



Independent  
Evaluation Office

Newsletter – Issue # 13 – April 2016

## Contributing to evaluating the Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015, [UN Women Independent Evaluation Office \(IEO\)](#) was among the leading actors successfully advocating for integrating evaluation into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In 2016, we must be among the leading actors in partnership with governments, other UN agencies, civil society and parliamentarians, to strengthen national capacities for evaluating localized SDGs with a gender lens.

This is why in January 2016, in collaboration with several partners, we initiated a multi-stakeholders e-consultation that culminated in the organization of a high-level event and technical workshop on how to evaluate SDGs with an equity-focused and gender-responsive lens.

This event will inform the development of a framework to evaluate SDGs with a gender lens. The framework will then be used in coming years to strengthen national capacities. With this, we hope to contribute to a mind shift in favor of gender-responsive evaluation and ensure that no one is left behind. We count on you!

I wish you an enjoyable reading.

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

## News

### Leave no one behind: High-level event and technical workshop

From 15 to 17 March 2016, the evaluation community gathered in New York to reflect on how to evaluate SDGs with an equity-



focused and gender-responsive lens. The event was organized under the leadership of the [Independent Evaluation Office \(IEO\) of UN Women](#), [EvalGender+](#) and the [United Nations Evaluation Group \(UNEG\)](#) in collaboration with [EvalPartners](#), the [Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation](#), the [International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation \(IOCE\)](#), [UNICEF](#), [UNFPA](#), [UNDP](#), the [Swiss Development Cooperation](#), the [Mexican National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy \(CONEVAL\)](#), the Government of Sri Lanka and the Government of Tunisia.

The high-level event engaged ministers, parliamentarians, senior leaders from international organizations, and civil society representatives, while the technical workshop addressed technical aspects such as the relevance of the new metrics and agreed indicators, the complexity of the SDGs and the power of partnerships, strategies to strengthen gender responsiveness of national evaluation systems, as well as the demand for and use of evaluation with an equity-focused and gender responsive lens in policy making.

Key take-aways included: the importance of including a transformative lens into evaluation moving beyond the use of disaggregated data to ensure that the voices of women and the most vulnerable are heard. Complexity is the new normal when addressing the SDGs. Evaluation should devise innovative methodological approaches for addressing complexity. Parliamentarians have an important role to play as promoters of gender-responsive evaluation linking policy-makers to evidence to strengthen accountability.

The event marked the culmination of the multi-stakeholders e-consultation launched in January 2016 which aimed at helping strengthen monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems to assess the SDGs with an equity-focused and gender-responsive lens.

To access the event presentations, please click [here](#).

To see a Storify collection of photos and tweets from the event, please click [here](#)



The High-Level and Technical Events were disseminated through Twitter. More than 1,000 tweets were sent using the #EvalGenderSDG hashtag.

Read our Twitter Storify [here](#)

Share on Twitter using the hashtag #EvalGenderSDG

## Webinar on evaluating the SDGs with an equity-focused and gender-responsive lens

On 21 January 2016, a live webinar marked the launch of the multi-stakeholder e-consultation on strengthening M&E systems to assess the SDGs with an equity-focused and gender-responsive lens. This was organized by [EvalGender+](#), [UNEG](#) and [UN Women IEO](#), following the approval of the 17 SDGs by the UN General Assembly.



HE Kabir Hashim (Sri Lanka Minister of Public Enterprise Development, and Chair of the Global Parliamentarian Forum for Evaluation) and Marco Segone (co-chair of EvalGender+, Chair of the United Nations Evaluation Group, and Director of UN Women IEO)

discussed the opportunities and challenges for the global evaluation community to evaluate the SDGs with an equity-focused and gender-responsive lens.

Questions addressed during the webinar included:

- What evaluation questions, to assess interventions, are relevant and are having an impact in decreasing inequity and in achieving results for the worst-off groups?
- What are the methodological, political, social and financial implications in designing, conducting, managing and using evaluations responsive to social equity and gender equality?
- How can we strengthen the capacities of governments, civil society organizations and parliamentarians to evaluate the effect of interventions on equitable outcomes for marginalized populations?

To access the webinar presentation, please [click here](#).

To access the recording of the webinar, please [click here](#).

For more information, please [click here](#).

## **EvalGender+ community four-week multi-stakeholder e-consultation**

Building on the January webinar, a four-week e-consultation launched on 22 January 2016 was hosted by [EvalGender+](#) community of practice with queries posted in six languages ([Arabic](#), [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#), [Russian](#), and [Portuguese](#)).

The online consultation focused on 4 themes:

### **1. The relevance of “new metrics” (measurement tools and indicators) for the evaluation of the SDGs from an equity-focused and gender-responsive perspective**

To capture gender dimensions and social change, participants agreed that current data collection methods have limitations (e.g. institutional capacities

and systemic lack of M&E resources) and that the use of sex disaggregated data is not enough. New data collection methods could be envisaged, such as geospatial, social media, and "big" data. Participants also observed the need to develop the SDG country-level indicators owned by the communities and reflecting cultural contexts.

## **2. Evaluation and complexity—dealing with the increasing complexity of development and interconnectedness of the SDGs to ensure “no one is left behind”**

Participants discussed evaluation strategies to overcome complexity challenges, in particular understanding the power relation dynamics and the SDG interconnectedness through systems thinking, emergent processes, strengthened monitoring systems, and “complexity aware” theories of change.

## **3. Towards equity-focused and gender-responsive national evaluation systems—multi-stakeholder partnerships to strengthen national evaluation capacities**

Participants discussed some challenges that national evaluation systems face when evaluating social equity and gender equality, and laid out some solutions for the future (i.e. retain institutional memory, build capacity, involve multiple stakeholders, non-state and state actors, standardize and improve data collection on social inclusion, and better manage information systems).

## **4. Demand for and use of evidence from equity-focused and gender responsive evaluation to inform equitable development**

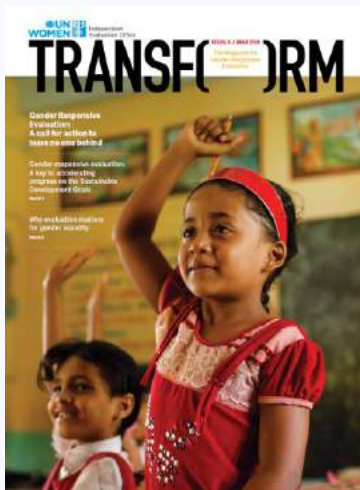
Under this item, participants discussed factors affecting the demand for use of evaluations, in particular social equity and gender equality evaluations. Although it was agreed that no dissemination format would be a magical recipe for use, participatory processes, formative evaluations and recommendations’ tracking mechanisms were identified as means to enhance evaluation use.

**To know more about the online consultation, please sign up to the Gender and Evaluation community [here](#) and then [click here](#).**

## Global Evaluation Agenda 2020

We have the pleasure to inform you that the [executive summary](#) and [full version](#) of the Global Evaluation Agenda 2016-2020 (EvalAgenda2020) is now available [online](#). The process was initiated by EvalPartners, under the leadership of UN Women IEO, and included contributions from many of the [92 events](#) around the world marking the International Year of Evaluation 2015 (EvalYear). Building on the great achievements during the first four years of EvalPartners, EvalAgenda2020 provides a vision and plan to guide the global evaluation community during the first five years of the 15-year scope of the SDGs.

Please note that Gender equality is central to EvalAgenda 2020, as stated in the introduction: *“Evaluation is not simply a value-neutral management tool. EvalPartners’ members are united by a shared commitment to promoting and supporting equitable and sustainable human development. Our alliance promotes evaluation processes and criteria grounded in values of equity, **gender equality**, and social justice and on shared principles of partnership, innovation, inclusivity, and human rights”.*



### Launch of TRANSFORM issue 6

### Gender-responsive evaluation: A call for action to leave no one behind

[TRANSFORM](#) is the first magazine exclusively dedicated to gender-responsive evaluation. Published by [UN Women IEO](#), it aims to communicate good practices on gender-responsive evaluations and evaluation

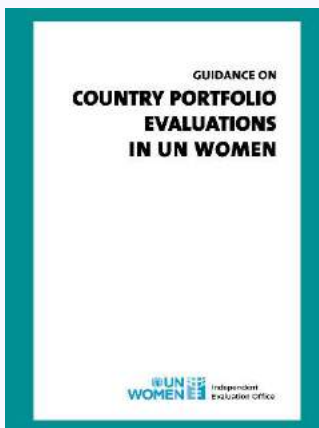
findings.

Gender-responsive evaluation can play a significant role in accelerating progress on the SDGs, provided that evaluators and the global evaluation community agree to integrate gender equality in their evaluations. In this

latest issue, IEO looks at how global partnerships for evaluation, UN system-wide coordination on evaluation, and the UN Women evaluation function can all contribute to making this a reality.

Click [here](#) to access Transform Issue #6 on Gender-responsive evaluation: A call for action to leave no one behind.

Click [here](#) to access all TRANSFORM issues.



## A new Country Portfolio Evaluation Guidance

[UN Women IEO](#) has developed a new Country Portfolio Evaluation (CPE) Guidance.

The [CPE](#) approach and methodology has been developed to assess UN Women's contributions to results at the country level while shifting the focus from activities and outputs towards medium/long-term results. Using the Strategic Note as main point of reference, the CPE guidance responds to both the triple mandate of UN Women, as well as to the specific needs for accountability, learning, and decision-making on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The CPE Guidance has been designed to ensure greater rigor, consistency and well-suited methodology in CPEs while providing flexibility to cater to varied contexts and country typologies. The Guidance includes three sets of model documents that provide a series of default options for the design of CPEs. The CPE approach was successfully piloted in 2015 in two country offices and one multi-country office.

The main audiences of this guidance are UN Women staff and evaluators involved in commissioning and managing UN Women CPEs, however, it may



also provide useful approaches for integrating gender equality in country level evaluations being carried out by other evaluation offices.

We hope you find this Guidance useful to further bolster an evaluation culture and build your capacity to conduct high-quality, credible and impartial country-level evaluations.

Please [click here](#) to access the CPE Guidance.



## A new Gender Evaluation Consultants Database

The UN Women Independent Evaluation Office is pleased to

announce the new Gender Evaluation Consultants Database, which aims to connect consultants that have reported a combination of experience applying human rights and/or gender equality analysis to evaluation, with hiring managers seeking professionals with those areas of expertise.

**For more information, or to search or join the database as a manager or evaluator, please clear [here](#)**

**Help us spread the news by tweeting:**

Hiring managers: Looking for evaluators w gender equality & human rights expertise? Find them on @unwomeneval GECD <http://ow.ly/Y58v5>

## UN Women's Global Evaluation Advisory Committee

In December 2015, the [UN Women Global Evaluation Advisory Committee](#) met to discuss progress of the [UN Women IEO](#) and discuss future directions for evaluation at UN Women. Part of the meeting was devoted to the role of evaluation in making UN Women fit for the [2030 Agenda](#) and enhancing the use of evaluation to support the achievement of gender equality. Panelists highlighted the importance of evaluation for facilitating an understanding of



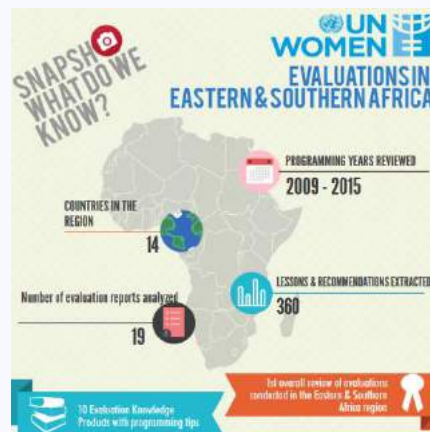
the effects of programming in the lives of women as well as the importance of looking at how gender intersects with other inequalities through evaluation. Among the panelists, Caroline Heider, Director General, Independent Evaluation Group, World Bank, emphasized the importance of drawing links between evaluation findings and normative intergovernmental processes and demonstrating the value of evaluation through leadership commitment and action. The IEO is grateful for the participants' contributions and the rich discussion, which provided "food for thought" on the focus of IEO work in the coming year.

## News From the Field

### East and South Africa:

#### Using evaluation to inform programming

Within UN Women, we think it is crucial that our programmes are evidence-based and build upon lessons learned from previous interventions. [UN Women IEO](#) therefore works to ensure that a core part of this process involves using the conclusions, findings, lessons and recommendations from the evaluations we conduct. On this basis, the Evaluation Unit of UN Women Eastern & Southern Africa (ESA) Regional Office undertook a review and analysis of all the evaluations conducted in the region between 2009 and 2015 and developed a database on lessons and recommendations from the 19 evaluations.



Based on this evidence, we developed a series of evaluation knowledge management products. The products were developed to cover and present the largest amount of evidence according to UN Women's thematic areas, operating principles and organizational priorities. This was accomplished by populating the database with lessons and recommendations from all

evaluations, then “tagging” the information that related to thematic areas, operating principles and organizational priorities. Finally, a combination of searches was run and the top 10 searches with the most evidence were selected.

Now, a series of 10 short programming guides with top tips and information from lessons learned is being developed and published in early 2016. The first six guides have been published; they can be found on the [UN Women Africa digital library](#). We encourage you to read, download and share them widely!

The aim is for colleagues to use these guides during project or programme planning processes. We also encourage UN Women staff to circulate them amongst their partners.

For any questions or information, please contact Ilena Paltzer at [ilena.paltzer@unwomen.org](mailto:ilena.paltzer@unwomen.org).



## East and South Africa:

### Building Gender Responsive and Transformative National Evaluation Capacity

UN Women Eastern and Southern Africa Office finalized the Training Manual “Building Gender Responsive and Transformative National Evaluation Capacity.” This is the product of a fruitful collaboration with the [Africa Centre for Transformative and Inclusive Leadership \(ACTIL\)](#) and [EvalGender+](#).

The training curriculum was successfully tested during a pilot training in November 2015 with participants from Egypt, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda and Uganda.

The Training Manual is particularly relevant in the context of the current discussion on localizing the SDGs, calling for effective and inclusive M&E systems at the national level that support countries to evaluate their SDGs from an equity and gender-responsive perspective. It also responds to the 2014 UN resolution A/RES/69/237 “*Building capacity for evaluation of development activities at the country level*”.

[Click here](#) to access the Training Manual.

For further information please contact [caspar.merkle@unwomen.org](mailto:caspar.merkle@unwomen.org)


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## Latin America and the Caribbean:

### Shaping strategic planning

In order to facilitate learning from evaluations, a meta-analysis of decentralized evaluations in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region was carried out in mid-2015. Disseminated before last year’s planning process started, it was used as an input to elaborate the Americas and the Caribbean Regional Office’s Strategic Note for 2016-2017 and the (multi-) country offices’ Annual Work Plans.

The meta-analysis is based on the conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned from 16 evaluations successfully conducted in the region between 2011 and 2014. Nine evaluations of the country offices and seven evaluations of the [Fund for Gender Equality](#) programmes were included in the analysis. By analyzing more than 400 statements using the same methodology, it was possible to derive useful information related to UN



¿Qué podemos aprender de las evaluaciones de ONU Mujeres en América Latina y El Caribe?

Meta-análisis de las evaluaciones del periodo 2011 a 2014

Women's organizational priorities, operational principles and the [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee's \(OECD-DAC's\)](#) criteria on multilateral organizations' effectiveness.

For more information, please contact Laura Gonzalez, UN Women Regional Evaluation Specialist for the Americas and the Caribbean at [laura.gonzalez@unwomen.org](mailto:laura.gonzalez@unwomen.org).



## Latin America and the Caribbean:

### Strengthening national evaluation capacities

In the framework of the UN Women National Evaluation Capacities Development Strategy, the UN Women Regional Office for the

Americas and the Caribbean (ACRO) and Ecuador Country Office supported the Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Cults in Ecuador to build the M&E system for the National Plan to Eradicate Gender Violence against Childhood, Adolescence and Women (PNEVG) and the Action Plan 2015-2017.

- A two-day training workshop on how to build an M&E system was organized on 16-17 November 2015 with the participation of multi-sectorial staff (six ministries and two national councils)
- An M&E system based on the goals established in the Action Plan 2015-2017 and linked with the national information systems (INEC) and the "Indicators for Measuring the Implementation of the Belem do Para Convention" was developed
- Training material and technical assistance guidance documents were created to replicate this process in other countries of the region

For more information, please contact Laura Gonzalez, UN Women Regional Evaluation Specialist for the Americas and the Caribbean at [laura.gonzalez@unwomen.org](mailto:laura.gonzalez@unwomen.org).



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

Contact Summer Brennan ([summer.brennan@unwomen.org](mailto:summer.brennan@unwomen.org)) with questions or for more information on social media.

**For any other information contact Alexandra Capello**  
([alexandra.capello@unwomen.org](mailto:alexandra.capello@unwomen.org))

## **About the Independent Evaluation Office**

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

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

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