



# REFLECTIONS ON CHANGE

Meta-analysis:

Findings and lessons from evaluations managed by UN Women in 2017



ON THE COVER Nguyen Thi Thu, is a 24-year-old migrant worker from Ha Tinh, Vietnam, she works at a special farm in Cameron Highlands, Friday 1 December 2017.

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REPORT

# REFLECTIONS ON CHANGE

Global Evaluation Report Assessment  
and Analysis System  
Meta-analysis Report 2017



NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 2018

# LIST OF ACRONYMS

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EVAW	Ending Violence Against Women
GATE	Global Accountability and Tracking of Evaluation Use
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GERAAS	Global Evaluation Report Assessment and Analysis System
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
HRBAP	Human Rights Based Approach to Programming
IASC	International Agency Standing Committee
IES	Independent Evaluation Service
LEAP	UN Women's Leadership, Empowerment, Access and Protection in Crisis Response Flagship Programme
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD DAC	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
RBM	Results Based Management
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UN SWAP	United Nations System Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UN System	United Nations System
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WCI	Women's Citizenship Initiative
WCS	Women's Cohesion Spaces
WPS	Women, Peace and Security
YIA	Young Innovators Award

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to aggregate and synthesize information generated from 2017 evaluations and transform it into accessible knowledge for future systematic strengthening of programming, organizational effectiveness and the evaluation function. This is intended to help inform the implementation of the United Nations Women Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN Women) Strategic Plan 2018-2021.

The meta-analysis is based on 39 evaluation reports independently rated as satisfactory or above, according to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) quality standards. It uses a process of realist synthesis that builds on similar analyses undertaken in previous years. In addition to qualitative analysis of evaluation findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons, the meta-analysis applies a quantitative assessment of development effectiveness based on widely accepted Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) specified methods for evaluating multilateral organizations.

Looking through the lens of the UNEG/OECD-DAC evaluation criteria (effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, sustainability), this meta-analysis responds to selected operational effectiveness and efficiency results identified in the UN Women Strategic Plan 2018-2021 and examines contributions made by UN Women to humanitarian response.

Broadly, evaluations conclude that UN Women interventions are relevant, efficient and effective, with most achieving the expected results (across all thematic areas). Nonetheless, securing multi-year funding, scaling up high impact innovative approaches and strengthening results-based management (RBM) systems that go beyond capturing immediate outputs to tracking outcomes needs to be further expanded and improved.

**RELEVANCE:** The analysis finds that strong levels of evaluation evidence in 2017 affirm continuing improvement in UN Women overall development

effectiveness. Evaluations find UN Women interventions to be highly relevant to normative frameworks, to meet the needs of women at the national level and to demonstrate good adaptive capacity. Although UN Women projects are well designed, most evaluations found the need for more intensive situation analyses.

**EFFECTIVENESS:** UN Women evaluations found that interventions at all levels have been effective, with most achieving the expected results (across all of the thematic areas) despite limited resources. Strategic partnerships, UN joint programming and openness to innovation have contributed to some of the most effective interventions.

**EFFICIENCY:** Evaluations found solid positive performance in efficiency of implementation, management arrangements and financial planning. Evaluations conclude that UN Women interventions, overall, are balanced, cost-effective and deliver on most of the intended objectives. However, integration of monitoring, financial and reporting systems could be improved to fully support real-time programme management and effective partnership governance.

**CULTURE OF RESULTS:** While there was a substantial improvement in RBM systems during the Strategic Plan 2014-2017, most monitoring and reporting systems emphasized activities and outputs relative to outcomes. They, therefore, are not yet fully supporting real-time programme management or effective partnership governance.

**SUSTAINABILITY:** Despite limited evidence of explicit exit planning in UN Women interventions, many findings on sustainability show that the benefits of interventions are likely to continue due to consistent development of national and local institutional capacity. UN Women comparative strengths are most pronounced in alliance and network building, leveraging the integrated mandate and working with partners; using these approaches, UN Women is overcoming predominantly-hindering external environments, despite reliance on short-term non-core resources that are poorly suited to gender transformative programming.

**UN COORDINATION AND JOINT PROGRAMMES:** The most significant external driver of performance found in many evaluations was the integration of UN Women interventions with the United Nations System (UN System), especially at the country level. Two evaluations specifically found that country-level UN Joint Programmes can help to address some of gaps faced by UN Women resourcing challenges, with both Ethiopia and Palestine concluding that the joint programme structure created an “enabling environment” for gender equality and women’s empowerment. However, while joint programming with UN System was found to be generally good, joint implementation was found to be weak.

Where joint implementation is achieved, such as in Arab States programming on Syria, programmes were found to be more efficient because they leveraged UN structures. To enhance this further, evaluations of humanitarian action found that UN Women should focus on a niche of economic empowerment and link this to wider UN programming under the cluster system.

Joint UN work was found to have made powerful contributions to cross-border and interdisciplinary programming, upstream sensitization and the obtainment of legal rights for women within larger policy frameworks. Three main challenges were identified that fully leverage UN coordination as a positive driver of change:

1. Shifting from ‘planning-as-one’ to implementation-level ‘delivery-as-one’.
2. Establishing shared UN-macro frameworks/narratives to support interventions.
3. Addressing the disconnect across the humanitarian-development continuum.

**STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND GENDER MAINSTREAMING:** Most evaluations found that partnerships have been a significant enabler of results for gender equality at all levels – global, regional and country. In particular, partnerships have supported multisector work, and the network of civil society organizations that UN Women has access to is considered to be a firm comparative strength. Evaluations at the country level also highlighted the importance of convening power as a comparative strength.

Despite its strengths, there is a need for UN Women to better develop strategic entry points due to the highly

constrained availability of resources. The Strategic Plan 2014-2017 was a period of exploration and consolidation of different partnership approaches, while the Strategic Plan 2018-2021 is an opportunity to bring these evolving approaches together.

Partnerships were found by several evaluations to be the key determinant of levels of engagement with youth, especially when working with young men as partners for change. The structural engagement of youth for supporting behaviour change was found to be reliant on a combination of innovation in UN Women programming with reach, operational capacity and sustainability of partners. The overall effectiveness of these partnerships improved when there was sufficient time allocated to inception phases – an important opportunity for partners to get to know one another and learn how to work jointly in practice.

Partnerships at the national and local levels were found to be a key strategy for most UN Women projects and programmes. Most evaluations concluded that drawing on local capacities for implementation contributed to sustainability. A key attribute of sustainability was supporting the development of informal networks. This was especially the case in relation to women’s economic empowerment (WEE) in which community-income generation led to the financial independence of women and development of sizeable joint venture companies.

**DRIVERS OF UN WOMEN PERFORMANCE:** When combined with UN Women convening power, the integrated mandate was found by many evaluations to be a key factor in supporting the participation of a broad group of stakeholders in national institutional processes, which contributed to positive impacts. Partnerships were essential to achieving this. However, UN Women reliance on non-core funds (with low levels of predictability) affects the degree to which such partnerships can be effective in supporting participation and impact.

UN Women support to technical exchanges between people from different countries or communities was found to be highly valued within programmes. This was particularly true where professionals could learn from neighbouring countries or places that shared similar attributes and experiences. While documented knowledge sharing was extensively reported as an activity, the over-reliance on exclusively English-language knowledge products is a hindering factor to effectiveness.

The commitment of UN Women staff is a key positive determinant of effectiveness. This had the biggest net-positive effect in cases where there were transparent and accountable management practices, supporting trusted relationships with partners. At the same time, several evaluations indicated that UN Women country offices lack sufficient numbers of specific positions for fully delivering on the strategic plan and country strategy notes:

1. Insufficient senior staff positions at the country level.
2. Insufficient numbers of monitoring staff to ensure data protection and use.
3. Insufficient numbers of staff with technical gender-mainstreaming expertise in humanitarian settings.

**PERFORMANCE AND ADAPTATION IN HUMANITARIAN AND SECURITY SITUATIONS:** Findings on humanitarian action are framed by the context that UN Women is not yet a member of the International Agency Standing Committee (IASC), which governs the humanitarian cluster system (while the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) governs refugee response). UN Women's efforts to become a member of IASC have so far been unsuccessful, which limits opportunities to leverage its mandate through IASC clusters. Addressing the varying degrees of in-country technical expertise is also important for UN Women to enhance its position as an influencer in humanitarian infrastructure.

Within the current context, partnerships have been a key driver of UN Women contributions to humanitarian outcomes and peacebuilding. UN Women has been able to effectively contribute to gender mainstreaming in the humanitarian response in countries such as Malawi and Cameroon. Several evaluations recommended that UN Women focus on supporting the uptake of IASC gender markers across all humanitarian projects.

UN Women's Leadership, Empowerment, Access and Protection in Crisis Response Flagship Programme (LEAP) has been a useful framework for supporting UN Women effectiveness. There is a need, however, for a more holistic overall global framework for

gender equality and women's empowerment in humanitarian action to which UN Women could contribute in the future.

WEE was found to be the strongest humanitarian programming area, regarding quality, reach, contextual adaptations and results. UN Women's strength in economic empowerment and legal assistance for survivors of violence, as part of a holistic set of response services (with clinical and psychosocial response led by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and protection by UNHCR), is a potential area for scaling up. This entire integrated response needs to be linked to advocacy – an area where UN Women has established strengths and can most effectively draw on its broader integrated mandate.

UN Women has been successful in operating in rural and insecure conditions, despite high costs and low-level donor presence (to validate and finance projects) associated with these operations. The short timeframe of humanitarian projects (up to one year) was universally found to be a barrier to humanitarian performance, and a few evaluations recommended UN Women engage more vigorously with donors and partners to secure multi-year resource commitments, especially in protracted crises.

The four priority issues to improve the management of humanitarian action identified in evaluations are:

1. Ensuring that focus on humanitarian delivery and effectiveness does not adversely affect the performance of other longer-term development programming, especially in countries such as Sudan, where the emergency is restricted to a specific area of the country.
2. Acquiring additional staff with competencies in humanitarian response and coordination to complement technical expertise in gender.
3. Addressing the gap in multi-stakeholder learning exchanges at the regional level to support better responses to unique regional patterns in emergencies.
4. Shifting humanitarian project monitoring away from a strong focus on project activities to capture changes at output and outcome levels across multiple project cycles.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS

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**Conclusion 1:** Despite constrained human and financial resources, evaluations found that UN Women's interventions at all levels have been effective, with most achieving the expected results. Nonetheless, UN Women should continue to improve its efforts in achieving resource targets, and refine methods and systems to track and capture outcomes and impacts.

**RECOMMENDATION 1:** Strengthen RBM systems to support adaptive programme management with information on the progress of interventions along the pathways to outcomes that have been articulated in theories of change. Use evidence of progress towards outcomes to advocate for longer-term and more stable core resources to scale and accelerate successful interventions.

Continue to improve RBM systems, but with a stronger focus on monitoring and reporting contribution to outcomes (instead of compliance with activity plans); and, where feasible, link this results data with financial data to help managers and partners to track which interventions and partnerships are translating resources into outcomes most effectively.

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**Conclusion 2:** Knowledge management is reliant on the role of regional offices to connect country-level practitioners and ensure knowledge is translated into results.

**RECOMMENDATION 2:** Reduce duplication of country-level programme management functions within regional programmes, directing this capacity to support the enabling environment for participating countries. In particular, strengthen the knowledge exchange function of regional offices, including with human capital for translation of knowledge resources into regional languages.

Attempt to avoid regional (and global) programmes that require separate programme management functions to the capacities already available within participating country and multi-country offices. In doing so, progressively make the case for shared resources in regional programmes to be made available to support knowledge exchange and inter-country learning.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

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**Conclusion 3:** Effective UN coordination and joint programmes have been strong drivers of effective programming at the global and country levels.

**RECOMMENDATION 3:** Realizing the potential of UN reform to support gender equality and women's empowerment requires building from 'planning-as-one' to implementation-level 'delivery-as-one'.

In some cases, such as economic empowerment and gender-responsive budgeting (GRB), supporting implementation-as-one requires shared UN-macro frameworks/narratives to support interventions and counteract regressive discourse. In many cases, the shared frameworks already exist, and UN Women can leverage the integrated mandate to work hand-in-hand with other entities.

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**Conclusion 4:** Strategic partnerships have delivered substantive, normative and operational results for UN Women and are the heart of programme sustainability.

**RECOMMENDATION 4:** Institutionalize a range of responsive ('fit-for-purpose') governance practices for working with different sizes and types of partner.

Build on UN Women strengths in partnership, network-building, and UN coordination as three powerful drivers of change to counter challenging external contexts and reliance on short-term non-core funding. Promulgate throughout UN Women the lessons learned about effectively working in partnership: improving governance arrangements and practices for strategic partnerships, joint programmes and formal alliances. This should include mechanisms for scaling governance and compliance requirements to better fit with the size and risk of different partners and partnerships.



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**Conclusion 5:** UN Women is overcoming barriers to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment through building alliances and networks of partners.

**RECOMMENDATION 5:** Focus country-level partnerships and programming on shifting more of the 'neutral' external factors towards being positive drivers of change for gender equality and women's empowerment.

Seven of the external factors identified by evaluations as influencing UN Women outcomes were found to have variable effects, from positive to neutral to negative. This suggests that scope exists to influence the 'balance' of external drivers in favour of UN Women outcomes. While not all such drivers can be influenced by UN Women (such as the level of broader aid-system presence, or the political environment, including level of crises), scope does exist to leverage others. These include:

1. The level of participation of civil society in national processes.
2. The wider information environment.
3. The legal and policy framework, and level of gender mainstreaming.
4. Multisector coordination across state entities.
5. Level of grassroots focus, and meeting wider community needs beyond gender relations.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON HUMANITARIAN ACTION

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**Conclusion 6:** UN Women is uniquely positioned to address the provisions of economic empowerment and access to justice for women and girl survivors of gender-based violence in humanitarian response.

**RECOMMENDATION 6:** Build experience and demand for UN Women work in humanitarian action by delivering concrete results with partners in economic empowerment, access to justice and disaster preparedness.

Grow demand in the humanitarian systems for UN Women to contribute a wider gender coordination role by consistently and collaboratively delivering results in the areas of: women's economic empowerment and access to justice for survivors of violence; gender mainstreaming and advocacy in humanitarian response; and gender mainstreaming in disaster risk reduction and preparedness. Develop these by working in close and supportive partnership with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), UNHCR, UNFPA and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

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VERONICA CASIMIRA, MENTOR TO EIGHT SELF-HELP GROUPS IN THE BOBONARO REGION, AND PROUD OWNER OF LIVESTOCK IN MEMO VILLAGE, TIMOR-LESTE.  
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# 1

## INTRODUCTION

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## KEY MESSAGES

- The purpose of this report is to aggregate and synthesise information generated from 2017 evaluations and transform it into accessible knowledge for future systematic strengthening of programming, organizational effectiveness and the evaluation function. This will also inform the implementation of the UN Women Strategic Plan 2018-2021.
- This meta-analysis is based on 39 evaluation reports independently rated as satisfactory or above, according to United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) quality standards.
- It builds on similar analyses undertaken in previous years.

## 1.1

### Background

The purpose and role of evaluation in the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN Women) is to contribute to learning the best ways to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, enhance UN Women's accountability and inform decision-making. By providing evidence-based information, evaluation seeks to contribute to knowledge on what works to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

The UN Women Independent Evaluation Service (IES) provides leadership for the evaluation function throughout the organization. IES also promotes and contributes to gender-responsive evaluation, accountability and evaluative evidence on UN system-wide gender equality results.

Given the decentralized nature of the organization, the majority of the evaluations supported by UN Women are managed at a decentralized level. To address the organizational demands for ensuring high quality and credible evaluations, particularly at a decentralized level, the IES has designed a Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System (GERAAS) consistent with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation.

#### UN WOMEN'S STRATEGIC DIRECTION

This is the last meta-analysis covering the Strategic Plan 2014-2017 cycle; the assessment made was against the previous strategic plan and not the current one. Looking forward, the UN Women Strategic Plan 2018-2021 consolidates the entity's strategic goals.

#### BOX 1.1

##### RESOURCES FOR QUALITY EVALUATION

UNEG (2016) *Norms and Standards in Evaluation*.

UNEG (2014) *Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation [Revised Guidance]*

UN Women (2013) *Evaluation Policy*.

UN Women (2015) *Handbook for Managing Gender Responsive Evaluations*.

UN Women (2015) *Guidance for Country Portfolio Evaluations*.

UNEG. 2016. *Norms and Standards in Evaluation*.

UNEG. 2014. *Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation [Revised Guidance]*.

UN Women. 2013. *Evaluation Policy*.

UN Women. 2015. *Handbook for Managing Gender Responsive Evaluations*.

UN Women. 2015. *Guidance for Country Portfolio Evaluations*.

These are commonly referred to as thematic areas, including within this report:

1. A comprehensive and dynamic set of global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls is strengthened and implemented.
2. Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems.
3. Women have income security, decent work and economic autonomy.
4. All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence.

5. Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience, and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts, and humanitarian action.

Within the results framework of the UN Women Strategic Plan 2018-2021, four outputs have been identified under the operational effectiveness and efficiency: (i) coordination, coherence and accountability of the United Nations System (UN System) for commitments to gender equality and women’s empowerment; (ii) engagement of partners; (iii) knowledge, innovation, results-based management (RBM) and evaluation; and (iv) management of financial and human resources in pursuit of results. Looking through the lens of the UNEG criteria – effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, sustainability, impact – this meta-analysis synthesizes these drivers of change where there is sufficient evidence to do so.

## 1.2 Purpose and scope

The purpose of this meta-analysis is to capture the key insights from evaluation reports rated satisfactory or above according to UN Women standards. The

findings will be used to inform the implementation of the UN Women Strategic Plan 2018-2021.

The scope of the meta-analysis includes 39 corporate and decentralized evaluation reports produced by UN Women in 2017, covering 34 countries with programme presence. Five countries with programme presence were included in evaluations in 2017 that were not previously been covered.

While only reports rated as satisfactory or above in GERAAS are included in the meta-analysis, all 2017 evaluations met or exceeded this standard. Overall, UN Women evaluations were found to meet the requirements for the United Nations System Wide Action Plan on Gender (UN SWAP) evaluation performance indicator, with an average performance rating of 10 (out of a maximum score of 12). This is a significant increase in performance of evaluation reports, with the highest recorded performance for UN Women since tracking of this indicator began.

Only clearly stated findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons presented in the evaluation report (as available on the UN Women Global Accountability and Tracking of Evaluations System (UN Women GATE) <http://gate.unwomen.org>) are considered. Insights from the evaluation process that were not documented and the level of utilisation of insights are outside the scope of this analysis.

**TABLE 1**  
**Coverage of UN Women Impact Areas in 2017 evaluation reports**

Strategic note 2014-2017 impact area		Coverage in evaluations
1	Women’s political participation	41%
2	Women’s economic empowerment	51%
3	EVAW	49%
4	Women, peace and security	38%
5	National planning and budgeting	38%
6	Normative framework	18%
	Humanitarian response	28%

## 1.3

### Approach and methodology

The approach of this meta-analysis is consistent with previous years' meta-analyses and involves five main stages:

1. Identifying evaluation reports to be included in the analysis using the results of the GERAAS meta-evaluation 2017. Evaluation reports were read and the major findings, conclusions, lessons and recommendations were individually extracted into an Excel database, with each statement linked to the evaluation report from which it was extracted and the labelling of that statement as a 'finding', 'conclusion', 'recommendation' or 'lesson'.
2. Classifying each insight from a report according to dimensions provided by the UNEG evaluation criteria. Statements were synthesised and coded in Excel.
3. Statements were then clustered under each classification and a qualitative analysis of the main issues was undertaken. Where appropriate, an indication of the frequency of insights is given.
4. A quantitative assessment in Excel analysed the frequency with which evaluation findings referred to positive or negative performance in relation to various aspects of development effectiveness specified by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC).
5. Finally, qualitative analysis was undertaken of key issues identified in consultation with UN Women senior managers.

### LIMITATIONS

This synthesis relies on the efficacy of the GERAAS quality ratings to identify good quality evaluation reports (see limitations on this noted in the accompanying Meta Evaluation report). Overall the meta-analysis found that the four criteria specified by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC), including on culture of results, were well covered by the body of evaluations (Table 2). While the methods described by OECD-DAC require analysis of the whole evaluation portfolio, the weakness of this approach is that the constitution of the evaluation portfolio (i.e. the proportion of corporate, global, regional and country level evaluations) differs from year to year. This type of evaluation is associated with both the level of effort invested in the evaluation process and the interpretation of the evaluation criteria (effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and relevance). Thus, while trends are suggested in this report, the reliability of this comparison has limitations and should only be considered as illustrative.

The qualitative synthesis process attempted to apply structured analysis by classifying all individual statements from reports. Nevertheless, the process, by its nature, requires judgements to be made on: (i) what the main findings are in a report; (ii) how to interpret these findings and their implications; and (iii) what combinations of findings from different reports represent a reliable pattern. In recognition of these judgements, the report attempts to be transparent about the prevalence of particular issues and identifies where there is a higher or lower degree of certainty in the findings.

Due to timings of evaluation completion, no report from the Latin America and Caribbean region has been included in the analysis. This has implications for overall performance trends, since there are often regional differences in terms of strengths and weaknesses. Observations on joint programmes and humanitarian issues also will be affected because varying numbers of reports can mask differences in business models and performance across regions and thematic areas.



TO MAXIMIZE HER RESOURCES AS WELL AS THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF HER ENTERPRISE, MADAME GARIKO HAS INTEGRATED HER FAMILY INTO THE BUSINESS. HER SON, WHO IS A UNIVERSITY STUDENT, SUPPORTS THE PROJECT AND CONDUCTS A MILK COLLECTION TWICE A DAY.  
© COURTESY OF AGENCY FOR CO-OPERATION AND RESEARCH IN DEVELOPMENT

# 2

## FINDINGS

# 2. FINDINGS OF EVALUATIONS ON UN WOMEN PERFORMANCE

## 2.1

### Development effectiveness

This section presents the findings of the quantified analysis of UN Women development effectiveness, using the methods and rubric specified by OECD-DAC.

**FINDING 1:** Strong levels of evaluation evidence in 2017 affirm continuing improvement in UN Women overall development effectiveness.

The coverage of evaluation reports in 2017 gives strong levels of evidence across all OECD-DAC criteria (with the exception of Impact, which is not currently tracked by GERAAS). While there are important limitations to making comparisons between the percentage of satisfactory ratings each year, the overall trend shows positive improvements (Table 2).

In the quantitative analysis (based on OECD-DAC indicators), the biggest improvement related to the systematization of RBM, indicating a continuation of the positive trend noted in 2016. When triangulated

with the qualitative synthesis of evaluation findings and analyses, this improvement should be viewed in more nuanced terms – to avoid the tendency for compliance-based implementation of RBM and to support sufficient examination of outcomes. Three other criteria exhibited trends of improvement in the quantitative analysis – relevance, sustainability, and efficiency. Only ‘effectiveness’ registered a decline in the percentage of evaluations finding positively, yet it still remained robust, as 86 per cent of evaluations reported satisfactory levels of performance.

#### BOX 2.1

##### LEVELS OF COVERAGE

The analysis uses the following terms to describe the number of evaluations contributing to an observation:

**MOST** - more than 75% of evaluations

**MANY** - from 50% to 75% of evaluations

**SOME/SEVERAL** - from 25% to 50% of evaluations

**FEW** - less than 25% of evaluations

TABLE 2

#### Coverage and performance of development effectiveness criteria

Criteria	n*	Coverage level ‡	Satisfactory ratings (%) †	Annual trend	
1	Relevance	37	Strong	97%	Improving
2	Effectiveness	36	Strong	86%	Declining
3	Sustainability	31	Strong	74%	Improving
4	Efficiency	33	Strong	81%	Improving
5	Culture of results	32	Strong	75%	Improving

\* n = Number of evaluations addressing the given sub-criterion.

‡ Strong: n=31-36; moderate: n=15-30; weak: n=<15.

† The percentage of satisfactory ratings is based on positive findings about UN Women’s performance.



## RELEVANCE

**FINDING 2:** Evaluations find UN Women interventions were highly relevant to normative frameworks, were successful at meeting the needs of women at the national level and demonstrated good adaptive capacity. Although UN Women projects are well designed, most evaluations found the need for more intensive situation analyses.

Table 3 describes the strong performance of UN Women interventions according to their relevance, with positive performance in nearly all evaluations. Inductive analysis across all evaluation reports identified key findings relating to: alignment with normative frameworks, meeting the practical needs of women and girls, the design of programmes, and working in partnership. Information on partnership is included under Section 2.2 of this report, while the other key attributes of relevance are described below.

**TABLE 3**  
**Performance of UN Women interventions in terms of relevance**

Criteria and sub-criteria		n*	Coverage 2016 ‡	Satisfactory ratings †
1	RELEVANCE	37	STRONG	97%
1.1	Programs and projects are suited to the needs and/or priorities of the target group.	37	Strong	97%
1.2	Projects and programs align with national development goals	36	Strong	94%
1.3	Effective partnerships with governments; bilateral and multilateral development and humanitarian organizations and non-governmental organizations for planning; and coordination and implementation of support to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women	34	Strong	100%

\* n = Number of evaluations addressing the given sub-criterion.

‡ Strong: n=31-36; moderate: n=15-30; weak: n<15.

† The percentage of satisfactory ratings is based on positive findings about UN Women's performance.

### Alignment with normative frameworks

Most evaluations provide clear evidence that UN Women interventions firmly align with intergovernmental global and regional norms on gender and with national gender policies, strategies and programmes. For the first time, in 2017, several evaluations assessed the alignment of UN Women programming at the country level with UN Women flagship programme initiatives; all found clear evidence of efforts to operationalize the flagships.

### Meeting needs

There was mixed evidence in the prevalence of situation assessments and surveys of needs, as well as regional differences in performance.

*“UN Women interventions firmly align with intergovernmental global and regional norms on gender, and with national gender policies, strategies and programmes”*

There was more evidence of assessments being conducted at global, regional and national levels, while evaluations found a significant gap in assessments of need at the community level. Partly as a result of this, some evaluations revealed that UN Women interventions were most relevant where they supported the scaling-up of home-grown programmes (i.e. locally designed, often by civil society).

#### PROJECT EVALUATION OF SUPPORT TO PROMOTE WOMEN'S EQUALITY, EMPOWERMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN MOROCCO

The evaluation finds and concludes that the project operationalizes UN Women's flagship programme on the empowerment of women in resilient agriculture. The project was extremely successful in terms of the benefits it has generated for its participants and its likely sustainability.

Its focus on the nexus on women's empowerment, food, financial security and environmental protection makes it innovative and unusual. The evaluation repeatedly notes the extent to which the project was successful because it met real community needs – not just in the sense of women's empowerment – but to preserve sustainable agriculture through an agroecological approach as well as to provide food and financial security for women and their families.

Under the strategic outcomes of UN Women, evaluations found that:

- For **women's political empowerment**, concepts of leadership should be expanded beyond participation in political systems where the dominant political discourse is a block to making progress (e.g., looking at leadership in business).
- For **women's economic empowerment**, integrating with interventions for other thematic areas through designing programmes around common 'life scenarios'. For example, developing holistic packages of support (covering leadership, economic empowerment and prevention of violence) to women living through a life-changing event, such as starting a family, migrating for work or being made unemployed.

- For **ending violence against women (EVAW)**, giving stronger focus to the rule of law and access to legal support, including more emphasis on prevention to complement strong work on response. For example, while programmes met psychosocial and health needs from violence in countries, such as Niger, there were found to be gaps in coverage for preventing or eliminating harmful practices in other West African countries.
- For **humanitarian action**, a need to include service-needs assessments for planning programmes and operations; and a recommendation to balance organizational focus of country offices between conflict and non-conflict areas of the country (e.g., Sudan) to avoid underperformance of development programming.

#### Programmatic design

Many evaluations found that UN Women programming demonstrated good adaptive capacity and enhanced the participation of women in development. There were some evaluations that emphasized UN Women interventions as being strong in terms of addressing multiple levels (e.g. policy, institutional and community).

Although UN Women projects are well designed, most evaluations found they are too short and lack critical follow-up (e.g., to institutionalize capacity development). Nonetheless, a few evaluations found pockets of innovation that represent promising contributions to longer-term change, such as bringing together gender and technology at the global level. Work on the humanitarian continuum in Arab States region using the UN Women's Leadership, Empowerment, Access and Protection in Crisis Response Flagship Programme (LEAP) to bring together economic empowerment and ending violence was also found to be innovative – with a case to share experiences of this approach, especially with the two Africa regions.

An issue covered by several evaluations in 2017 is the added value of global or regional programmes being implemented in several countries. Aside from resources and limited numbers of learning exchanges, these evaluations found limited value is being added

### THEMATIC EVALUATION OF UN WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN EGYPT

UN Women has won accolades for its work around the provision of ID cards for women, responding to one of the foundational issues in the country and enabling women to claim their rights and access services. The women's citizenship initiative (WCI) and training of local election candidates produced gender-equality results greater than planned. WCI started as a gender-targeted initiative but produced gender-transformative results.

by multi-country programme structures beyond the learning and exchange that is already supported by the day-to-day work of regional advisors. They recommend that future global and regional programmes can do more to support shared approaches, knowledge management systems and the international enabling environment.

#### Effectiveness

**FINDING 3:** UN Women evaluations found that interventions at all levels have been effective, with most achieving the expected results (across all thematic areas) with limited resources. Strategic partnerships, UN joint programming and openness to innovation have contributed to some of the most effective interventions.

Table 4 describes the performance of UN Women interventions, according to their effectiveness, with the most positive performance in terms of concrete benefits to members of targeted groups. Inductive analysis across all evaluation reports found contributions to all of the thematic areas. Evaluations also identified six prevalent strategies for change in use by UN Women, alongside key insights into the application of human rights-based approaches, RBM and some of the key contributing factors to effectiveness.

### EVALUATION OF MOLDOVA WOMEN IN POLITICS JOINT PROJECT

UN Women and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supported campaigns aimed at encouraging active participation and meaningful voting in marginalized communities. The campaigns focused on organizing public debates, scrutinizing the electoral platform of candidates for inclusion of the needs of the marginalized, producing and distributing relevant elections information materials in minority languages, and conducting door-to-door activities and mobile voter information caravans. As an example of the campaigns' impact, in Chetrosu village alone, 98 per cent of Roma people cast their vote during the June 2015 local elections, compared to a 35 per cent voter turnout in 2011.

**TABLE 4**  
Performance of UN Women interventions in terms of effectiveness

Criteria and sub-criteria	n*	Coverage 2017 ‡	Satisfactory ratings (%) †
2 Achieving development objective and expected results (effectiveness)	36	Strong	86%
2.1 Programs and projects achieve their stated objectives and attain expected results.	36	Strong	83%
2.2 Programs and projects have resulted in positive benefits for target group members.	36	Strong	94%
2.3 Programs and projects made differences for a substantive number of beneficiaries and where appropriate, contributed to national development goals.	32	Strong	81%
2.4 Programs contributed to changes in development policies and programs, including for disaster preparedness, emergency response and rehabilitation, (policy impacts) and/or to needed system reforms.	27	Moderate	85%

\* n = Number of evaluations addressing the given sub-criterion.

‡ Strong: n=31-36; moderate: n=15-30; weak: n<15.

† The percentage of satisfactory ratings is based on positive findings about UN Women's performance.

## Contributions to strategic outcomes

The following patterns in contributions to the UN Women Strategic Plan 2017-2018 thematic outcomes were identified by 2017 evaluations.

**Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems.** Sixteen evaluations covered this theme in 2017, which included many examples of UN Women interventions successfully contributing to policy changes. However, aside from a few exceptions (e.g., Women in Politics Joint Programme in Moldova), work with political parties around representation of women demonstrated less success. Most evaluations observe that policy implementation remains a general challenge with regard to gender equality. Although three evaluations note that gender-responsive budgeting has been successfully supported, the evidence of it leading to changes in expenditure, accountability and impact is limited.

### Selected examples of results:

**Women have income security, decent work and economic autonomy.** Twenty evaluations considered this theme in 2017, most of which concluded that UN Women's contribution to results was effective. There was, however, a range in terms of how holistic economic empowerment programming is, with a few evaluations recommending that more integrated approaches are taken. For example, the programmatic links between ending violence against women and economic empowerment were found to be weaker and at a smaller scale than they needed to be in two countries in Africa. Some success in this regard was found through support to integrated services, i.e.,

#### PAPUA NEW GUINEA EVALUATION OF EQUALITY FOR PROGRESS (E4P) AND PLANIM SAVE KAMAP STRONGPELA (PLANT KNOWLEDGE, GROW STRONG) UNDER PARTNERS FOR PREVENTION, REGIONAL JOINT PROGRAMME

Gains made by Planim Save led to a drop in perpetration of physical IPV by 10 per cent and victimization of Intimate Partner Violence. This was found to be an impressive and important start at addressing the epidemic levels of violence against women and girls in Bougainville. Counsellors, facilitators, key staff, beneficiaries and stakeholders repeated assertions that Planim Save had opened up communities and minds.

'one stop shops', for information and services. Yet, a few evaluations noted that national services need a stronger focus on value-addition for women's enterprises to be sufficiently empowering.

**All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence.** Nineteen evaluations covered this theme in 2017 and produced a wide range of findings. Overall, evaluations concluded that violence against women is one of the hardest outcomes in which to measure the contribution of interventions, but that provision of services (e.g., safe spaces and one stop shops) offered firm evidence of effectiveness. Evidence around changing social and gender norms and practices was more mixed. For example, Afghanistan found little progress in this respect and Kyrgyzstan concluded that it is a promising area. Where there is strength in changing social norms, this was reported at the community level. Evaluations recommended that a stronger evidence base is needed with interventions using media (both traditional and social). One evaluation, from Côte d'Ivoire, noted that literacy is a weak link for violence programming – an issue with potential to be explored elsewhere.

**Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience, and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and humanitarian action.** Fifteen evaluations included this theme in 2017, along with a wide range of links to other thematic areas and dimensions of change. Evaluations indicated diverse strategic partnerships are key to making progress in this space, as illustrated by UN Women work in Northern Kenya. Partners also have been essential to successful gender mainstreaming in humanitarian action. There is a strong intersection between this outcome and ending violence work, especially around the inclusion of men in programmes that most evaluations find UN Women is doing. While projects are leading to changes in women's capacity and agency, some evaluations concluded that work with men is insufficiently addressing the root causes of violence, including patriarchal norms, as men are still contesting women's leadership in practice. Two evaluations of humanitarian action recommended a stronger link between UN Women's existing interventions and the provision of psychosocial services, which is normally led by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) under the gender-based violence (GBV) sub-cluster.

## Strategies for change

The following six insights about strategies for change were induced from the synthesis of evaluation evidence from all 39 reports.

- **Capacity development.** Most evaluations found evidence of UN Women developing the capacity of national institutions and civil society partners. Overall, this approach was associated with good results in terms of the management and monitoring capacities of ministries of women (e.g., Afghanistan, Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)). Contribution to outcomes regarding national coordination mechanisms for gender equality was mixed, although China reported a positive example.
- **Partnerships.** Nearly all evaluations covered partnerships, mostly implementing partnerships. Identifying the right strategic partnerships was found to be key to long-term sustainability. UN Women implementing partners have been essential to the comparative strength of reaching and mobilizing differentiated groups, exemplified by projects in Egypt. Projects have been most effective where implementing partners have supported sub-national adaptation to different contexts. In terms of areas for growth, some evaluations found that links between UN Women implementing partners were weaker than they needed to be, especially given that there is a wide variation in the capacity of implementing partners even in the same country.
- **Theories of change.** While many evaluations found that UN Women interventions and strategic notes were based on stated theories of change, there was found to be a margin for improvement available in most cases. Theories of change were found to be narrow and not linked to broader dynamics, assumptions and risks that were impacting programmes. Although 'implicit' theories of change were found to be more comprehensive, several evaluations concluded that more could be done to ensure that root causes, mainly patriarchy, are addressed.
- **Data.** Many evaluations referenced the strategy of UN Women supporting gender data for sustainable development, but the findings regarding the contribution of these interventions to results were mixed. A few examples of support to national statistical systems (e.g., Moldova) and national administrative systems (e.g., a civil society organization (CSO) database in Kenya) were highlighted as being successful. Overall, however, the success of projects supporting administrative data has been mixed, and a few evaluations found firm evidence that data is not yet being used to support tactical decision-making.
- **Models.** Several evaluations identified the use of service-provision models by UN Women country offices, such as for access to social welfare, justice expertise or business development support. These were found to have good reach, but with mixed success in terms of scalability within national systems and structures (e.g., China). An essential issue highlighted in Morocco was the importance of disseminating knowledge generated by models in Francophonie and the Anglosphere.
- **Advocacy and coordination.** While the level of evidence available on advocacy in 2017 was limited, the few evaluations with specific findings identified that advocacy was delivering effective results. By comparison, country portfolio evaluations indicate that there is a demand from the UN System to further strengthen UN Women coordination capabilities.

**FIGURE 1:**

**The five most common strategies for change found under analyses of effectiveness**



### Human rights-based approaches

Several evaluations concluded that UN Women programming has helped to prioritize the commitment to intergovernmental gender equality norms at the country level, such as in Cameroon, and helped to extend the reach of UN System programming to marginalized groups, such as in Ethiopia. However, they also observe that the focus of participation has been on women as beneficiaries of programming, more than as decision makers within programmatic structures.

Key insights from country programme and thematic regional evaluations were that the evidence base for interventions is most often the lessons from the previous strategic note. Fewer examples of project designs were based on a comprehensive set of primary and secondary evidence. This triangulates with the uneven coverage of evaluations observed in the UN Women Meta Evaluation 2017, representing a complementary

source of evidence to support future programming. A few evaluations indicate that inconsistent application of gender analysis at the project design stage has led to missed opportunities for including some marginalized groups of women in programming.

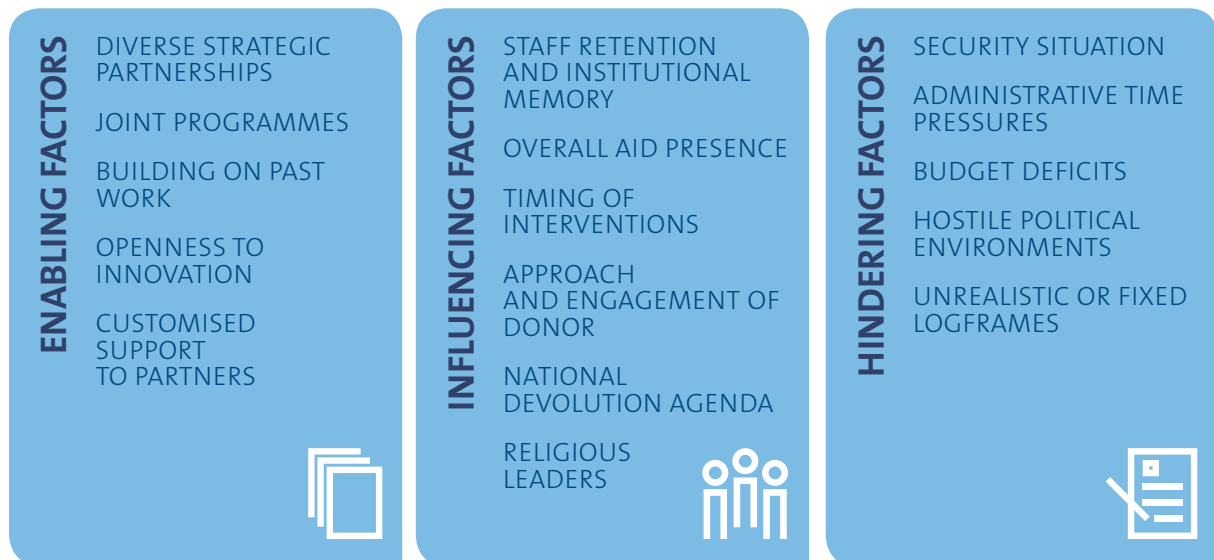
#### DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC) COUNTRY PORTFOLIO EVALUATION

The evaluation notes that the country office has not used linear theory of change, but rather designs interventions that are context-appropriate (an important factor given DRC's size and the scope of the challenges). The evaluation group noted that these interventions are based on human rights principles of inclusion, participation and accountability. As a result, programming was more likely to successfully identify and address some of the root causes of gender inequality.

## Factors behind changes

Within the examination of effectiveness – which was undertaken by all 39 evaluations in 2017 – several explanatory factors were offered to describe how and

why interventions performed to the levels they did. These have been summarized in the diagram below. Each factor is identified and evidenced either by multiple evaluations or in explicit detail in a ‘very good’ quality evaluation report.



## Results-based management (RBM)

**CULTURE OF RESULTS:** most evaluations found that RBM systems are in place and have improved, but require continuous investment and further strengthening.

Evaluations found continual improvement in RBM systems over the course of the Strategic Plan 2014-2017. In 2017, seventy-five per cent of evaluations concluded that systems for managing, monitoring and reporting on results were in place and functioning, which is the highest level achieved to date. At the same time, this provides only a partial picture of the qualitative analysis of evaluation findings that reveal weaknesses in RBM requiring organization-wide attention. This improvement should be viewed in more nuanced terms to avoid a tendency for compliance-based implementation of RBM and to better support the examination of outcomes.

There is a measurement challenge to assessing impact on gender equality that does not fit well with the way (level and timeframe) that UN Women is funded. A dissonance between large-scale problems and small-scale projects means that the impact of UN Women programming is gradual and difficult

to reliably detect without consistent long-term tracking. Constraints on monitoring and reporting specialists at the country level and capacity of partners to report on outcomes and impact results are concerns reflected in several evaluations:

- A **compliance-orientated** nature of RBM in partnerships (i.e., just reporting data without clear evidence of using it to improve performance). These evaluations recommended that increased attention is given to using RBM to actively manage the effectiveness of partnerships.
- Stronger rigour in **measuring activities and outputs** than in assessing outcomes. Evaluations found that UN Women programming is reaching the planned numbers, but not systematically capturing the impact of this.
- A **dissonance between large-scale problems and small-scale projects** means that the impact of UN Women programming is very gradual and hard to detect reliably without consistent long-term tracking. There is a measurement challenge to assessing impact on gender equality that does not fit well with the way (level and timeframe) that UN Women is funded.

**TABLE 5****Performance of UN Women interventions in terms of results-based management**

Criteria and sub-criteria		n*	Coverage 2017 ‡	Satisfactory ratings (%) †
5	Culture of results	32	Strong	75%
5.1	Systems and processes for monitoring and reporting on program results are effective	32	Strong	75%
5.2	Results-based management systems are effective	32	Strong	75%

\* n = number of evaluations addressing the given sub-criterion

‡ Strong: n=31–39; Moderate: n=15–30; Weak: n=<15.

† The percentage of satisfactory rating is based on positive findings about UN Women's performance.

**Efficiency**

**FINDING 4:** Evaluations found solid positive performance in terms of the efficiency of implementation, management arrangements and financial planning. However, integration of monitoring, financial and reporting systems could be improved to fully support real-time programme management and effective partnership governance.

Table 6 describes good performance of UN Women interventions, according to their efficiency, with positive performance in most evaluations. Inductive analysis across all evaluation reports found key findings relating to: management, business processes, monitoring and reporting systems and UN coordination. Information on coordination is included under Section 2.2 of this report, while the other key attributes of relevance are described below.

**TABLE 6****Performance of UN Women interventions in terms of efficiency**

Criteria and sub-criteria		n*	Coverage 2017 ‡	Satisfactory ratings (%) †
4	Efficiency	33	Strong	81%
4.1	Program activities are evaluated as cost/resource efficient	33	Strong	82%
4.2	Implementation and objectives achieved on time (given the context)	32	Strong	88%
4.3	Systems and procedures for project/program implementation and follow-up are efficient	31	Strong	74%

\* n = number of evaluations addressing the given sub-criterion

‡ Strong: n=31–39; Moderate: n=15–30; Weak: n=<15.

† The percentage of satisfactory rating is based on positive findings about UN Women's performance



## Management

Overall, most evaluations found that UN Women offices manage limited resources (financial and human) responsively and conclude that allocation of resources is efficient. Furthermore, most evaluations find that financial resources within programmes and projects were sufficient to achieve the planned activities and outputs (even where these were ambitious). However, they also conclude that resources are, generally, not sufficient to scale or sustain interventions beyond the project timeframe.

With few exceptions, compressed timescales of projects were a universal concern in evaluations. This links to the observation in a few evaluations that there is a need for a comprehensive approach to risk analysis and management in UN Women programming.

Evaluations at all levels noted that UN Women management costs were relatively high – reaching up to 30 per cent in some projects. It was observed that this is partly driven by the highly demanding technical requirements associated with most gender interventions. Insufficient and overstretched human resources limit the scale that UN Women programmes can reach.

### REGIONAL EVALUATION OF UN WOMEN CONTRIBUTION TO GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

Based on the overall budget for the Regional Project, it cost an average of US\$24,000 per municipality or national programme to instigate gender-responsive budgeting. This has the potential to influence at least US\$235 million per year in expenditure. In Albania, an additional US\$61 million was leveraged specifically to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women policy: this alone represents a return on investment for the entire regional project of US\$26.40 for each US\$1 spent.

Several evaluations indicate that other attempts at enhancing management efficiency hold promise, but are not yet fully realized. As examples: (i) country strategic notes are creating synergies between projects on paper, but these are not fully realized in day-to-day implementation and are sometimes isolated from UN

Women contributions to UN coordination (e.g., DRC); (ii) there is good use of international management standards at the country-office level, but these are not yet promulgated to the sub-national level; and (iii) an ‘innovation approach’ is being used in some countries to enhance the impact of UN Women programming, but it has not yet been applied to UN Women systems and processes.

## Business processes

Several evaluations noted recent improvements in UN Women business processes. The evaluation of the Elimination of Violence Against Women Special Fund in Afghanistan (EVAW Special Fund) is one example. It found improved calls for proposals, contracting processes and partnership durations. Other evaluations noted improving transparency in UN Women operations, more efficient recruitment and enhanced business systems, contributing to making management overhead more manageable for UN Women staff.

Partnership was the main area in which evaluations indicated further improvements are warranted. In particular:

- Several evaluations covering all levels (global, regional and country) found that there is a need to better **systematize partnership governance** arrangements.
- In a cross-over with UN coordination, a few evaluations (e.g., Palestine) concluded that governance structures for partnerships and joint programmes should be in place from the **design stage** – i.e., from even before funding is secured and programme activities are initiated. This is a concrete recommendation for the phasing of future partnership development.
- Several evaluations highlighted that there is no **scaling of the management requirements** for partnerships – all partnerships across a wide range of values and capabilities are subject to the same ‘gold plated’ administrative and accountability standards, with a few evaluations recommending that a small-scale financing mechanism is established to support more efficient (and effective) partnerships with civil society.

## Monitoring and reporting systems

Most evaluations found that RBM systems are in place, and have improved, but they require further investment and strengthening. Although improved RBM systems are in place, theories of change and monitoring indicators emphasized activities and outputs relative to outcomes. In addition to most evaluations recommending improved monitoring indicators, a few evaluations recommended that common systems need to be used by all implementing partners, or that UN Women 'fund mechanisms' should be used more often to reduce the reporting burden on civil society implementing partners.

Many evaluations found that cost-effectiveness is not systematically being tracked and managed. Although both results and financial tracking systems are in place, there are technical and organizational limitations to the integrations of these systems. As a result, data is being collected, but there is little evidence that it is being used for decision-making. More integrated and structured approaches are required for data management.

By comparison, several evaluations noted that knowledge management more broadly is improving. Especially promising results, using the structure of regional programmes, were identified at the regional level. A number of evaluations also noted that 'thematic clustering' of interventions helped to support efficiency because of complementarity around knowledge.

## Finance

Most evaluations examined the liquidation rates of UN Women – actual versus planned expenditure; all found that the actual rate was above 80 per cent, and many found that it was above 90 per cent. It was observed by several evaluations that implementations were often subject to slow start-up phases, but that lost time caused by delays was made up over the course of project implementation. A significant example was the global partnership with The Coca Cola Company.

A few evaluations found that overall liquidation rates were not always mirrored at the level of budget lines, reflecting a degree of flexibility in project implementation, which many evaluations praised as a management strength, and a contributing factor to

efficiency. There was also found to be wide variations in the liquidation rates (and capacities) of different implementing partners (e.g., a range of 37 per cent to 85 per cent within a single programme in Côte d'Ivoire), leading to recommendations to enhance coordination between partners and more capacity development of civil society implementing partners.

Many evaluations noted that country offices are committing an increasing level of effort to local fundraising, driven by HQ-set goals. This is having mixed success, but in a few evaluations (e.g., Moldova), it was found that securing multi-year donor funds to the country strategic note (rather than to individual projects) made a significant contribution to both management and programmatic efficiency.

### ENGAGING WOMEN IN PREVENTING AND COUNTERING EXTREMIST VIOLENCE IN KENYA

To boost financial efficiency, the project adopted co-financing mechanism in which the cost of the project was shared among some of the implementing partners. For instance, one partner contributed 10 per cent of the project monitoring and evaluation budget in addition to sponsoring two local resource persons involved in facilitating the trainings.

## Sustainability

**FINDING 5:** Despite limited evidence of explicit exit planning in UN Women interventions, many findings on sustainability indicate that the benefits of interventions are likely to continue due to consistent development of national and local institutional capacity.

Several evaluations, including from Palestine and Moldova, emphasized that the wider environment is anti-sustainability in terms of progress on gender equality, thereby challenging gains in terms of local ownership of international norms. Within this wider context, evaluations from 2017 recalled that UN Women itself is also a vector for sustainability, especially in terms of knowledge (e.g., Progress of the World's Women Reports) and capacity development.

**TABLE 7****Performance of UN Women interventions in terms of sustainability**

Criteria and sub-criteria		n*	Coverage 2017 ‡	Satisfactory ratings (%) †
3	Sustainability of results/benefits	31	Strong	74%
3.1	Benefits continuing or likely to continue after project or program completion.	31	Strong	74%
3.2	Projects and programs are reported as sustainable in terms of institutional and/or community capacity.	30	Strong	73%

\* n = number of evaluations addressing the given sub-criterion

‡ Strong: n=31–39; Moderate: n=15–30; Weak: n=<15.

† The percentage of satisfactory rating is based on positive findings about UN Women's performance.

## Capacity development

Evaluations in 2017 included significant coverage of capacity development, including an evaluation from the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office centred entirely around the UN Women approach to capacity development. This concluded that although capacity development is adding significant value, a more coherent corporate framework for the UN Women approach to capacity development is needed.

Many evaluations found that capacity development of the national gender equality mechanisms (especially women's ministries) is a common and useful part of UN Women programmes. However, this capacity development could be more comprehensive. Currently, there is good coverage of capacity for planning, but there are gaps in capacity for operationalizing these plans. In particular, although legal and policy frameworks are often used to ensure sustainability, many evaluations found that there is a gap in measuring national capacity (normally of the gender equality mechanism) to implement the normative framework.

Training is found to be a common approach to capacity development, but many evaluations reported it to have low levels of sustainability without continuous follow-up, including coaching. A few evaluations, including

at the global level, and from Malawi, concluded that institutional gender audits or efforts to increase the representation of women in leadership positions were more sustainable approaches to capacity.

### INTEGRATING GENDER IN PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS IN KENYA

The final project evaluation notes that one of the successes of the project relates to follow-on actions taken by women trained in Marsabit. Following engagement by government and civil society organizations and completion of the leadership course within their counties, these women formed a local organization they call Advancement of Women in Peace and Security in Africa that is already receiving funding from a donor for countering violent extremism.

Capacity development is also undertaken for implementing partners and developing the agency of individual women. However, few evaluations covered these dimensions. The structural determinants of women's agency and civil society sustainability were not well examined either. Questions also were raised by evaluations that demand further evidence – such as how the often-invoked analogy of critical mass specifically should be defined to be useful for UN Women programming.

## Institutional development

Building institutions is a sustainability strategy that several evaluations found to be important to UN Women programming. For example, developing referral pathways for responding to sexual and gender-based violence was found to be a more sustainable approach than service provision, despite the risk that these pathways can be interrupted in the future.

Rather than being a standalone strategy, institutional development was found to be closely linked to other sustainability approaches. Examples raised in evaluations include: (i) staff turnover is directly connected to the sustainability of capacity development; (ii) changes to the legal and policy framework affect the positioning of national institutions; and (iii) local partnerships can help to scale models.

On the issue of scaling models, a few evaluations observed that 'scaling' was included in project design as a pathway to sustainability, but that no evidence was available to suggest that this was a feasible objective or likely outcome. More often, however, the main strategy for sustainability identified in evaluations is programmes working through national structures and institutions. This approach was rated highly in many evaluations.

## Exit strategies

Few evaluations found evidence of explicit exit planning, while several recommended that sustainability plans need to be made at the beginning (e.g., through co-creation of programmes). Devising more robust methods to 'entrench gains' was a key message of a few evaluations. Others highlighted the need for an enhanced communications strategy.

Specific recommendations by evaluations for exit plans included: (i) 'pay-it-forward' training arrangements, whereby a condition for receiving UN Women-supported training is to train others in a cascade; (ii) embedding training programmes within the national curricula for vocation or academic institutions; and (iii) better leveraging coordination and gender mainstreaming for sustainability.

While the evaluation criterion of sustainability does not apply in the same way to humanitarian action as it does to development, several evaluations did cover questions regarding the nexus between humanitarian response and development. For example, that one-stop-shop women's centres (providing safe spaces with access to services and information) need to be linked into national budgeting processes during the recovery phase. Overall, evaluations conclude that more attention needs to be given to the transition phase. There are good examples of innovation emerging, such as joint host and refugee cooperatives around the whole-of-Syria response that offer potential for sustained income generation and peacebuilding.

## 2.2

# Lessons, insights and good practices

## UN coordination and joint programmes

### CÔTE D'IVOIRE COUNTRY PORTFOLIO EVALUATION

An example of leveraging opportunities for synergy to drive change and sustainability is highlighted in the case of the joint UN Women/UNDP initiative to support women's community initiatives for reconciliation and peace in Côte d'Ivoire (2014-2016). This project helped to strengthen the capacities of grassroots organizations and local management committees in conflict mediation techniques and participatory dialogue.

The most significant external driver of performance found in many evaluations was the integration of UN Women interventions with the UN System, especially at the country level. Two evaluations specifically found that country-level UN Joint Programmes can help to address some gaps faced by UN Women resourcing challenges, with both Ethiopia and Palestine concluding that the joint programme structure created an 'enabling environment' for gender equality and women's empowerment. As with other partnerships, joint programmes benefitted from having inception phases to support consensus building and development of joint knowledge products (e.g., Papua New Guinea).

Overall, most evaluations at the country level concluded that UN Women programming is firmly aligned with both the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the national development agenda, although UNDAF documents do not always reflect all UN Women priorities. Joint UN work was found to have made powerful contributions to cross-border and interdisciplinary programming, upstream sensitization, and securing the legal rights of women within larger policy frameworks. In practical terms, joint UN programming supported holistic responses to violence against women (including

reintegration of survivors) and establishing a revolving fund for women's economic empowerment.

Many evaluations reported on UN coordination within the context of efficiency, with a mixed overall picture. By comparison, fewer evaluations covered coordination of national gender equality mechanisms and women's civil society, but found this to be generally strong and a contributing factor to efficiency. In particular, UN Women offices were found to be good at networking civil society and government together to increase the efficiency of programmatic outputs. This was best supported through gender audits, small grants and capacity development. A specific evaluation, however, of UN Women civil society capacity development in Kenya found that a more strategic corporate framework for capacity development is needed.

Joint programming with the UN System was observed to be generally good, but joint implementation was found to be weak. As a consequence, joint programmes, such as in Ethiopia – were found not to have achieved economies of scale. This was found to be exacerbated in several evaluations, which noted how joint resources were spread thinly across dispersed project sites. Where joint implementation was achieved, such as in Arab States programming on Syria, programmes were found to be more efficient because they leveraged UN structures. To enhance this further, evaluations of humanitarian action concluded that UN Women should focus on a niche of economic empowerment and link this to wider UN programming under the cluster system.

### EVALUATION OF THE JOINT PROGRAMME: CREATING A ONE-STOP-SHOP FOR SUSTAINABLE BUSINESSES IN PALESTINE

This is one of the few evaluations considered where there was a deep and effective partnership with businesses. Women beneficiaries had the opportunity to learn about the concept of perceived value and how important it is when dealing with markets, which has had a positive impact on their businesses. Several of them have made leaps and bounds in the product development phase and have been able to increase their business both locally and internationally.

With fully leveraged UN coordination as a positive driver of change, three main challenges were identified:

- **Shifting from ‘planning-as-one’ to implementation-level ‘delivery-as-one’** – a current gap that was explicitly listed as a conclusion and recommendation within joint programme evaluations.
- **Establishing shared UN-macro frameworks/narratives** to support interventions, such as gender-responsive budgeting, which is currently less influential than models from outside the UN System because it is viewed as competing for intellectual space with performance-based budgeting (e.g., UNDP) and human-rights based budgeting (e.g., Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)).
- **Addressing the disconnect across the humanitarian-development continuum** in terms of funding mechanisms, coordination roles and programmatic focus.

## Partnerships and gender mainstreaming

Most evaluations found that partnerships have been a significant enabler of results for gender equality at all levels (global, regional and country). In particular, partnerships have supported multisector working, and the network of civil society organizations that UN Women has access to is considered to be a firm comparative strength. Evaluations at the country level, such as in Egypt, also highlighted the importance of convening power as a comparative strength, while global evaluations highlighted the power of the UN General Assembly mandate held by UN Women.

### EVALUATION OF THE GLOBAL PROGRAMME: WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND INTEGRATION INTO THE VALUE CHAIN OF THE COCA-COLA COMPANY

One of the first steps in developing this partnership was to take the time to understand: “Where each one came from and what each one meant by empowerment of women.” There was a strong commitment at the top level from both organizations to make the partnership and the programme work. During the evaluation, most stakeholders reported that they saw this as an innovative public-private partnership programme.

Nevertheless, gaps remain. Some evaluations highlighted that despite UN Women’s strengths, it needs to better develop strategic entry points due to the highly constrained availability of resources. There are also mixed conclusions about how well UN Women partnerships are addressing the root causes of gender inequality, although this includes positive examples, such as from DRC.

Looking back, the corporate evaluation of strategic partnerships found that the Strategic Plan 2014-2017 was a period of exploration and consolidation of different partnership approaches. It recommended that the Strategic Plan 2018-2021 should be a period of systemization to bring these evolving approaches together. A significant challenge in doing this, according to some country-level evaluations, is the need for better methods of monitoring the effectiveness and impact of gender mainstreaming in partnerships. This issue was found to be equally relevant to UN coordination.

## Partnerships for youth engagement

### REGIONAL EVALUATION OF UN WOMEN EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL OFFICE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

The Young Innovators Award (YIA) was developed to encourage and incentivize students, youth and young scientists in the fields of agriculture, IT and social sciences, to develop gender-sensitive technologies in agriculture. The YIA presented an opportunity for young innovators to participate in a high-level international event where they were exposed to influential organizations and institutions, as well as other networks of innovators in the region. At the Award ceremony each of the winners were given the unique opportunity to present/pitch their innovation on stage, using their training. The award winners also received a cash prize of US\$5,000. Entertainment for the Award Ceremony was provided by a specially-selected regionally-acclaimed musician who has been actively involved in initiatives that promote the engagement of Youth in Farming. The benefit has been twofold: the winners have come away with new experience and exposure, and the field of agriculture has benefited from their innovations.

Partnerships were found by several evaluations to be the key determinant of levels of engagement with youth, especially in terms of working with young men

as partners for change<sup>3</sup>. The structural engagement of youth in order to support behaviour change was found to be reliant on a combination of innovation in UN Women programming with the reach, operational capacity and sustainability of partners. The overall effectiveness of these partnerships improved when there was sufficient time allocated for inception phases, as these provided important opportunities for partners to get to know one another and learn how to work jointly in practice.

**FINAL EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT: MAINSTREAMING GENDER INTO HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AND PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS AFFECTED BY BOKO HARAM TERRORISM IN CAMEROON**

UN Women approaches to gender mainstreaming in humanitarian contexts (with support from implementing partner GenCap), including the provision of psychosocial support to women and traditional support of shelter and food, is an example of how humanitarian and development programme approaches can be merged in one project.

**Local partnerships**

Partnerships at the national and local levels were found to be a key strategy for most UN Women projects and programmes. Most evaluations concluded that drawing on local capacities for implementation contributed to sustainability, with civil society organizations and women entrepreneurs assessed as likely to continue many project activities. The main gap in this approach, identified by a few evaluations, was the need to have a mechanism for early identification of failing implementing partnerships, along with clear options for reallocation of funds or introduction of corrective actions.

Key attributes of sustainability identified in several evaluations include UN Women’s network-building and support for the development of informal networks. This was especially the case in relation to women’s economic empowerment in which community income generation led to both the financial independence of women (e.g., Morocco) and the development of sizeable joint venture companies (e.g., Egypt).

**Internal drivers of UN Women performance**

**Alliance-building and movement for change**

Several evaluations found that network building is a key driver of UN Women contributions to impact, especially

when linked with strategic partnerships and formal collaboration. While technical expertise is enhanced by bilateral partnerships, coordination across multiple partners (i.e., an alliance) was found to be indispensable for unleashing their full potential. Examples of this include UN Women support to links between women’s civil society organizations and the security services in Kenya as a contribution to peace building. Within all of these alliances and networks, communication was found to be an essential ingredient of success (e.g., Morocco).

In the area of economic empowerment, particularly, several evaluations found that women’s lives have been significantly impacted by the creation of networks – especially between entrepreneurs and/or small and medium enterprises.

**UN WOMEN STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2021 DRIVERS**

**OF CHANGE:**

- Alliance-building and movement for change
- Evidence, data and statistics
- Innovation and technology
- Knowledge-hub
- Youth engagement
- South-South cooperation

**Innovation, technology, evidence, data and statistics**

Within the 2017 body of evaluations, data was covered largely in terms of being an ‘enabling-layer’ for other programming, rather than as an outcome objective. Although there were exceptions, such as supporting national gender statistics in the Moldova country portfolio. Within this context of project data and administrative data systems, several evaluations found that appropriate data, evidence and information was being collected, but that there were concerns over data protection systems and protocols. This has important implications for ‘do no harm’ in thematic areas, such as EAW and peace building.

Many evaluations found that UN Women programming is incorporating information learned from past evaluations to improve performance. Three evaluations, for instance, indicated that the uptake of ‘innovation approaches’, such as human-centred design, were promising contributions to improving UN Women effectiveness. The extent to which evidence and programming approaches are ‘adapted’

to a specific region was also found (by regional evaluations) to be an important internal driver of UN Women performance.

#### **PROGRESS OF THE WORLD'S WOMEN: EVALUATION OF UN WOMEN FLAGSHIP REPORT**

The evaluation concludes that in surveys completed as part of the evaluation, respondents noted that the originality of the progress reports lay in the way that they brought together an impressive array of knowledge in innovative ways – rather than originality in the sense of proposing thoroughly new arguments and ‘fresh’ evidence. In addition to regionally-tailored fact sheets, innovations included the development of infographics for web and social media, a story series and (later) short policy briefs, picking up on some of the main recommendations of the report.

### **Knowledge-hub and South-South cooperation**

#### **EVALUATION OF THE GLOBAL PROGRAMME: PROMOTING AND PROTECTING WOMEN MIGRANT WORKERS' LABOUR AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

A number of elements of programme implementation were considered innovative, such as the inter-committee (CEDAW-CMW) approach and the sustained inclusion of civil society, as opposed to the more traditional approach of one-off consultations. Committee members highlighted this as an ‘eye opening’ experience, which allowed them to see the potential of working with other committees and creating alliances. The latter led to coordination between the CMW and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, resulting in a joint declaration. Civil society stakeholders that were interviewed also highlighted this as an effective practice. In fact, all stakeholders interviewed said that this multi-stakeholder approach had been a timely and effective mechanism, with many expressing their intent to use the recommendations on addressing women’s human rights in the global compact for lobbying purposes going forward.

A few evaluations explicitly covered the issue of knowledge management as a driver of impacts. These found that UN Women support to technical exchanges between people from different countries or communities was found to be highly valued within programmes, especially where professionals could learn from neighbouring countries, or places they

felt shared similar attributes to their own situations. For example, exchanges on gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) between the governments of Balkan countries was considered by participants to have more applicable value than exchanges with Austria, Sweden or Iceland. In terms of documented knowledge sharing, while this was extensively reported as an activity in many evaluations, some found that the over-reliance on exclusively English-language knowledge products was a hindering factor to effectiveness.

#### **EVALUATION OF THE GLOBAL PROGRAMME: PREVENTING AND ADDRESSING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS**

In Mexico, knowledge products generated by the programme are considered key inputs for national and state counterparts, as well as for UN Women, for accelerating the harmonization of state legal frameworks with the international and national standards on women’s human rights and EVAW. The project in Timor-Leste has generated knowledge for improved EVAW policy implementation and a variety of guidance and resource material (facilitation guides, and monitoring and evaluation tools) tailored for the national context.

A key issue found by several evaluations related to the translation of knowledge into impact. While UN Women was found to support national administrative information systems at the country level and global knowledge through the Progress of the World’s Women Reports, there was no systematic evidence gathering about the extent to which this knowledge leads to different practices. For example, country-level evaluations detected widespread changes in perceptions about women migrant workers, survivors of violence and harmful practices as a result of knowledge-centred interventions, but administrative case management within these systems remained highly inconsistent in terms of applying the required standards and principles.

### **Human capital**

Most evaluations commented on the commitment of UN Women staff as being a key positive determinant of effectiveness. This had the biggest net-positive effect in cases where evaluations found transparent and accountable management practices, supporting trusted relationships with partners, who extend UN Women access to additional skills and field reach. Other contributing factors to effectiveness included the high



level of gender technical knowledge contributed by UN Women staff and interdisciplinary programming to help break down silos (also aided by UN coordination).

At the same time, several evaluations indicated that UN Women country offices have insufficient numbers of particular positions to fully deliver on the strategic plan and country strategy notes:

- Insufficient **senior staff positions** to effectively manage all of the partnership, coordination and normative leadership functions that are in demand by stakeholders.
- Insufficient numbers of **monitoring staff** to ensure data protection and use.
- Insufficient numbers of staff with technical **gender-mainstreaming expertise** in some humanitarian settings.

### Leveraging the integrated mandate

Most evaluations found that the UN Women integrated mandate (normative/policy, UN coordination and operational/programme) is a key positive driver of change, providing unique credibility in relation to gender. In implementing this mandate, however, UN Women modalities of engagement were found by several evaluations to be important determinants of how much impact was achieved.

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*“The UN Women integrated mandate was found by many evaluations to be a key factor in supporting the participation of a broad group of stakeholders in national institutional processes”*

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In Malawi, for example, it was concluded that UN Women needs more focus to deliver impact, with limited resources being spread too thin (a side effect of the inclusive mandate).

When combined with UN Women convening power, the integrated mandate was found by many evaluations to be a key factor in supporting the

participation of a broad group of stakeholders in national institutional processes. Several evaluations indicated that this contributed to achieving positive impacts. Partnerships were key to achieving this. However, several evaluations also indicated that UN Women organizational systems and structures affect (both positively and negatively) the level to which such partnerships can be effective in supporting participation and, ultimately, impact.

### EVALUATION OF UN WOMEN AFGHANISTAN PORTFOLIO ON ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (EVAW)

UN Women successfully leveraged the opportunities presented by its integrated mandate in the context of the government's plan to incorporate the EVAW law into the Afghan penal code. UN Women did not take an active position on this contentious issue, but rather provided technical assistance to various line ministries and acted as facilitator between entities, by convening dialogues and playing a coordinating role to ensure that government stakeholders were aware of the law's progression and status.

For example, the UN Women budget reliance on non-core funds (with low levels of predictability) and resulting one-year partnership cooperation agreements with partners was found by regional evaluations (from Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Eastern and Southern Africa and Arab States) to undermine the potential impact of support to GRB, peace building and humanitarian recovery. All of these areas require long-term sustained interventions to build relationships between duty bearers and rights holders, establish trust, explore opportunities and institutionalize new practices.

### External drivers of UN Women performance

Across the 2017 portfolio of evaluations, 11 high-level drivers of UN Women performance were identified that constitute the 'enabling or hindering environment'. Each of these was identified by multiple evaluations, and together they can be clustered into three sets:

- Drivers that are always positive. There was only one example of this, the SDG framework.

- Drivers that are neutral. These can be positive or negative depending on how they are manifested in each context. Most drivers are in this set.
- Drivers that are always, or nearly always negative. They can only be mitigated or eliminated as a barrier to gender equality and women’s empowerment. Three drivers are included in this set.

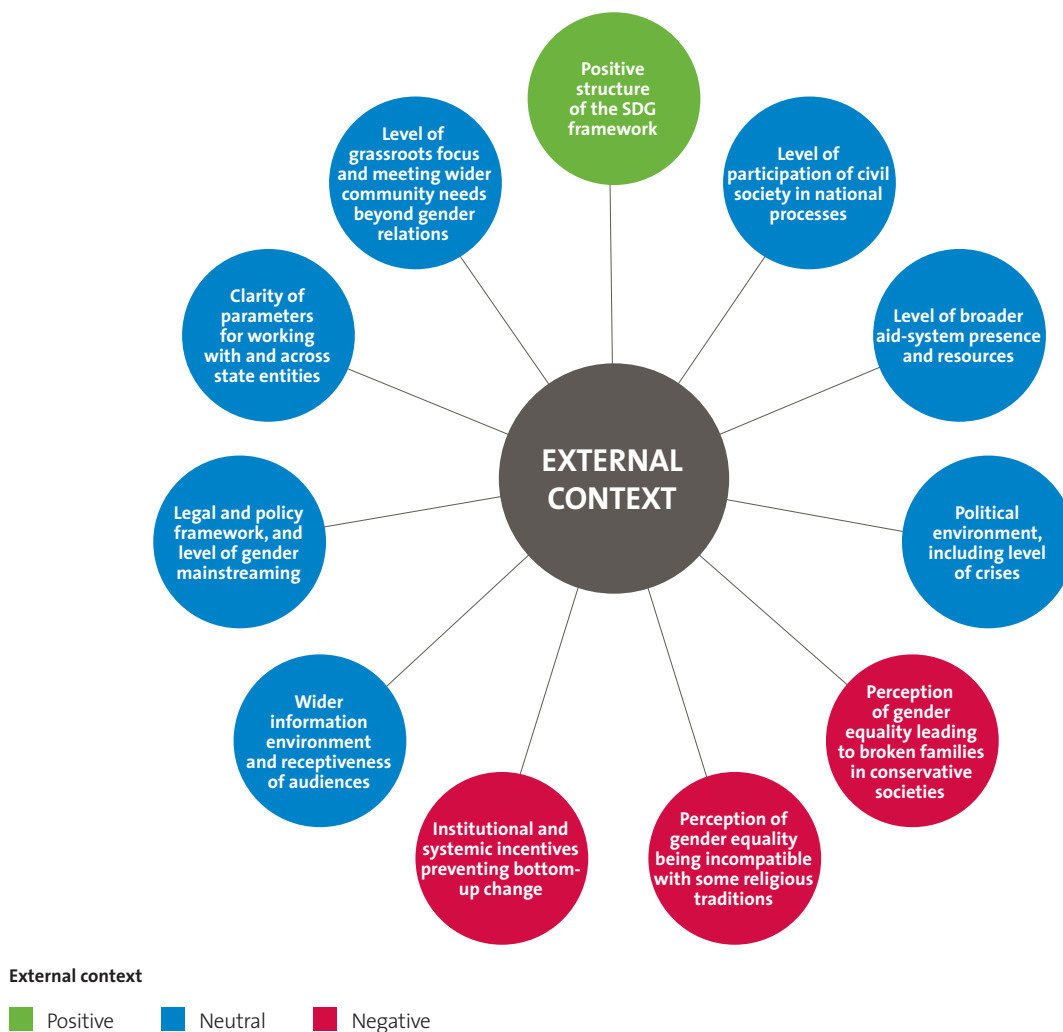
safety or peace) are more effective than those that target gender relations specifically.

#### MOLDOVA COUNTRY PORTFOLIO EVALUATION

Adopting an ‘innovation approach’ is suited to high levels of contextual uncertainty. Overall, unexpected outcomes identified by the evaluation are positive, showing that UN Women has been receptive and responsive to emerging information about problems or challenges. While some of the major outcomes were planned for, the speed at which they were eventually achieved was unprecedented and, therefore, not fully expected. The passing of temporary special measures (Law 71) stands out in this regard.

Overall, most evaluations concluded that the wider environment and context for UN Women programming has a negative influence on performance. However, the prevalence of ‘neutral’ drivers also illustrates that good quality programming can influence this in positive ways. For example, interventions that address wider community needs and interests (such as livelihoods,

**FIGURE 1:** Eleven external factors that influence the performance of UN Women interventions



## Performance and adaptation in humanitarian and security situations

For 2017, 11/39 (28 per cent) evaluations covered humanitarian action. The scope varied from country portfolio evaluations – covering elements of humanitarian response and country-level project evaluations in Niger to an entire regional evaluation on humanitarian action in Arab States. Overall, findings on humanitarian action are framed by the context that UN Women is not yet a member of the International Agency Standing Committee (IASC), which governs the humanitarian cluster system, while the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) governs refugee response. Humanitarian action is coordinated by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the protection cluster lead agency is UNHCR, the sub-cluster lead agency for GBV is UNFPA, while the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) leads GBV mainstreaming.

### Humanitarian cluster system

UN Women's efforts to become a member of IASC have so far been unsuccessful, which limits opportunities to leverage its mandate through the IASC clusters. Addressing the varying degrees of in-country technical expertise also is important for UN Women to enhance its position as an influencer in humanitarian infrastructure.

Within the current context, partnerships have been a key driver of UN Women contributions to humanitarian outcomes and peacebuilding. UN Women has been able to effectively contribute to gender mainstreaming in humanitarian response in countries, such as Malawi and Cameroon. Several evaluations recommended that UN Women focus on supporting the uptake of the IASC gender markers across all humanitarian projects. This gender mainstreaming role requires continuous advocacy and retraining to be effective due to the high turnover of humanitarian workers – an issue highlighted in Palestine. An evaluation in Vietnam also highlighted that the low level of representation of women in disaster-risk reduction is a predetermine of how gender is addressed in humanitarian response.

Several evaluations conclude that the future effectiveness of UN Women in humanitarian action can be enhanced by developing closer strategic partnerships with OCHA (on coordination) and UNFPA (on GBV in emergencies).

## Programme design and UN Women comparative strength

Evaluations cover two main (interconnected) areas of humanitarian response: women's economic empowerment and GBV in emergencies. Of these, economic empowerment is found to be the strongest in terms of quality, reach, contextual adaptations and results. Examples include cash-for-work programming, vocational training, establishing women's cooperatives and organizing work placements. One country-level evaluation highlighted concerns with the depth of analysis of need and beneficiaries at the project-design stage.

### EVALUATION OF GENDER-RESPONSIVE HUMANITARIAN ACTION AND AID TO WOMEN AND GIRLS AFFECTED BY BOKO HARAM TERRORISM IN DIFFA, NIGER

Women's Cohesion Spaces (WCS) are structures for the promotion and protection of the rights of women and girls. In Niger, these spaces are housed inside camps and sites for refugees and displaced persons. WCS provide GBV survivors with psychosocial care, counselling, orientation and referrals to other services (medical, legal and judicial). The spaces enable women and girls to share their experiences and express themselves freely. WCS are an important factor in building the social resilience of survivors of GBV. Although just a 12-month project, it had a significant and positive benefit on beneficiaries' lives.

### Women's economic empowerment was found to be the strongest humanitarian programming area in quality, reach, contextual adaptations and results.

UN Women's strength in economic empowerment and legal assistance for survivors of violence as part of a holistic set of response services (with clinical and psychosocial response led by UNFPA and protection by UNHCR) is a potential area for scaling-up. This entire integrated response needs to be linked to advocacy, which is an area where UN Women has established strengths and can most effectively draw on its broader integrated mandate. UN Women has also contributed to peacebuilding, with evaluations from Côte d'Ivoire and Kenya highlighting this as a strength, but one that tends to be isolated from wider UN Women programming.

While the Arab States regional evaluation concluded that LEAP has been a useful framework for supporting

UN Women effectiveness, it also found that there is a gap in terms of a more holistic overall global framework for gender equality and women's empowerment in humanitarian action to which UN Women could contribute in the future.

### UN WOMEN LEAP FLAGSHIP PROGRAMME

UN Women's Leadership, Empowerment, Access and Protection in Crisis Response Flagship Programme (LEAP) is improving the gender responsiveness of coordinated humanitarian action by:

- Ensuring humanitarian planning and programming are informed by gender analysis and assessment.
- Increasing access to protection and economic opportunities for women affected by crises.
- Bridging the humanitarian/development divide in protracted crises by promoting sustainable livelihoods.

### Operations and management

Evaluations from Afghanistan and Kenya both find that UN Women has been successful in operating in rural and insecure conditions, despite the high costs and low level of donor presence (to validate and finance projects) associated with these operations. The short time frame of humanitarian projects (up to one year) were universally found to be a barrier to humanitarian performance, and a few evaluations recommended UN Women more strongly engage with donors and partners to secure multi-year resource commitments (especially in protracted crises).

Nonetheless, evaluations, such as from Niger, found that even short duration projects had been implemented effectively by UN Women (despite delays to start-up). The four priority issues to improve the management of humanitarian action in evaluations are therefore:

- Ensuring that focus on humanitarian delivery and effectiveness does not adversely affect the performance of other longer-term development programming, especially in countries, such as Sudan where the emergency is restricted to a specific area of the country.
- Hiring more staff with competencies in humanitarian response and coordination to complement technical expertise in gender.
- Addressing the gap in multi-stakeholder learning exchanges at the regional level to support better responses to unique regional patterns in emergencies.
- Shifting humanitarian project monitoring away from a strong focus on project activities to capture changes at output and outcome levels across multiple project cycles.

### EVALUATION OF UN WOMEN REGIONAL PROJECT: ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF SYRIAN WOMEN REFUGEES AND HOST COMMUNITIES IN THE ARAB REGION

In the host communities setting of Egypt and Lebanon, strategies used for economic empowerment provided opportunities to enhance social cohesion between host community women and refugee women. The collective training and workshops allowed for the creation of social cohesion and the alleviation of social tensions. While during the early stages there were tensions between the groups, the constant interaction among them gradually led to the dissolution of such tensions. Integration of Syrian and Lebanese women into the training project established a sense of companionship, ownership and self-confidence, providing common ground for dialogue and participation to bridge the cultural differences between Syrians and Lebanese women.



PROUD VOTERS IN THE 7 JULY 2012 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN TIMOR-LESTE.  
© UN WOMEN/BETSY DAVIS COSME

# 3

## CONCLUSIONS

# 3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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The following conclusions and recommendations have been developed by independent analysis of the findings, based on cross-referencing the findings, lessons and insights.

## Development effectiveness

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**Conclusion 1:** Despite constrained human and financial resources, evaluations found that UN Women's interventions at all levels have been effective, with most achieving the expected results. Nonetheless, UN Women should continue to improve its efforts in achieving resource targets and refine methods and systems to track and capture outcomes and impacts.

Strong levels of evaluation evidence affirm the continuing improvement in UN Women's overall development effectiveness. Despite reliance on short-term non-core resources, UN Women interventions are overall effective. The combination of UN Women convening power, partnerships and the integrated mandate contributes to achieving positive outcomes, but current monitoring systems have limitations in capturing these pathways to outcomes.

While there was a substantial improvement in the roll-out of RBM systems during the Strategic Plan 2014-2017, evaluations noted scope for improvements particularly in relation to systematic methods and tools for tracking and verifying indicators of progress at outcome and impact level. Gaps were also found in the capacity to use evidence and data to provide timely feedback or analysis for decision-making and learning.

The outcomes of UN Women programming are gradual and hard to detect reliably without consistent long-term tracking. Increasing reliance on non-core funds (with low levels of predictability) affects the extent to which the entity can engage in the long-term programming, partnerships and outcome monitoring that is needed to deliver results.

The lack of predictable funds also manifests in insufficient numbers of key staff positions to fully deliver on the strategic plan and country strategy notes, especially country-level senior staff, monitoring experts and gender-mainstreaming advisors in humanitarian settings. Despite short programmes and limited evidence of explicit exit-planning in UN Women interventions, many findings on sustainability indicate the benefits of interventions are likely to continue due to consistent development of national and local institutional capacity.

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**Recommendation 1:** Strengthen RBM systems to support adaptive programme management with information on the progress of interventions along the pathways to outcomes that have been articulated in theories of change. Use evidence of progress towards outcomes to advocate for longer-term and more stable core resources to scale and accelerate successful interventions.

Continue to improve RBM systems, but with a stronger focus on monitoring and reporting pathways to outcomes (instead of compliance with activity plans); and, where feasible, link this results data with financial data to help managers and partners to track which interventions and partnerships are translating resources into outcomes most effectively.

Achieve this by:

- Enabling managers in the field to more easily cross query corporate results tracking systems with corporate finance systems to identify projects and partnerships that are most cost-effective or not delivering on expectations.

- Linking all partners into common reporting systems to enable quicker aggregation and comparison of monitoring data.
- Reducing the number of data points collected on implementation of activities, redirecting this effort toward tracking evidenced-based key performance indicators along the theory of change to outcome-level changes.

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**Conclusion 2:** Knowledge management is reliant on the role of regional offices to connect country-level practitioners and ensure knowledge is translated into results.

The extent to which global evidence and programming approaches are adapted to a specific region was found to be an important internal driver of UN Women performance. Increasingly, the regional level effectively sits at the nexus of global norms and variations within country contexts. ‘Regionality’ contributes most when it manifests in regionalized approaches, knowledge exchange and creates an

‘enabling environment’, rather than replacing or duplicating country-level project administration functions. Support to technical exchanges between people from different countries or communities was found to be especially valued where professionals could learn from neighbouring countries, or places they felt shared similar attributes to their own situations.

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**Recommendation 2:** Reduce duplication of country-level programme management functions within regional programmes, directing this capacity to support the enabling environments for participating countries. In particular, strengthen the knowledge exchange function of regional offices, including with human capital for translation of knowledge resources into regional languages.

Attempt to avoid regional (and global) programmes that require separate programme management functions to the capacities already available within participating country and multi-country offices. In doing so, progressively make the case for shared resources in regional programmes to made available to support knowledge exchange and inter-country learning.

programmes beyond those already collected and reported by countries.

Achieve this by:

- Minimize additional reporting requirements (logframe indicators) of regional and global
- Include within the budget for global and regional programmes resources for dedicated knowledge management positions, meaningful levels of knowledge exchange activities between participating countries, and systematic translation of knowledge materials to accessible languages.

## Drivers of change

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**Conclusion 3:** Effective UN coordination and joint programmes have been a strong driver of effective programming at the global and country levels.

Country-level UN Joint Programmes have helped address some of the gaps faced by UN Women resourcing challenges and create an ‘enabling environment’ for gender equality and women’s empowerment. They have enabled UN Women to maximize comparative strengths and mitigate

weaknesses, have made powerful contributions to cross-border and interdisciplinary programming, and have secured the legal rights of women within larger policy frameworks. However, UN Joint Programmes are more often ‘joint’ in planning than they are in implementation.

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**Recommendation 3:** Realizing the potential of UN reform to support gender equality and women’s empowerment requires building from ‘planning-as-one’ to implementation-level ‘delivery-as-one’.

In some cases, such as economic empowerment and gender responsive budgeting, supporting implementation-as-one requires shared UN-macro frameworks/narratives to support interventions and

counteract regressive discourse. In many cases, the shared frameworks already exist, and UN Women can leverage the integrated mandate to work hand-in-hand with other entities.

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**Conclusion 4:** Strategic partnerships have delivered substantive, normative and operational results for UN Women, and are the heart of programme sustainability.

Partnerships have been a significant enabler of results for gender equality at all levels (global, regional and country). In particular, partnerships have supported multisector working, and the network of civil society organizations that UN Women has access to is considered to be a firm comparative strength. Many lessons have been learned about improving the governance of UN Women partnerships, which need to be implemented more broadly and more consistently.

Key lessons to guide the improvement of partnership governance include: initiating working governance arrangements during the design stage of partnerships to help ‘hit the ground running’ and stress-test assumptions about working together; using inception phases to develop consensus around key issues between representatives from each partner; and focus monitoring and reporting systems on the performance of the partnership towards catalysing results, rather than compliance ‘to the letter’ of the original plan.

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**Recommendation 4:** Institutionalize a range of responsive (fit-for-purpose) governance practices for working with different sizes and types of partner.

Build on UN Women strengths in partnership, network-building, and UN coordination as three powerful drivers of change to counter challenging external contexts and reliance on short-term non-core funding. Promulgate throughout UN Women the lessons learned about effectively working in partnership: improving governance arrangements and practices for strategic partnerships, joint programmes and formal alliances. This should include mechanisms for scaling governance and compliance requirements to better fit with the size and risk of different partners and partnerships.

requirements for partnering with small and low-risk women’s civil society organizations.

Achieve this by:

- Establish a new mechanism of ‘small scale funding agreement’ with lower levels of compliance

- For strategic partnerships, instigate working governance mechanisms at the (pre-funding) design stage to build familiarity between organizational representatives and to refine working modalities.
- In all partnerships, establish the practice of ‘inception phases’ of sufficient length to build consensus and publish joint analyses.
- Seek ways to strengthen joint implementation of UN Joint Programmes, building on successful experiences in joint planning.

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**Conclusion 5:** UN Women is overcoming barriers to advancing gender equality and women’s empowerment through building alliances and networks of partners.

UN Women comparative strengths are most pronounced in alliance and network building, leveraging the integrated mandate and working with partners. Network building is a key driver of UN Women contributions to impact, especially when linked to strategic partnerships and formal collaboration. Using such approaches, UN Women is overcoming barriers to advancing gender

equality and women’s empowerment, despite reliance on short-term non-core resources that are poorly suited to gender transformative programming. Given the short timeframe of many interventions, drawing on local capacities for implementation and supporting the development of informal networks contributed to better sustainability.



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**Recommendation 5:** Focus country-level partnerships and programming on shifting more of the ‘neutral’ external factors towards being positive drivers of change for gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Seven of the external factors identified by evaluations as influencing UN Women outcomes were found to have variable effects, from positive to neutral to negative. This suggests that scope exists to influence the ‘balance’ of external drivers in favour of UN Women outcomes. While not all such drivers can be influenced by UN Women (such as the level of broader aid-system presence or the political environment, including level of crises), scope does exist to leverage others. These include:

- The level of participation of civil society in national processes.
- The wider information environment.
- The legal and policy framework, and level of gender mainstreaming.
- Multisector coordination across state entities.
- Level of grassroots focus and meeting wider community needs beyond gender relations.

## Humanitarian action

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**Conclusion 6:** UN Women is uniquely positioned to address the provision of economic empowerment and access to justice for women and girl survivors of gender-based violence in humanitarian response.

While the absence of position within the IASC structure limits opportunities for UN Women to assume a clear leadership role, UN Women has been able to uniquely address the provision of economic empowerment and access to justice for women and girl survivors of gender-based violence. This complements the work of the humanitarian cluster system in providing safe spaces, psychosocial support and the minimum initial service package, and is a promising entry point for UN Women to work in partnership with other UN agencies. Building a case for UN Women making a wider contribution to humanitarian coordination requires the

deployment of sufficient in-country technical expertise in emergencies.

While most of the evidence on humanitarian action focuses on UN Women’s contribution to and positioning in the response, there is a secondary set of evidence that indicates the gendered nature of most disaster risk-reduction and disaster-preparedness institutions. Given the implications for determining the effectiveness and focus of humanitarian responses, supporting gender mainstreaming in national disaster planning institutions could also be an important entry point for UN Women.

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**Recommendation 6:** Build experience and demand for UN Women work in humanitarian action through delivering concrete results with partners in economic empowerment, access to justice and disaster preparedness.

Grow demand in the humanitarian systems for UN Women to contribute a wider gender coordination role by consistently and collaboratively delivering results in the areas of: women’s economic empowerment and access to justice for survivors of violence; gender mainstreaming and advocacy in humanitarian response; and gender mainstreaming in disaster risk reduction and preparedness. Develop these by working in close and supportive partnership with OCHA, UNHCR, UNFPA and UNICEF.

Achieve this by:

- Prioritizing the availability of gender technical staff in emergencies to support gender mainstreaming in partnership with OCHA and/or UNHCR.
- Prioritizing programmatic activities and fundraising around the provision of economic empowerment and access to justice to survivors of GBV in close partnership with relevant agencies.
- Focusing UN Women leadership contributions around the humanitarian-development continuum, including integrating peacebuilding experiences and mainstreaming gender in national disaster preparedness.
- Leveraging the consistent provision of these concrete contributions to support the case for UN Women membership of IASC.

# ANNEXES

## ANNEX 1

### Coverage and summary of results for each sub-criteria

Criteria and sub-criteria		n*	Cover- age 2017 ‡	Comparabil- ity <sup>4</sup>	Satisfactory ratings †			
					2013	2014 2015	2016	2017
1	Relevance	37	Strong	Strong	80%	85%	96%	97%
1.1	Programs and projects are suited to the needs and/or priorities of the target group	37	Strong	Yes	86%	95%	97%	97%
1.2	Projects and programs align with national development goals	36	Strong	Yes	100%	100%	94%	94%
1.3	Effective partnerships with governments, bilateral and multilateral development and humanitarian organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGO) for planning, coordination and implementation of support to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women	34	Strong	Yes	55%	61%	94%	100%
2	Achieving development objective and expected results (effectiveness)	36	Strong	moderate	89%	64%	96%	86%
2.1	Programs and projects achieve their stated objectives and attain expected results	36	Strong	Yes	90%	88%	97%	83%
2.2	Programs and projects have resulted in positive benefits for target group members	36	Strong	Yes	89%	65%	97%	94%
2.3	Programs and projects made differences for a substantial number of beneficiaries and where appropriate contributed to national development goals	32	Strong	No	75%	33%	94%	81%
2.4	Programs contributed to significant changes in development policies and programs, including for disaster preparedness, emergency response and rehabilitation (policy impacts) and/or to needed system reforms	27	Moderate	No	100%	70%	97%	85%

Criteria and sub-criteria		n*	Cover- age 2017 ‡	Comparabil- ity <sup>4</sup>	Satisfactory ratings †			
					2013	2014 2015	2016	2017
3	Sustainability of Results/Benefits	31	Strong	Low	28%	59%	56%	74%
3.1	Benefits continuing or likely to continue after project or program completion	32	Strong	No	71%	60%	59%	74%
3.2	Projects and programs are reported as sustainable in terms of institutional and/or community capacity	30	Strong	Yes	28%	57%	53%	73%
4	Efficiency <sup>t</sup>	33	Strong	Low	63%	50%	64%	81%
4.1	Program activities are evaluated as cost/resource efficient	33	Strong	No	71%	43%	88%	82%
4.2	Implementation and objectives achieved on time (given the context)	32	Strong	Yes	-	50%	57%	88%
4.3	Systems and procedures for project/program implementation and follow up are efficient, including managing operations and programmes, financial resource issues, human resource issues, risk management, coordination, oversight/governance, project/programme design, coordination, logistical arrangements, etc..	31	Strong	No	55%	57%	46%	74%
5	Culture of results	32	Strong	Low	25%	7%	76%	75%
5.1	Systems and processes for monitoring and reporting on program results are effective	32	Strong	No	33%	7%	79%	75%
5.2	Results based management systems are effective	32	Strong	No	16%	-	74%	75%

\* n = number of evaluations addressing the given sub-criterion.

‡ Strong: n=31–36; Moderate: n=15–30; Weak: n=<15.

† The percentage of satisfactory rating is based on positive findings about UN Women's performance.

<sup>4</sup> Please read chapter on limitations for additional information on the extent to which criteria and indicators are comparable over time.

## ANNEX 2

### Guide to classify evaluation findings

The following classifications guide is based on the global Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) development effectiveness review methods with indicators adapted to UN Women. It has been used in UN Women since 2013.

Criteria	(1) Highly unsatisfactory	(2) Unsatisfactory	(3) Satisfactory	(4) Highly satisfactory
<b>1. Relevance</b>				
1.1 UN Women supported programs and projects are suited to the needs and/or priorities of the target group.	Substantial elements of program or project activities and outputs were unsuited to the needs and priorities of the target group.	No systematic analysis of target group needs and priorities took place during the design phase of developmental or relief and rehabilitation programming or there is some evident mismatch between program and project activities and outputs and the needs and priorities of the target group.	UN Women supported activity, program or project is designed taking into account the needs of the target group as identified through a process of situation or problem analysis (including needs assessment for relief operations) and the resulting activities are designed to meet the needs of the target group.	UN Women supported programs and projects are suited to the needs and/or priorities of the target group.
1.2 UN Women supported development projects and programs align with national development goals.	Significant elements of UN Women supported development program and project activity run counter to national development priorities with a resulting loss of effectiveness.	Significant portion (1/4 or more) of UN Women programs and projects are not aligned with national plans and priorities, but there is no evidence that they run counter to those priorities.	Most UN Women supported development programs and projects are aligned with national plans and priorities as expressed in national poverty eradication and sector plans and priorities.	UN Women supported development projects and programs fully aligned with national development goals.
1.3 UN Women has developed an effective partnership with governments, bilateral and multilateral development and humanitarian organizations and NGOs for planning, coordination and implementation of support to development and/or emergency preparedness, humanitarian relief and rehabilitation efforts.	UN Women experiences significant divergence in priorities from those of its partners (government, UN Agencies, NGO or donor) and lacks a strategy or plan which will credibly address the divergence and which should result in strengthened partnership over time.	UN Women has experienced significant difficulties in developing an effective relationship with partners and there has been significant divergence in the priorities of UN Women and its partners.	UN Women has improved the effectiveness of its partnership relationship with partners over time during the evaluation period and that this partnership was effective at the time of the evaluation or was demonstrably improved.	UN Women has developed an effective partnership with governments, UN agencies, bilateral and multilateral development and humanitarian organizations and NGOs for planning, coordination and implementation of support to development and/or emergency preparedness, and humanitarian relief.

Criteria	(1) Highly unsatisfactory	(2) Unsatisfactory	(3) Satisfactory	(4) Highly satisfactory
<b>2. Achievement of objectives and expected results</b>				
2.1 UN Women supported programs and projects achieve their stated development objectives and attain expected results.	Less than half of stated output and outcome objectives have been achieved including one or more very important output and/or outcome level objectives.	Half or less than half of stated output and outcome level objectives are achieved.	UN Women supported programs and projects either achieve at least a majority of stated output and outcome objectives (more than 50% if stated) or that the most important of stated output and outcome objectives are achieved.	UN Women supported programs and projects achieve all or almost all significant development and/or humanitarian objectives at the output and outcome level.
2.2 UN Women supported programs and projects have resulted in positive benefits for target group members.	Problems in the design or delivery of UN Women supported activities mean that expected positive benefits for target group members have not occurred or are unlikely to occur.	UN Women supported projects and programs result in no or very few positive changes experienced by target group members. These benefits may include the avoidance or reduction of negative effects of a sudden onset or protracted emergency.	UN Women supported projects and programs have resulted in positive changes experienced by target group members at the individual, household, or community level. These benefits may include the avoidance or reduction of negative effects of a sudden onset or protracted emergency.	UN Women supported projects and programs have resulted in widespread and significant positive changes experienced by target group members as measured using either quantitative or qualitative methods. These benefits may include the avoidance or reduction of negative effects of a sudden onset or protracted emergency.
2.3 UN Women programs and projects made differences for a substantial number of beneficiaries and where appropriate contributed to national development goals.	UN Women supported projects and programs have not contributed to positive changes in the lives of beneficiaries as measured quantitatively or qualitatively.	UN Women supported projects and programs have contributed to positive changes in the lives of only a small number of beneficiaries when compared to project or program targets and local or national goals if established.	UN Women supported projects and programs have contributed to positive changes in the lives of substantial numbers of beneficiaries as measured quantitatively or qualitatively.	UN Women supported projects and programs have contributed to positive changes in the lives of substantial numbers of beneficiaries. Further, they have contributed to the achievement of specific national development goals or have contributed to meeting development and humanitarian relief objectives agreed to with the national government and/or national and international development and relief organizations.

Criteria	(1) Highly unsatisfactory	(2) Unsatisfactory	(3) Satisfactory	(4) Highly satisfactory
2.4 UN Women activities contributed to significant changes in national development policies and programs, including disaster preparedness, emergency response and rehabilitation) (policy impacts) and/or to needed system reforms.	National policies and programs in a given sector or area of development, including disaster preparedness, emergency response and rehabilitation were deficient and required strengthening, but UN Women activities have not addressed these deficiencies.	UN Women activities have not made a significant contribution to the development of national policies and programs in a given sector or area of development, disaster preparedness, emergency response or rehabilitation.	UN Women activities have made a substantial contribution to either re-orienting or sustaining effective national policies or programs in a given sector or area of development disaster preparedness, emergency response, or rehabilitation.	UN Women activities have made a substantial contribution to either re-orienting or sustaining effective national policies or programs in a given sector or area of development disaster preparedness, emergency response or rehabilitation. Further, the supported policies and program implementation modalities are expected to result in improved positive impacts for target group members.
<b>3. Sustainability</b>				
3.1 Benefits continuing or likely to continue after project or program completion or there are effective measures to link the humanitarian to longer-term developmental results.	There is a very low probability that the program/project will result in continued intended benefits for the target group after project completion.	There is a low probability that the program/project will result in continued benefits for the target group after completion.	It is likely that the program or project will result in continued benefits for the target group after completion.	It is highly likely that the program or project will result in continued benefits for the target group after completion. Further, they are likely to succeed in securing continuing benefits for target group members.
3.2 Extent UN Women supported projects and programs are reported as sustainable in terms of institutional and/or community capacity.	The design of UN Women supported programs and projects failed to address the need to strengthen institutional and/or community capacity as required. In the case of humanitarian operations, the design of programs and projects failed to take account of identified needs to strengthen local capacities for delivery of relief operations and/or for managing the transition to rehabilitation and/or development.	UN Women programs and projects may have failed to contribute to strengthening institutional and/or community capacity or, where appropriate, to strengthen local capacities for delivery of relief operations and/or for managing the transition to rehabilitation and/or development.	UN Women programs and projects may have contributed to strengthening institutional and/or community capacity, but with limited success.	Either UN Women programs or projects have contributed to significantly strengthen institutional and/or community capacity as required, or institutional partners and communities already had the required capacity to sustain program results.

Criteria	(1) Highly unsatisfactory	(2) Unsatisfactory	(3) Satisfactory	(4) Highly satisfactory
<b>4. Efficiency</b>				
4.1 Program activities are evaluated as cost/resource efficient.	Credible information indicating that UN Women supported programs and projects are not cost/resource efficient.	UN Women supported programs and projects under evaluation do not have credible, reliable information on the costs of activities and inputs and therefore the evaluation is not able to report on cost/resource efficiency. Or UN Women supported programs and projects under evaluation present mixed findings on the cost/resource efficiency of the inputs.	Level of program outputs achieved when compared to the cost of program activities and inputs are appropriate even when the program design process did not directly consider alternative program delivery methods and their associated costs.	UN Women supported programs and projects are designed to include activities and inputs that produce outputs in the most cost/resource efficient manner available at the time.
4.2 Evaluation indicates implementation and objectives achieved on time, given the context, in the case of humanitarian programming.	Less than half of stated output and outcome level objectives of UN Women supported programs and projects are achieved on time, there is no credible plan or legitimate explanation found by the evaluation, which would suggest significant improvement in on-time objectives achievement in the future.	Less than half of stated output and outcome level objectives of UN Women supported programs and projects are achieved on time, but the program or project design has been adjusted to take account of difficulties encountered and can be expected to improve the pace of objectives achievement in the future. In the case of humanitarian programming, there was a legitimate explanation for the delays.	More than half of stated output and outcome level objectives of UN Women supported programs and projects are achieved on time and that this level is appropriate to the context faced by the program during implementation, particularly for humanitarian programming.	Nearly all stated output and outcome level objectives of UN Women supported programs and projects are achieved on time or, in the case of humanitarian programming, a legitimate explanation for delays in the achievement of some outputs/outcomes is provided.
4.3 Evaluation indicates that UN Women systems and procedures for project/program implementation and follow up are efficient, including systems for engaging staff, procuring project inputs, disbursing payment, logistical arrangements, etc.	Serious deficiencies in UN Women systems and procedures for project/program implementation that result in significant delays in project start-up, implementation or completion and/or significant cost increases.	Some deficiencies in UN Women systems and procedures for project/program implementation but does not indicate that these have contributed to delays in achieving project/program objectives.	UN Women systems and procedures for project implementation are reasonably efficient and have not resulted in significant delays or increased costs.	Efficiency of agency systems and procedures for project implementation represent an important organizational strength in the implementation of the program under evaluation.

Criteria	(1) Highly unsatisfactory	(2) Unsatisfactory	(3) Satisfactory	(4) Highly satisfactory
<b>5. Culture of results to improve development effectiveness</b>				
5.1 Systems and processes for monitoring and reporting on program results are effective.	Absence of monitoring and reporting systems programming. This would include the absence of adequate monitoring of outputs during the implementation programmes including in humanitarian setting.	While monitoring and reporting systems for programming exist, either they do not report on a regular basis or they are inadequate in frequency, coverage, or reliability.	Monitoring and reporting systems for programming, as appropriate, are well established and report regularly.	Monitoring and reporting systems for the program are well established and report regularly. The quality of regular reports is rated highly by the evaluation, and results are reportedly used in the management of the program.
5.2 Results Based Management (RBM) systems are effective.	There is no evidence of the existence of an RBM system for the program and no system is being developed.	While an RBM system is in place, or being developed, it is unreliable and does not produce regular reports on program performance.	RBM system is in place and produces regular reports on program performance.	RBM system is in place for the program. There is evidence noted in the evaluation that the system is used to make changes in the program to improve effectiveness.



**ANNEX 3**
**Evaluations completed in 2017**

Region	Office/division	Title of evaluation	Quality rating
<b>WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA</b>	Cameroon	Mainstreaming Gender into Humanitarian Response	Good
	Cameroon	Country Portfolio Evaluation	Good
	Cote d'Ivoire	Country Portfolio Evaluation	Good
	Cote d'Ivoire	Anticipating and Preventing Women and Young Girls' Vulnerability to Terrorism through Their Empowerment, Community Dialogue and Education in the Northern Part of Côte d'Ivoire	Good
	Democratic Republic of Congo	Country Portfolio Evaluation	Very Good
	Regional Office for West and Central Africa (Senegal)	Action Humanitaire Sensible au Genre et Aide aux Femmes et Filles Touchées par le Terrorisme de Boko Haram à Diffa, Niger	Good
<b>EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA</b>	Ethiopia	Joint Programme on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment	Good
	Kenya	Midterm Country Portfolio Evaluation	Good
		Engaging Women in Preventing and Countering Extremist Violence	Good
		Integrating Gender in Peace Support Operations	Good
	Malawi	Gender-based Governance	Good
		Country Portfolio Evaluation	Very Good
	Regional Office for East and Southern Africa (Kenya)	Regional Evaluation on Capacity Development Initiatives during Strategic Note Period	Good
	Sudan	Country Portfolio Evaluation	Very Good
	Tanzania	Wanawake-Wanaweza Project on Women Leadership and Political Participation	Satisfactory
Rwanda	The National Scale Up of the ISANGE One Stop Center Model	Satisfactory	
<b>ASIA AND THE PACIFIC</b>	China	Promote Efforts for National Legislation on Domestic Violence and Upscale the Multi-sector Model in China	Good
	Papua New Guinea	Equality for Progress and Planim Save Kamap Strongpela (Plant Knowledge, Grow Strong)	Good
	Timor-Leste	Institutional Strengthening for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment	Good
	Vietnam	Strengthening Women's Capacity in Disaster Risk Reduction to Cope with Climate Change	Very Good
	Afghanistan	Ending Violence Against Women	Good
	Jordan	Promoting Rural Women's Food Security	Very Good

Region	Office/division	Title of evaluation	Quality rating
<b>ARAB STATES</b>	Regional Office for Arab States (Egypt)	Thematic Evaluation of UN Women's Humanitarian Action in the Arab States Region	Very Good
		Syrian Women Economic Empowerment Regional Project	Good
	Palestine	One-Stop-Shop for Sustainable Development Joint Programme	Good
		Country Portfolio Evaluation	Very Good
	Morocco	Evaluation du Degré d'intégration du Genre dans Les Plans Communaux de Développement	Good
		Projet "Appui aux Femmes Semencières pour un Développement Egalitaire, Solidaire et Durable au Maroc"	Good
	Egypt (Country Office)	Securing Rights and Improving Livelihoods of Women Programme	Good
		Thematic Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to Women's Leadership and Political Participation	Very Good
<b>EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA</b>	Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (Turkey)	UN Women's Contribution to Gender-Responsive Budgeting in Europe and Central Asia Region	Very Good
	Kyrgyzstan	Country Portfolio Evaluation	Very Good
	Moldova	Enhancing Women's Political Representation Through Improved Capacity and Enhanced Support	Very Good
	Moldova	Country Portfolio Evaluation	Good
<b>CORPORATE</b>	IES	UN Women Strategic Partnerships on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment	Very Good
<b>HQ DIVISIONS</b>	Policy Division	Preventing and Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls in Albania, Mexico and Timor-Leste	Very Good
		Women's Economic Empowerment and Integration into the Value Chain of The Coca-Cola Company in Brazil, Egypt and South Africa	Good
	Programme Division	Promoting and Protecting Women Migrant Workers' Labour and Human Rights: Engaging with International National Human Rights Mechanisms to Enhance Accountability	Good

n = number of evaluations addressing the given sub-criterion.

‡ Strong: n=31–39; Moderate: n=15–30; Weak: n=<15.

†The percentage of satisfactory rating is based on positive findings about UN-Women's performance.

Please read chapter on limitations for additional information on the extent to which criteria and indicators are comparable over time.

UN WOMEN IS THE UN ORGANIZATION  
DEDICATED TO GENDER EQUALITY AND  
THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN. A  
GLOBAL CHAMPION FOR WOMEN AND  
GIRLS, UN WOMEN WAS ESTABLISHED  
TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS ON MEETING  
THEIR NEEDS WORLDWIDE.

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to implement these standards. It stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, 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 equality central to national development planning and budgeting. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.

