



# Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

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### Evaluation

## Report on the corporate evaluation of UN-Women's support to intergovernmental processes

### *Summary*

This report summarizes the corporate evaluation of UN-Women's support to intergovernmental processes.

The purpose of the evaluation was to contribute to strategic decision-making, learning and accountability. The evaluation examined the relevance, effectiveness, added value and adaptability of UN-Women's support to intergovernmental processes.

The evaluation time frame spanned from January 2022 to December 2025, aligning with the UN-Women Strategic Plan 2022–2025. The geographic scope covered support to intergovernmental processes at global, regional and national levels.

The primary intended users of the evaluation are the UN-Women Executive Board, UN-Women senior management, the Intergovernmental Support Section (part of the Policy, Programme and Intergovernmental Division), liaison, regional and country offices, and personnel directly working on or with an interest in UN-Women's support to intergovernmental processes.

## I. Background

1. The independent corporate evaluation of UN-Women's support to intergovernmental processes was conducted by UN-Women's Independent Evaluation Service of the Independent Evaluation, Audit and Investigations Services. The evaluation was initiated in April 2025 and the report completed in January 2026. It covered the period from January 2022 to December 2025, aligning with the UN-Women Strategic Plan 2022–2025.

2. The key purpose of the evaluation was to assess the relevance, effectiveness, added value and adaptability of UN-Women's support to intergovernmental processes during the years 2022–2025. It identified the processes supported and modalities used; reviewed internal organizational arrangements; and examined how UN-Women adapted to the changing environment. The evaluation developed recommendations to strengthen this area of work and inform strategic decision-making, learning and accountability.

3. The key evaluation questions were:

- What were UN-Women's key contributions to intergovernmental processes?
- How does UN-Women's organizational structure drive coherence and alignment in its support to intergovernmental processes across global offices, and at regional and country levels?
- How does UN-Women adapt its support to intergovernmental processes in light of changing priorities, constraints and opportunities within this space?

4. The evaluation acknowledges that primary responsibility for driving intergovernmental processes and implementing their outcomes lies with Member States, while UN-Women's role is strictly supportive.

## II. Evaluation approach and methodology

5. The evaluation employed a theory-informed, mixed methods and utilization-focused approach designed to maximize the usefulness of the findings and the process itself for UN-Women personnel and their work in this area.

6. The evaluation drew on primary and secondary data. In total, 153 people were consulted through key informant interviews and three online surveys targeting country, regional and liaison offices, global office personnel and Member State representatives. Secondary data included portfolio and desk reviews of relevant evaluations, strategic documents and reports.

7. To assess UN-Women's contributions to results, the evaluation conducted seven case study reviews covering UN-Women's support to four global intergovernmental processes: the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), the High-Level Political Forum, the Human Rights Council (HRC) and the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP); and three regional intergovernmental processes involving the African Union, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean's Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, and intergovernmental processes in the Europe and Central Asia region.

8. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the UN-Women Evaluation Policy (UNW/2020/5/Rev.1)<sup>1</sup> and the United Nations Evaluation Group Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System.<sup>2</sup>

### III. UN-Women support to intergovernmental processes

9. Intergovernmental forums provide, inter alia, space for Member States to discuss and agree on global and regional norms and standards, including those related to gender equality and women and girls' human rights. These norms and standards guide actions by governments and stakeholders at global, regional and national levels, influencing the development and improvement of laws, policies and programmes.

10. As part of its mandate, UN-Women supports Member States by providing technical support, conducting research and sharing best practices and lessons learned to inform intergovernmental processes. UN-Women also supports policy advocacy; promotes dialogue among different key stakeholders; and facilitates the participation of civil society to ensure women's perspectives are included in intergovernmental spaces. At the request of Member States, UN-Women helps to implement global and regional standards through country programmes, and leads the coordination of United Nations system-wide efforts to promote gender equality. The current context, characterized by growing backlash against long-standing commitments on gender equality and women and girls' human rights, and challenges to multilateralism, underscores the relevance and critical role of UN-Women's intergovernmental support work.

11. UN-Women's Strategic Plan (2022–2025) emphasized intergovernmental engagement as a key lever to advance gender equality, in line with the Entity's mandate. This work aligns most closely with the Strategic Plan's systemic outcome on global normative frameworks and laws, policies and institutions that advance gender equality outcomes. Between 2022 and 2024, UN-Women reported consistently meeting or exceeding most strategic targets for key indicators related to intergovernmental support. The Entity reported that it integrated gender equality in United Nations resolutions as per established targets. UN-Women also maintained a strong influence in shaping CSW outcomes, effectively supporting the integration of recommendations from the Secretary-General's Report into Agreed Conclusions. With regard to governments undertaking Voluntary National Review processes, UN-Women had expanded national-level engagement significantly by 2024 and ensured the timely delivery of technical knowledge products to support intergovernmental decision-making. Overall, UN-Women's performance over the period reflects the Entity's growing impact on advancing gender equality through global and national policy frameworks.

### IV. Key evaluation findings

#### UN-Women's contributions to intergovernmental processes

12. UN-Women's support to intergovernmental processes during 2022–2025 was highly valued by Member States and other stakeholders. The evaluation found the support to be strategically relevant for advancing the global normative framework on women's rights and gender equality. However, the evaluation also identified structural

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/08/evaluation-policy-of-the-united-nations-entity-for-gender-equality-and-the-empowerment-of-women>

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Evaluation Group, *Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation* (2020). Available at <http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp>

and resource constraints that limit coherence across organizational levels (global, regional and country) and the sustainability of results over time.

13. The evaluation categorized 29 intergovernmental processes supported by UN-Women across global offices and regional and country levels during the period under evaluation (2022–2025). Six distinct but interrelated modalities of support were identified: technical and strategic advisory support; convening and multi-stakeholder engagement; advocacy and political engagement with governments; implementation support; capacity-building and knowledge-sharing; and the amplification of women’s voices, including organizational and logistical support for women’s group participation at key events. These six categories were used to assess how UN-Women’s support contributed to outcomes in intergovernmental processes. While the evaluation categorized UN-Women’s support into distinct types, the practical examples often revealed significant overlap. For instance, technical support frequently underpinned capacity-development initiatives, and convening was embedded within efforts to amplify women’s perspectives. This interconnectedness reflects the integrated nature of UN-Women’s work and mandate, where different support modalities reinforce each other to achieve broader outcomes for gender equality and women’s empowerment.

14. UN-Women’s technical and strategic advisory support was consistently identified as one of its most effective contributions to advancing gender equality outcomes in intergovernmental spaces. The clearest evidence of results from this modality of support was found in UN-Women’s CSW engagement. UN-Women’s annual support to CSW was uniformly cited by internal and external stakeholders, including Member States, as a key contribution to the adoption of Agreed Conclusions. UN-Women’s critical technical and organizational support prior to and during negotiations was noted to have contributed to the adoption of Agreed Conclusions and political declarations by consensus. Successful support to CSW is largely attributed to UN-Women’s institutional and historical knowledge, strong relationships with Member States, and ability to maintain a “neutral” stance while providing relevant research/reports, intelligence and other tailored forms of support. Across the three CSW sessions reviewed (2022–2024), between 91 and 97 per cent of recommendations from the Secretary-General’s report, developed with UN-Women’s technical support, were ultimately reflected in the Agreed Conclusions adopted by Member States.

15. UN-Women’s evidence-based inputs, most notably the flagship Gender Snapshot (developed jointly by the UN-Women Research and Data Section with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs [UN DESA]), were repeatedly used by Member States to strengthen negotiations across intergovernmental processes such as CSW, the General Assembly, the High-Level Political Forum and the HRC. Other examples of evidence-based inputs supported by UN-Women included knowledge products (e.g. expert group papers) to support CSW negotiations prior to, within and following the official sessions. Stakeholders also mentioned the use of knowledge products such as the 2025 Gender Equality and Climate Policy Scorecard to track how effectively countries are responding to the impact of climate change while promoting women’s participation and leadership in climate action.

16. Additional examples of technical support include the role UN-Women played in assisting Member States in drafting a resolution on promoting care and support systems for social development (ECOSOC 2024/4). Similarly, UN-Women was substantially engaged in supporting negotiation of the resolution on women and diplomacy and human rights, working closely with the co-sponsor to review the initial draft and make it a stronger document.

17. Convening and multi-stakeholder engagement also emerged as a distinct comparative advantage for UN-Women, reinforcing coherence among governments, United Nations agencies and civil society. As substantive Secretariat of CSW, UN-Women facilitated inclusive high-level dialogues and expert consultations that substantially contributed to consensus outcomes and strengthened global commitments.

In the context of the Beijing+30 review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, UN-Women leveraged its convening role to support multi-level preparations and alignment across intergovernmental processes. This included supporting regional review processes with regional economic commissions and facilitating strategic information-sharing across global offices, and at regional and country levels in preparation for CSW 69 and Beijing+30.

18. At regional level, UN-Women’s co-ordination of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean alongside the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean contributed to Member States adopting the 2022 Buenos Aires Commitment and the 2025 Tlatelolco Commitment, both of which elevated “care” as a regional political priority. This regional engagement contributed directly to a biregional Pact for Care between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean. UN-Women’s convening role also expanded civil society access in other intergovernmental spaces, including the HRC and COPs.

19. Strategic collaboration with Member States, United Nations agencies and civil society organizations (CSOs) was considered generally strong and perceived as central to the Entity’s effectiveness, e.g. its collaborative work with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), UNFPA and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) at the HRC sessions.

20. The evaluation found that UN-Women’s unique normative mandate and role as a neutral broker continued to underpin its credibility. Member States that were consulted as part of the evaluation consistently recognized the Entity as the authoritative source on gender equality and welcomed its ability to provide guidance, at their request, during negotiations on sensitive issues. The Entity was perceived as strongly including intersectionality in its work, particularly through technical guidance and advocacy for all women and girls, including those belonging to marginalized groups. UN-Women facilitated the participation of indigenous women at HRC sessions, and supported regional consultations in collaboration with OHCHR that were said to have contributed substantively to Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) General Recommendation 40 on the equal and inclusive participation and representation of women in decision-making systems. While civil society engagement was generally strong, particularly at CSW, engagement with youth-led, rural and disability-focused organizations remained uneven, especially at regional and country levels, pointing to the need for more systematic inclusion approaches.

### **How UN-Women organizes its support**

21. The evaluation found that UN-Women had introduced some effective measures to strengthen intergovernmental-related coordination and alignment across the organization. For instance, in June 2025, UN-Women created a new section on Human Rights and Non-Discrimination within the Geneva Office, under the Policy, Programme and Intergovernmental Division, aimed at strengthening coordination and coherence in its work in these areas, and ensuring a more direct connection with regional and country offices to further advance accountability for normative commitments. Other measures to strengthen intergovernmental coordination included the introduction in 2023 of regional personnel known as “sherpas”, who support regional preparatory processes and act as an important link between regional intergovernmental preparations and global negotiations. These sherpas support political engagement with governments from their region in the negotiation process and coordinate follow-up implementation of global commitments in the regions. The sherpas also engage in cross-divisional task forces for major processes (e.g. CSW, COPs), which have contributed to intergovernmental coordination, alignment and follow-through at global, regional and country levels.

22. Nevertheless, some stakeholders highlighted perceived structural challenges related to UN-Women’s intergovernmental support work, including fragmented internal communication between global and regional offices, on the one hand, and liaison offices that work on intergovernmental support, on the other hand; and areas for improvement

in internal communication on standardized processes for CSW preparation. The reliance on regular budget resources for intergovernmental work at a time when such resources have come under increasing pressure was also noted, and reiterated as a limitation by stakeholders. This underscored the importance of safeguarding and strengthening UN-Women's regular budget funding base, while also exploring complementary approaches to enhance resilience and sustainability in a manner fully consistent with UN-Women's normative mandate and founding resolution. Assessment of internal UN-Women practices showed that personnel often did not adequately capture contributions to intergovernmental outcomes through monitoring and reporting systems, limiting the visibility of UN-Women's impact.

23. The translation of global and regional commitments into country-level outcomes remained uneven. While many country offices embedded intergovernmental work in their Strategic Notes, follow-up mechanisms, for example to CSW Agreed Conclusions, were inconsistent. Strong examples exist, such as the launch of the UN-Women strategic framework to prevent and eliminate technology-facilitated violence against women, which was recognized in the Agreed Conclusions of CSW 67 and the Global Digital Compact, and directly linking CSW commitments to actionable steps. Also of significance was the CSW Feedback Forum in the Philippines, and UN-Women's support to leading to the adoption of 30 national and local care policies across 11 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

### **How UN-Women adapts to change in intergovernmental processes**

24. UN-Women demonstrated adaptability and resilience in responding to the growing pushback on long-standing commitments on gender equality and women and girl's human rights, leveraging evidence-based messaging, strengthened partnerships and strategic political analysis. This was realized with a range of strategies to ensure stakeholders have access to data and evidence-based knowledge to inform decision-making. For instance, UN-Women played an important role as the substantive Secretariat of the CSW during its revitalization process, supporting effective implementation of gender equality commitments. The revitalization process culminated in the adoption of a resolution in September 2025 to make CSW more accountable and dynamic.

25. In terms of sustainability, stakeholders stressed the need for UN-Women to continue adapting to a resource-scarce scenario. This could include through the growing use of new technologies, e.g. for convening, and even rethinking what intergovernmental support is or entails in a resource-scarce context. UN-Women has been effective at building strategic partnerships in the context of intergovernmental support, but also needs to move towards more strategic collaboration in those cases where engagement remains ad hoc and fragmented, to help define common outcomes, align resources and/or clarify accountability. Stakeholders underscored the need for stronger coordination with the United Nations system based on long-term, collaborative processes that prioritize consultation to strengthen the sustainability of UN-Women's intergovernmental support.

## **V. Evaluation conclusions**

**Conclusion 1: UN-Women has successfully contributed to raising awareness; delivered technical support; and strengthened collaboration among various stakeholders in intergovernmental processes by effectively using its unique normative role, leading global agreements such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and as the substantive secretariat of CSW, alongside its reputation as a trusted knowledgeable broker.**

26. Stakeholders highly rated UN-Women's ability to act as a strategic convener and trusted broker to lead multi-stakeholder dialogues. This convening contributed to

intergovernmental coherence and the translation of national priorities into normative consensus.

**Conclusion 2: UN-Women’s approach to partnerships was found to be comprehensive and valuable in supporting intergovernmental work. UN-Women’s multi-stakeholder approach ensured that gender equality expertise and women’s perspectives were integrated into diverse intergovernmental processes.**

27. UN-Women was perceived to have successfully cultivated trusting, close working relationships with Member States, acting as a constructive partner providing specialized expertise and often supporting Member States to ensure that governments maintain ownership of strong and forward-looking outcomes that advance gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. UN-Women’s recognized authority for gender equality and its coordination mandate has enabled systematic collaboration within the United Nations system. However, some internal organizational challenges have limited internal coherence. The evaluation found some cases of internal fragmentation where intergovernmental-related coordination between global, liaison, regional and country offices limited a fully effective and coherent approach with all partners undertaking this work.

**Conclusion 3: During 2025, UN-Women introduced a series of innovations to strengthen internal coordination towards a more integrated and cohesive approach. However, there is a need to improve under-leveraged reporting practices and connections between different offices providing intergovernmental support to maximize UN-Women’s offer in this area.**

28. The measures UN-Women introduced to foster internal alignment, such as appointing intergovernmental focal points (sherpas) at regional level and creating a new section on Human Rights and Non-Discrimination within the Geneva Office, have great potential to ensure that the Entity enhances internal coherence. Ensuring efficient and strategic reporting and the measurement of results would support the organization in these efforts; however, evidence showed that UN-Women will need to improve its reporting practices to ensure the significance of its intergovernmental work is adequately captured.

**Conclusion 4: The sustainability of UN-Women’s support to intergovernmental processes is characterized by effective adaptation and resilience in the face of the growing backlash against long-standing commitments on gender equality and declining resources.**

29. To ensure the long-term sustainability of UN-Women’s intergovernmental support work, there is a need for enhanced intergovernmental coordination across the United Nations system; increased organizational effectiveness in this area, especially in terms of maximizing available financial and human resources; and streamlining the Entity’s approach to this type of work. Investing in institutional memory; documenting results and good practices; and inclusive participation of CSOs will also be important to sustain progress in an increasingly challenging multilateral landscape.

## VI. Key recommendations

30. Two recommendations are presented below. Together, they constitute a mutually reinforcing framework: the first addresses the internal architecture needed to guide and sustain UN-Women’s intergovernmental support work; the second addresses the external relationships and partnership ecosystems required to amplify impact.

**Recommendation 1: UN-Women should lead an internal process to develop a strategy for its support to intergovernmental processes that articulates a clear vision, defines roles and responsibilities, and includes the intergovernmental support offer at country, regional and global levels.**

28. This would help to strengthen clarity and coherence on how UN-Women operates at an intergovernmental level across substantive teams. The strategy should be aligned with UN-Women's Strategic Plan.

29. Key actions for its implementation should include a collaborative and consultative internal process to develop a strategy that establishes a clear institutional vision and operational framework, including an explicit articulation of what the intergovernmental support offer entails at country, regional and global levels. The strategy should be accompanied by a dedicated CSW playbook to ensure consistent and high-quality engagement in key CSW intergovernmental processes, and should be shared broadly within the organization to align internal planning, monitoring and communication practices. Regular joint planning mechanisms across global, regional and liaison offices should be established to reduce potential duplication, strengthen coherence and ensure that UN-Women's contributions to normative results are systematically captured and reported.

**Recommendation 2: UN-Women should strengthen its overall engagement with partners (Member States, CSOs, United Nations system) by developing a systematic approach to its partnership ecosystem based on existing UN-Women political engagement strategies.**

30. This recommendation emphasizes leveraging UN-Women's coordination and convening roles to further enhance use of existing mechanisms (at global, regional and local levels) to formalize joint knowledge products, co-lead joint briefings and co-produce policy papers to promote a unified and integrated approach to gender equality in key intergovernmental processes and spaces. Closer and more systematic partnerships with CSOs should also be developed in the context of intergovernmental work, including through more structured and consistent engagement.

31. Building on existing political engagement strategies, the Intergovernmental Support Section should systematically map partners engaged in intergovernmental support at global and regional levels, capturing internal mechanisms, formalized partnerships (including memorandums of understanding) and informal collaborations. For United Nations system partners, this should involve strengthening the use of existing coordination mechanisms through joint knowledge products, co-led briefings and co-produced policy papers. CSO engagement should be further institutionalized to facilitate the participation of new and diverse organizations, with targeted measures to address barriers to inclusion at regional and country levels, including capacity-building initiatives and expanded opportunities for CSOs to contribute as substantive voices in intergovernmental meetings. For Member States, standardized capacity-strengthening packages should be developed for personnel involved in intergovernmental processes. These efforts should be consolidated into a partnership road map that aligns internal organizational support functions and sustains engagement with all partners over time.

## Annex 1

### Evaluation findings

**Finding 1:** Technical and strategic advisory support to intergovernmental processes was a key type of support that contributed effectively to advancing norms and standards. When coupled with solid evidence and data produced by UN-Women, such support contributed towards stronger integration of gender perspectives in intergovernmental processes and increased the availability of evidence-based data and tools to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

**Finding 2:** The convening and multi-stakeholder engagement support provided by UN-Women, together with the amplification of women's voices, effectively contributed to intergovernmental coherence; translating national priorities into unified regional and global normative consensus; and ensuring voices from marginalized groups were reflected in policy outcomes.

**Finding 3:** UN-Women was perceived as effective and strategic in its collaboration with partners (especially through close cooperation with Member States and CSOs), which is central to supporting intergovernmental work, even when engagement with CSOs sometimes remained uneven. While the Entity's United Nations coordination for intergovernmental work was perceived as effective, there is potential for UN-Women to further leverage coordination mechanisms in this area, especially at the regional and country levels to enhance coherence across different contexts.

**Finding 4:** UN-Women is widely recognized by stakeholders for its unique and authoritative normative mandate on gender equality and women and girl's human rights. Its normative leadership, especially in supporting global processes such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action review and CSW, sets it apart in intergovernmental work. The Entity's perceived value in its normative mandate is complemented by its reputation as a neutral broker, which is equally highly rated by stakeholders.

**Finding 5:** UN-Women was widely acknowledged for its intersectional approach to intergovernmental support work, particularly through technical support, evidence-based advocacy and facilitating the participation of all women and girls, including marginalized groups of women. While there is evidence of progress in including an intersectional lens, the translation of guidance into concrete language, capacity-building and representation of marginalized groups remained uneven in intergovernmental processes.

**Finding 6:** UN-Women introduced effective measures to strengthen coordination and alignment across the organization, introducing changes in its structure and developing innovative mechanisms. Despite this, some structural and efficiency challenges exist, such as inconsistent communication flow and some uncoordinated planning; reliance on regular resources; and reporting that does not fully capture results related to support to intergovernmental processes.

**Finding 7:** While UN-Women has designed country programmes to leverage intergovernmental processes effectively, their translation into actual outcomes at the country level remains uneven.

**Finding 8:** UN-Women was able to effectively adapt its intergovernmental support to changing priorities, constraints and opportunities within the intergovernmental space, particularly responding to the growing backlash on long-standing commitments to gender equality and women and girls' human rights. While there is evidence of good practices, increasing United Nations system coordination in intergovernmental spaces would further strengthen efforts at countering backlash.

**Finding 9:** The strengthening and sustainability of intergovernmental support work would benefit from securing predictable dedicated funding; deepening strategic partnerships with Member States, the United Nations system and CSOs; and ensuring the translation of global and regional frameworks into context-specific actions at the national level.