From the Field

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### **Latin America and the Caribbean:**

### **Strengthening national evaluation capacities**

The UN-Women Regional Office for the Americas and the Caribbean (ACRO) and Colombia Country Office (CO) are supporting the National Planning Department of Colombia (DNP-SINERGIA) in the integration of a gender equality and human rights perspective in their national evaluation system.

In the framework of this initiative, UN Women ACRO and Colombia CO organized a training course to support the incorporation of gender perspectives in the evaluation of main gender public policies in the region. The event was attended by 21 participants - the majority from the Evaluation Directorate and the Gender Sub-Directorate of the National Planning Department of Colombia, as well as 6 participants from UN agencies in the country (OHCHR, UNFPA and UN Women).

For more information, please, contact to Laura Gonzalez ([laura.gonzalez@unwomen.org](mailto:laura.gonzalez@unwomen.org)) and visit the [National Planning Department of Colombia \(DNP-SINERGIA\)](#)



**Follow @unwomenEval on Twitter, and participate with the hashtag #Eval2030 and #EvalGenderSDG**

Contact Alexandra Capello for more information on social media.



For any other information on IEO communications and knowledge management, kindly also contact Alexandra Capello ([alexandra.capello@unwomen.org](mailto:alexandra.capello@unwomen.org))

The graphic displays the staff of the UN Women Independent Evaluation Office. It features the UN Women logo and the text 'Independent Evaluation Office'. The staff is organized into three main sections: 'HQ Staff', 'Regional Evaluation Specialists', and a top row of two senior staff members. Each staff member is represented by a small portrait photo above their name and title, which is listed in a blue box below the photo.

**UN WOMEN** Independent Evaluation Office

**HQ Staff**

- Inga Sniukaite, Deputy
- Marco Segone, Director

**HQ Staff (continued):**

- Shravanti Reddy, Evaluation Specialist
- Priya Alvarez, Evaluation Specialist
- Messay Tassew, Evaluation Specialist
- Maria Teresa Britos Rodriguez, Administrative Professional
- Rose Flore Frederique, Administrative Professional
- Alexandra Capello, Evaluation Specialist
- Florencia Tateossian, Evaluation Specialist
- Sabrina Evangelista, Evaluation Specialist

**Regional Evaluation Specialists**

- Caspar Merkle, ESARO
- Cyuma Mbyiha, WCARO
- Mona Selim, ROAS
- Isabel Suarez, ECARO
- Yumiko Kanemitsu, APRO
- Laura Gonzalez, LACRO

## 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.

[UN Women Evaluation Governance and Policy](#)

[Corporate Evaluations](#)

[Decentralized Evaluation Systems](#)

[UN Coherence](#)

[National Evaluation Capacities](#)

[Resources and Tools](#)

[News, Transform magazines and past newsletters](#)



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