



**Independent
Evaluation Office**

Newsletter issue 16, February 2017

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Dear Colleagues,

The evaluation community has much to rejoice as 2016 has seen major achievements: (1) UNEG updated its evaluation Norms and Standards by including 4 new norms, including standards on the SDGs, human rights and gender, national evaluation capacity, professionalization of evaluation. (2) The global evaluation community leveraged the achievements of the international year of evaluation by starting implementing the Global Evaluation Agenda. (3) UNEG supported national evaluation capacity with a focus on “no one left behind”. (4) 22 countries reported implementation of the SDGs to the High Level Political Forum at the UN General Assembly, and 40 more countries are scheduled to do so in 2017. (5) New Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, reiterated the call for a strong evaluation in the UN and beyond. Amidst the emergence of post-truth politics, a strong evaluation culture is even more important.

This newsletter discusses the evaluation community’s next big challenge: implementing the SDGs. It starts with a new video and guidance on evaluating the SDGs with a “no one left behind” lens. It also reports on IEO recent achievements, like highlights from the Global Evaluation Advisory Committee, the corporate evaluation of UN Women's regional architecture, and the ongoing efforts to enhance dialogue with evaluation users through webinars and events.

I wish you an enjoyable reading.

Marco Segone

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

**New IEO video and guidance on evaluating the
SDGs with a gender-responsive and equity-
focused lens**

Evaluation can help us achieve greater gender equality in a new development agenda.

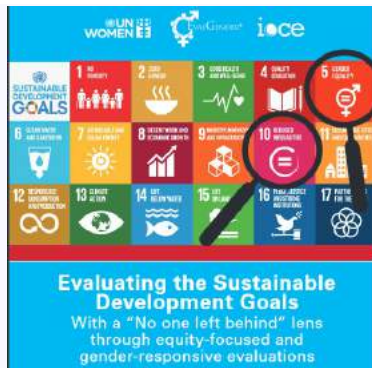
Our new video explains how and why gender-responsive evaluation matters for the SDGs.



The SDGs present a great challenge to the evaluation community, but also a unique opportunity to make gender equality a reality. Human rights, social justice and gender equality approaches are at the forefront of the Global Evaluation Agenda. Evaluation, especially gender-responsive evaluation, has a critical role to play in ensuring the inclusion of those traditionally marginalized and discriminated against. Join us!

How can YOU get involved? Become an advocate for [gender-responsive evaluation](#) in your organization. Read [Transform](#), a one-of-a-kind magazine on gender-responsive evaluations. Join the discussion online with [EvalGender+](#) and its [community of practice](#), and follow us on Twitter at [@unwomenEval](#).

[Watch the video on YouTube](#)



New guidance supports evaluating the SDGs with an equity-focused and gender-responsive lens to leave no one behind

UN Women, EvalGender+ and IOCE published a new guidance “Evaluating the Sustainable Development Goals with a “No one left behind”

lens through equity-focused and gender-responsive evaluation” in partnerships with EvalPartners, UNEG, UNICEF, UNFPA and the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation. This publication aims to support national evaluation systems on how to integrate equity-focused and gender-responsive evaluation to inform national reviews of SDGs. The guidance proposes a step by step process for country-led evaluations that are equity-focused and gender-responsive as well as a strategy to integrate equity-focused and gender-responsive evaluations into national SDG reviews. The guidance is accompanied by a series of training modules adapted to the particular country contexts and experience in evaluation. Please access the guidance [here](#).

Please access the training modules [here](#)

Reporting to the Global Evaluation Advisory Committee (GEAC) and Executive Board

UN Women Evaluation Function is mature and high performing - GEAC assessment

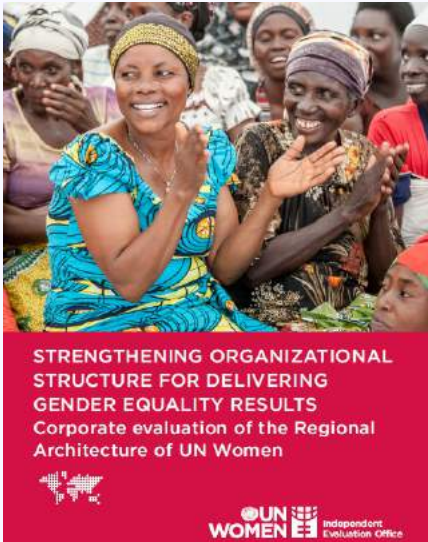


The [Global Evaluation Advisory Committee \(GEAC\)](#) met in New York on 5-6 December in fulfillment of its responsibility under the [UN Women Evaluation Policy](#) to serve as an advisory forum for UN Women Executive Director (see [TOR](#)). The committee is comprised of [external evaluation experts](#) and [UN Women senior management](#) who meet once a year to provide feedback and direction on the performance of UN Women evaluation function.

This meeting of the Committee included a review of the performance of the evaluation function and consideration of the Corporate Evaluation Plan 2018-2021, the Evaluation Strategy 2018-2021, and the Strategy for Strengthening Evaluation Use through Communication.

The Committee recognized the continued progress in building the evaluation function at UN Women and welcomed the leadership role played by the Independent Evaluation Office, both within UN Women and far beyond in promoting gender responsive evaluation. It also recognized the considerable efforts across management in carrying forward work on evaluation and acting on evaluation findings and recommendations.

While emphasizing the shared responsibility for the evaluation function, the Committee directed several recommendations first to management and several further recommendations to the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO). While management should systematically uptake evaluation evidence in planning and programming as well as in advocacy and partnerships, build evaluation into corporate strategic planning for development of the new Strategic Plan, and request at least two corporate-level “flagship” thematic evaluations each year, IEO was recommended to further enhance evaluation use through communication and information systems technology, protect the targets of two corporate evaluations set out in the ongoing and upcoming Corporate Evaluation Plans, and refresh and deepen the Evaluation Strategy.



UN Women Executive Board acknowledges the regional architecture's successes and challenges as identified by IEO's Corporate evaluation

UN Women was designed with a regional architecture that aims to maximize the organization's ability to deliver on its mandate. Based on this, an evaluation of the regional architecture of UN Women was conducted between September 2015 and August 2016 to assess the implementation of the regional

architecture from its launch in 2012 to the first quarter of 2016. The evaluation benefited from the active involvement of more than 300 stakeholders, staff and partners, many of whom actively contributed to the development of evaluation findings by serving as reference group members, attending focus group discussions and workshops, and completing comprehensive surveys.

The evaluation was welcomed by UN Women who expressed its appreciation through the management response. UN Women is pleased to see that the evaluation recognizes the organization's achievements and the overall success of the Regional Architecture roll-out as approved by the Executive Board. The evaluation is also timely, coming in ahead of the process of developing UN - Women's second Strategic Plan 2018- 2021. This affords the opportunity to address the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation as part of the new Strategic Plan's development. While the evaluation notes that UN -Women has made significant progress in the normative, coordination and operational areas, with significant contributions at global, regional and country levels; it also sets out some of the challenges UN -Women faces to deliver on various aspects of its mandate, as financial resources have not been aligned with the budgets approved by the Executive Board.

Click [here](#) to read the Board Paper in [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#) and [here](#) the management response

Click [here](#) to read the full evaluation report

Click [here](#) to read the Transform Magazine

Click [here](#) to read the Brief

Four webinars enhancing dialogue with evaluation users

Webinar on Meta-analysis focuses on enhancing constructive dialogue and improving evaluation uptake

IEO and UN Women Programme Division jointly hosted a webinar to present the key insights and management perspective of the 2015 meta-analysis recommendations. The collaboration enabled to consciously reflect on emergent patterns from multiple evaluations and feed this learning into ongoing and future thinking and practice. The webinar was also proven effective in enhancing constructive dialogue with regional and country offices to increase the influence and uptake of evaluations. Thirty-eight staff members representing all regions including several representatives attended the webinar.

Click [here](#) for further information on the meta-analysis

Webinar fosters dialogue on the corporate evaluation of UN Women's contribution to UN System coordination on gender equality and women's empowerment

The Independent Evaluation Office and the UN System Coordination Division hosted the webinar: "Coordinating for Gender Equality Results" during a workshop with UN Women Regional Planning and Coordination Specialists. This was jointly organized by the UN System Coordination Division and Planning, Programme and Guidance Unit.

The webinar discussed highlights from the Corporate Evaluation of UN Women contribution to UN System coordination on gender equality and women's empowerment (GEEW), and UN Women's management response to the evaluation. It aimed at responding to questions related to UN Women's progress on this important remit, the main lessons learned and good practices, the evaluation recommendations and what the organization plans to do to implement those recommendations.

For UN Women staff, please click here for the webinar [presentation](#) and [recording](#).

Click [here](#) for further information on this evaluation.

Webinar on UN-SWAP Review

Improving the understanding of what it means to meet UNEG Norms and Standards on gender equality

The [United Nations Evaluation Group \(UNEG\)](#) Working Group on Gender Equality and Human Rights (co-chaired by UN Women) supports UNEG members to report against the [UN System Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women \(UN-SWAP\) Evaluation Performance Indicator](#). In 2016, the working group commissioned an [independent review of UN-SWAP EPI reporting](#) with the aim of better targeting support and facilitating a shared understanding of what it means to meet UNEG Norms & Standards on gender equality. The results were presented in a webinar in October, 2016.

46 evaluation reports that represented 23 UN entities were independently assessed against the UN-SWAP EPI criteria. Although the overall UN-SWAP process is a self-assessment process, UNEG has advocated for external review in order to increase objectivity and reliability of the rating. The independent assessors validated this approach with their finding that 81 per cent of those originally scored in the 'exceeds' category had to be re-classified by the independent assessors. Self-assessments were the least reliable type of review with the highest rate of inconsistency. With regards to integration of GEEW in evaluations, there is an inconsistent understanding about how to integrate GEEW in evaluation scope of analysis; and while there is a general understanding about how to integrate GEEW in evaluation criteria and questions, approaches in applying the criterion were somewhat inconsistent and uneven; gender responsive methods were found to be the weakest aspect of the overall body of reports, and were insufficient to meet the required UN SWAP standard; approaches to mainstreaming GEEW across the findings, conclusions and recommendations varied and a systematic approach to weaving gender more comprehensively across all three was often missing. The Working Group will now be disseminating the [review](#), taking forward the recommendations and facilitating use of the information through the production of good practice webinars/briefs.



Webinar on communications to enhance evaluation use sparks conversation and idea sharing

Evaluation Offices from the [GEF](#), the [World Bank](#), and [UN Women](#) joined forces to organize a [webinar on](#)

[communication and evaluation use](#) in November 2016. Stemming from the paper by the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) on [Evaluation Use in the UN System: Conclusions from the Data](#), this webinar discussed how communications can improve engagement with evaluation users, and how evaluator can improve communications to increase evaluation use. [Please click to view the recording of the webinar.](#)

Advocating for gender-responsive evaluation

UN Women IEO leads discussions at the 12th EES Biennial Conference (EES 2016)

At the [European Evaluation Society \(EES\) 12th biennial conference “Evaluation Futures in Europe and Beyond: Connectivity, Innovation and Use”](#) in Maastricht, the UN Women Independent Evaluation Office played a key role in leading gender related panels and discussions. The conference showcased the current state of the art and future directions in evaluation research, methods, capacity, communication, use, systems, and politics. A gender responsive evaluation approach played a prominent role in this year’s conference.

Marco Segone, the Director of UN Women IEO chaired the panel “Gender and Evaluation: From Global Commitment to Regional Experiences”, and also participated in the panel “Evaluation in the Era of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, and in the fishbowl panel: “Let Us Introduce [EvalPartners](#) – Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow”. Here, we reflected on key opportunities and challenges to evaluate the SDGs with a gender responsive lens, building on its pilot experience in the ECA region.

Rituu B. Nanda (Institute of Social Studies Trust and Constellation, Delhi) shared lessons from the e-discussion on evaluating the SDGs with a gender and equity-focused lens. The e-discussion built on the online [community of practice on gender and evaluation](#) which has 2400 members and serves as the hub of EvalGender+, an [EvalPartners](#) initiative.

Maria Bustelo and Julia Espinosa from Complutense University of Madrid (UCM) presented the UCM experience evaluating the GENOVATE project, a European action-research project, where six Universities pursued to promote a more gender-sensitive organizational culture through the implementation of different Gender Equality Action Plans from 2013 to 2016.

For further information, please contact Isabel Suarez, Regional Evaluation Specialist for Europe and Central Asia (ECA).
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“Evaluative thinking” a key theme at the 2016 Asian Development Week

UN Women participated in the [2016 Asian Development Week](#) held on 5-6 September in Xi'an, China. The Ministry

of Finance of China hosted the event, being supported by the Asia-Pacific Finance and Development Institute (AFDI) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to help synthesize global learning on evaluation and demonstrate how they can best inform development policies. Delegates from 40 countries and 20 international development organizations participated in the event. UN Women organized three sessions:

- (1) Strategies for empowering women - lessons from Gender Responsive Budgeting,
- (2) Understanding and supporting equity and gender equality: implications to evaluate the SDGs, and
- (3) Strengthening the demand and use of evaluation in policy making.

For further information, please contact Yumiko Kanemitsu, Regional Evaluation Specialist, Asia & Pacific.
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UN Women IEO presents at the American Evaluation Association Conference

Evaluation + Design was the theme at the annual American Evaluation Association Conference held in Atlanta, Georgia in October 2016. The UN Women IEO was involved in the organization of two sessions where Shravanti Reddy (Evaluation Specialist) presented. The first was a 90-minute demonstration co-presented with Dr. Anne Stephens (James Cook University and Australian Endeavor Fellow) on the “Inclusive Systemic Evaluation for Gender Equality, Environments and voices from the Margins (ISE4GEMs): A new approach for the SDG Era”. This approach builds on existing approaches by combining systemic evaluation practice with intersectional analysis. The second session was a panel entitled “Equity-focused monitoring, evaluation and capacity development in light of the SDG agenda” co-presented with Michael Bamberger (Independent Consultant) and Michele Tarsilla (Independent Evaluator and Capacity Development Expert). The panelists presented on the opportunities and challenges of current monitoring, evaluation, and capacity development systems to support the SDG agenda, including the work of UN Women IEO.

For more information, please contact Shravanti Reddy.
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UN Women actively engaged in the Asia and the Pacific Evaluation Association (APEA) Conference

On 21-25 November in Hanoi, Viet Nam, the Director of IEO, presented at the [Asia and the Pacific Evaluation Association](#)

(APEA) Conference on “Equity-focused and gender-responsive principles in action within the SDGs”.



During the conference, UN Women conducted a workshop on “How to manage gender responsive evaluation” with participants from civil societies, governments, international organizations, consultancy firms working in different countries in Asia and the Pacific. UN Women supported “Regional consultation on national evaluation policy” during which Asia and Pacific parliamentarians, government officials, and VOPEs shared challenges and progress of national evaluation capacity in their countries.

For further information, please contact Yumiko Kanemitsu, Regional Evaluation Specialist, Asia & Pacific.
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Reporting on ECA Regional Evaluation on UN System Coordination

Coordinating for Gender Equality Results in the ECA Region

Building on a corporate evaluation of the same topic, the UN Women ECA Regional Office finalized a regional evaluation of UN Women’s UN System coordination role on gender equality and women’s empowerment (GEEW).

Please click [here](#) to access the full evaluation report.

For more information, please contact Isabel Suarez at:
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Strengthening National Evaluation Capacities



Strengthening National Evaluation Capacities in Latin America and the Caribbean

Last year was a very fruitful year in the area of strengthening National Evaluation Capacities in LAC. UN Women Regional Office for the Americas and the Caribbean (ACRO) and the Independent Evaluation Office have supported several initiatives in the region:

- Integration of the gender equality and human rights perspectives in the evaluation of two public policies of the Colombia National Planning Department (DNP-SINERGIA): The National Public Policy on Gender Equality (CONPES 161) and the Public Policy on Prevention of Risks, Protection and Guarantee of Rights of Women victims of the Armed Conflict (CONPES 3784).
- Elaboration of the M&E System of the Regional Policy on Gender Equality and Equity (PRIEG) from the Central America Integration System, SICA.
- Evaluation of the National Gender Plan (PLANEG) with the Ministry of Women in Dominican Republic, in the framework of an interagency initiative with UNFPA (at national and regional level).
- Incorporation of the gender equality perspective to the 35 Goals of the Government of Buenos Aires, strengthening its M&E system and training on gender-responsive evaluation to their staff.

Currently, we are finalizing other two NECD initiatives in the region:

- Evaluation of the National Gender Policy (PIEG) with the Ministry of Women (INAMU) and the Ministry of Development and Planning (MIDEPLAN) in Costa Rica.
- Support to the elaboration of the evaluation manual of SENPLADES (Planning Ministry) in Ecuador, in order to incorporate the gender equality perspective, and training on gender-responsive evaluation to the staff of the Evaluation Directorate.

For more information, please contact Laura Gonzalez
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Contact Greta Karris for information on social media.
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For any other information on IEO communications and knowledge management, kindly contact Alexandra Capello.
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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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