



2014-2017 Corporate Evaluation Plan (CEP)

Revised version

This version of the 2014-2017 Corporate Evaluation Plan (CEP) was revised in consultation with the Senior Management Team and approved by the Executive Director. The purpose of the revision is to ensure that the organization has adequate time to absorb the body of evidence produced by corporate evaluations, and act upon the relative recommendations, with the aim of ensuring evaluations are transformative. The revision consists in changing the schedule of the Corporate Evaluations planned to be delivered in 2017.

Independent Evaluation Office
March 2016

Executive Summary

The purpose of the 2014-2017 Corporate Evaluation Plan (CEP) is to provide a coherent framework within which useful evaluation evidence is generated systematically on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and, as far as possible, impact and sustainability, of work under the UN Women Strategic Plan 2014-2017.

This Corporate Evaluation Plan outlines the Corporate Evaluations to be managed by the Independent Evaluation Office in the period 2014-2017, aligned with UN Women's Strategic Plan 2014-2017. It foresees a total 14 corporate evaluations in 4 years, including 6 major evaluations, 4 evaluations that are narrower in scope and 4 meta-analysis of decentralized evaluations.

The corporate evaluations proposed have been selected based on the parameters and requirements of UN Women Evaluation Policy, and applied to the UN Women 2014-2017 Strategic Plan in order to cover its Impact areas and OEEF output clusters.

The total funding requirement to implement the CEP is estimated in \$2,950,000 over 4 years (an annual average of \$737,500), excluding staff costs and other costs related to strengthening the decentralized evaluation function; promoting UN coherence; and strengthening national evaluation capacity.

Progress in plan implementation will be reported in the Annual Report on the Evaluation Function presented to the Board each year, as well as to the Global Evaluation Committee and the Senior Management Team.

The main risks to implementation of the Evaluation Plan concern mobilization of adequate resources, enhancing staffing and more broadly any major issues affecting implementation of UN Women's Strategic Plan.

1. Background and purpose of the Corporate Evaluation Plan

Evaluation in UN Women is defined as a systematic and impartial assessment that provides credible and reliable evidence-based information for understanding the extent to which an intervention has achieved or made progress (or lack thereof) towards intended and unintended results on gender equality and the empowerment of women. The purpose of evaluation in UN Women 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's Independent Evaluation Office contributes to oversight of UN Women's work through its programme of evaluations, notably its series of corporate evaluations. They are independent assessments undertaken by the Independent Evaluation Office with the support of external evaluators. Corporate evaluations provide impartial overviews of key areas of UN Women's work with a view to promoting accountability, learning and performance improvement. They are carried out in consultation with national governments and other stakeholders to ensure the validity of evidence and greater ownership of development results. The reports of these evaluations are all published, contributing to UN Women's transparency and accountability as well as to global knowledge on what works for gender equality.

The purpose of the 2014-2017 Corporate Evaluation Plan (CEP) is to provide a coherent framework within which useful evaluation evidence is generated systematically on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and, as far as possible, impact and sustainability, of work under the UN Women Strategic Plan 2014-2017. The eventual goal of these evaluations is to support UN Women's mission and help the organization better serve gender equality and women empowerment.

This document presents the plan for corporate evaluations to be managed by Independent Evaluation Office in the period 2014-2017 and is aligned with UN Women's Strategic Plan 2014-2017. It outlines scope; intentionality and use; process to develop the plan; selection approaches and criteria; the corporate evaluations selected; the resource framework; the risk framework; the implementation approach and reporting.

2. Scope of the Corporate Evaluation Plan

Two types of evaluations are undertaken by UN Women: corporate and decentralized. The proposed Corporate Evaluation Plan is limited to the corporate evaluations to be undertaken by the Evaluation Office, and does not cover decentralized evaluations. UN Women plans and budgets for decentralized evaluations through monitoring, evaluation and research plans that are aligned with regional and country programming cycles in each country or region.

The overall focus of the Corporate Evaluation Plan and the basis for prioritization is UN Women's Strategic Plan 2014-17. In particular, the proposed Corporate Evaluation Plan focuses on the six impact areas and the output clusters of organizational effectiveness and efficiency framework set out in the Strategic Plan.

3. Intentionality and use of corporate evaluations

Corporate evaluation findings, recommendations and lessons learned are used to improve organizational and United Nations system-wide performance on gender equality and the empowerment of women, and improve coherence between normative and operational work. More specifically, they contribute to strategic policy and programmatic decisions, organizational learning, accountability at the country and regional levels, as well as to the generation of knowledge on what works and what doesn't to advance gender equality. The results of corporate evaluations will inform the midterm review of the UN Women Strategic Plan in 2016. In addition, they will feed into UN Women's efforts to promote a stand-alone gender equality goal in the post-2015 development framework and inform Beijing +20 discussions.

The findings and recommendations of corporate evaluations managed within the CEP are presented in annual and regular sessions to the Executive Board by the Director of Independent Evaluation Office, while the management responses are presented by the Deputy Executive Director.

4. Process to develop the Corporate Evaluation Plan

As specified in UN Women's Evaluation Policy, the Independent Evaluation Office prepared the Corporate Evaluation Plan for the consideration of the Senior Management Team and the Global Evaluation Committee. The Global Evaluation Committee welcomed the plan, found it to be compliant with the requirements of the Evaluation Policy and recommended the UN Women's Executive Director to approve it.

The Independent Evaluation Office finalized the Plan taking into account the comments of senior management and the Global Evaluation Committee, and the Executive Director approved it. The approved CEP is shared with the Executive Board at the 2014 second regular session, and reporting on its implementation is included within the annual report of the evaluation function.

This plan should be viewed as flexible and responsive to the changing context and emerging priorities. To increase the utility of evaluations, the Plan follows a two-year cycle approach that allows the Plan to be updated in 2016 to respond to the emerging priorities in the implementation of the UN Women Strategic Plan, as well as to inform its Mid-Term Review.

5. Selection approaches and criteria

Overall principles

The principles set out in the UN Women's Evaluation Policy guide the planning, conduct and follow-up to evaluation. They include: *national ownership and leadership; United Nations system coordination and coherence on gender equality and the empowerment of women; innovation; fair power relations and empowerment; participation and inclusion; independence and impartiality; transparency; quality and credibility; intentionality and use of evaluation; and, ethics*. All these principles taken together ensure that all UN Women evaluation processes reflect:

- (a) The overall normative, operational and coordination mandates of UN Women as an entity within the United Nations system;
- (b) The commitment of UN Women to gender and women's rights responsive evaluation; and
- (c) Alignment with UNEG Norms and Standards, UNEG Ethical Guidelines and UNEG guidance on integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation.

Gender equality and human rights responsive evaluation

Considering the mandate to incorporate human rights and gender equality in all UN work, these dimensions have a special attention in evaluations of UN Women. UN Women undertakes gender equality and human rights responsive evaluations that assess the extent to which intervention evaluated is guided by organizational and system-wide objectives on gender equality and human rights and whether it contributes to gender equality and human rights results, while also incorporating these approaches in the actual evaluation process. More specifically, evaluations analyze whether UN Women contributed to short-, medium- and long-term objectives (or lack thereof) through an examination of results chains, processes, contextual factors and causality using gender and rights analysis. They also assess if UN Women interventions have maximized participation and inclusiveness (of rights-holders and duty-bearers) in their planning, design, implementation and decision-making processes and sought out opportunities to build sustainable results through the empowerment and capacity building of women and groups of rights-holders and duty-bearers. Overall, through gender equality and human rights responsive evaluation, UN Women aims to contribute to the social and economic change processes by identifying and analyzing the inequalities, discriminatory practices and unjust power relations that are central to development problems.

UN Coherence on gender equality and the empowerment of women and joint evaluation

In accordance with the UN Women's Evaluation Policy, evaluation should be conducted system-wide and jointly with United Nations sister agencies, whenever possible, as a means to promote coordination and coherence on gender equality and the empowerment of women. UN Women has demonstrated its commitment by actively participating in joint decentralized evaluations and UNDAF evaluations at decentralized level. In addition, Independent Evaluation Office led the first-ever joint corporate evaluation of joint gender programmes with four United Nations entities and the governments of Spain and Norway in 2012-2013. The corporate evaluation plans takes into account this principle and includes a *Joint Systemic Review of Gender Equality Results in Development* and collaboration on *Evaluation of UN System Wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment* to be led by the Joint Inspection Unit.

Criteria to select corporate evaluations

The selection of evaluations to be included in the CEP is informed by: i) the need to provide adequate evaluation coverage of Strategic Plan (SP) impact areas and OEEF output clusters, ii) the evaluation targets outlined in the Evaluation Policy and SP, and iii) its intentionality and intended use.

According to the Evaluation Policy, during the SP life cycle, the EO will conduct at least one strategy/policy evaluation, one organizational performance evaluation, one normative support evaluation, and one

evaluation focused on each thematic area of the strategic plan (see Annex 1 for definitions of typology of corporate evaluations).

The selection of corporate evaluations is based on eight key parameters divided into two levels of priority. The first level of priorities includes the following three parameters:

- a) *relevance of the subject (RS)*: Is the evaluation subject a socioeconomic or political priority of the mandate and role of UN-Women? Is it a key priority of the strategic plan?
- b) *risk associated with the intervention (RI)*: Are there political, economic, funding, structural or organizational factors that present potential high risk for the non-achievement of results or for which further evidence is needed for management decision-making?
- c) *significant investment (SI)*: Is the intervention considered a significant investment in relation to the overall portfolio?

Second level of priorities includes the following three parameters:

- d) *demands for accountability from stakeholders (DAS)*: Are stakeholders specifically requesting the evaluation? Can the demand be satisfied through an evaluation that is already planned?
- e) *potential for replication and scaling-up (PRS)*: Would an evaluation provide the information necessary to identify the factors required for the success of an intervention and determine the feasibility of its replication or scaling-up?
- f) *potential for joint evaluation (JE)*: Does the evaluation present a clear opportunity to evaluate jointly with other partners (United Nations country teams, national Governments, etc.)?

Cross-cutting parameters which need to be assessed in all prioritized evaluations are:

- g) *feasibility for implementing the evaluation (FIE)*: Does the commissioning office have the financial and human resources available to conduct or manage a high-quality evaluation within the time period indicated? Is the evaluability of the intervention high enough to conduct an in-depth study that can result in sound findings, recommendations and lessons?
- h) *filling a knowledge gap (KG)*: Will the evaluation help to fill a pressing knowledge gap in relation to achieving gender equality or the empowerment of women?

Annex 2 presents the application of selection criteria for the proposed 2014-2017 corporate evaluations.

6. Selected corporate evaluations 2014-2017

The list of recommended evaluations presented in Table 1 below ensures a comprehensive coverage of key results areas of UN Women Strategic Plan 2014-2017 by providing the assessment of its thematic areas, including development and organizational effectiveness and efficiency results, coordination and normative work. The proposed corporate evaluations take into account the corporate evaluations already managed under the 2012-2013 Corporate Evaluation Plan, notably: Violence against women; Women's leadership and participation in Peace and Security; and Joint evaluation of joint gender programmes in the UN system. The proposed evaluations comply with the requirements of Evaluation Policy and its eight parameters for prioritizing the selection of corporate evaluations. The Plan foresees the delivery of one or two major evaluations and one or two smaller evaluations per year, including the production of Meta-Analysis of decentralized evaluation reports to be presented to the Executive Board through the Annual Evaluation Report. A total 16 corporate evaluations in four years, including seven major evaluations, five

evaluations that are narrower in scope and four meta-analysis of decentralized evaluations are planned to be delivered within the four years cycle.

Table 1: Corporate evaluations 2014-2017

| Number and scale | 2014-2015 Planned corporate evaluations | Evaluation Type | Compliance with commitments/requirements |
|-------------------------|--|---|---|
| Total: 4 | <i>Evaluations planned in 2014</i> | | |
| Major | Thematic Evaluation of Women’s Economic Empowerment (Impact Area 2) | Thematic | Evaluation Policy requirement to evaluate each thematic area during the cycle of SP |
| Joint | Joint Systemic review of gender equality in development | Systemic review to be led by UNW, jointly with other key stakeholders | Evaluation Policy commitment to UN system wide coherence on evaluation of gender equality and women empowerment |
| | External Assessment of UN Women Evaluation Policy ¹ | Organizational performance, carried out by JIU | Evaluation Policy requirement |
| | Peer Review of the UN Women Evaluation Function ² | Organizational performance, carried out by UNEG | Evaluation Policy requirement |
| | Meta-analysis of decentralized evaluations | Meta-analysis and Meta-evaluation | Requested by the Executive Board |
| Total: 4 | <i>Evaluations planned in 2015</i> | | |
| Major | Evaluation of UN Women contribution to global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and women’s empowerment (impact area 6) | Normative Support Evaluation | Evaluation policy requirement to conduct at least one normative support evaluation in the cycle of SP |
| Major | Evaluation of UN Women contribution to the United Nations system coordination (OEEF output cluster 1) | Organizational performance | Evaluation Policy requirement to conduct at least one organization performance evaluation during the SP cycle |
| | Meta-analysis of decentralized evaluations | Meta-analysis and Meta-evaluation | Requested by the Executive Board |

¹ This External Assessment was originally planned to be carried out in 2015. However, to be able to use it strategically to inform the UNEG Peer review, it was decided, jointly with JIU and UNEG, to carry it out in early 2014 to be able to share the findings with UNEG in a timely manner

² Peer review of evaluation function is an external assessment conducted by UNEG with support of Evaluation Office.

| Number and scale | 2016-2017 Planned corporate evaluations | Evaluation Type | Compliance with commitments/requirements |
|-------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| Total: 4 | <i>Evaluations planned in 2016</i> | | |
| Major | Evaluation of UN Women strategic partnerships on gender equality and women's empowerment (OEEF output cluster 1) | Organizational performance | Evaluation Policy requirement to conduct at least one organization performance evaluation during the SP cycle |
| Major | Evaluation of Regional Architecture (OEEF output cluster 2) | Organizational Performance | Evaluation Policy requirement to conduct at least one organization performance evaluation during the SP cycle |
| | Meta-analysis of decentralized evaluations | Meta-analysis and Meta-evaluation | Requested by the Executive Board |
| Total: 3 | <i>Evaluations planned in 2017</i> | | |
| Major | Thematic evaluation of UN Women contribution to Governance and National planning (Impact Area 5) ³ | Thematic | Evaluation Policy requirement to evaluate each thematic area during the cycle of SP |
| Major | Thematic Evaluation of Women's Political Participation and Leadership (Impact Area 1) | Thematic | Evaluation Policy requirement to evaluate each thematic area during the cycle of SP |
| | Meta-analysis of decentralized evaluations | Meta-analysis and Meta-evaluation | Requested by the Executive Board |

7. Resource framework

Based on the actual cost of previous corporate evaluations managed by Evaluation Office of UN Women and other sister UN Agencies, the estimated cost for major global thematic evaluations is \$350,000; for more narrowly scoped evaluations is \$200,000; and about \$50,000 for desk studies such as the meta-synthesis of decentralized evaluation reports presented annually to the Board. The main costs are for consultancy fees and travel, based on the assumption that EO staff closely scope, prepare and manage evaluations, including quality assurance and dissemination of evaluation results, while implementation is carried out by consultant teams.

³ This evaluation will be initiated in 2017 but delivered in 2018.

Table 2: Resource framework for 2014-2017 corporate evaluations

| Year | Score/Scale | 2014-2017 Planned corporate evaluations | Estimated cost |
|------|-------------|--|------------------|
| 2014 | Major | Thematic Evaluation of Women’s Economic Empowerment (Impact Area 2) | 350,000 |
| | Joint | Joint Systemic review of gender equality | 200,000 |
| | | External Evaluation of UN Women Evaluation Policy | 50,000 |
| | | Peer Review of the UN Women Evaluation Function | 50,000 |
| | | Meta-Synthesis of decentralized evaluations | 50,000 |
| | | <i>Total estimated cost in 2014</i> | 700,000 |
| 2015 | Major | Evaluation of UN Women contribution to global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and women’s empowerment (impact area 6) | 350,000 |
| | Major | Evaluation of UN Women contribution to the United Nations system coordination (OEEF output cluster 1) | 350,000 |
| | | Meta-Synthesis of decentralized evaluations | 50,000 |
| | | <i>Total estimated cost in 2015</i> | 750,000 |
| 2016 | Major | Evaluation of UN Women strategic partnerships on gender equality and women’s empowerment (OEEF output cluster 1) | 350,000 |
| | Major | Evaluation of Regional Architecture (OEEF output cluster 2) | 350,000 |
| | | Meta-Synthesis of decentralized evaluations | 50,000 |
| | | <i>Total estimated cost in 2016</i> | 750,000 |
| 2017 | Major | Thematic Evaluation of UN Women contribution to Governance and National planning (Impact Area 5) ⁴ | 350,000 |
| | Major | Thematic evaluation of Women’s Political Participation and Leadership (Impact Area 1) | 350,000 |
| | | Meta-Synthesis of decentralized evaluations | 50,000 |
| | | <i>Total estimated cost in 2017</i> | 750,000 |
| | | GRAND TOTAL | 2,950,000 |

Some non-core funding may become available to the Evaluation Office for managing corporate evaluations. Such allocations are unpredictable but may allow some expansion of the resource framework.

⁴ This evaluation will be initiated in 2017 but delivered in 2018.

8. Risk framework

The following two main potential risks that could negatively affect the implementation of the CEP have been identified:

- Funds mobilization falls short of target. A key assumption is that funds can be mobilized each year at the level proposed.
- The Strategic Plan is superseded: with continuing volatility in the resourcing environment, and key orientations expected to emerge from the post-2015 discussions, the Strategic Plan may need to be revised in the course of its implementation. The iterative approach to evaluation planning will allow relevant adjustments in the Corporate Evaluation Plan to address any major changes in UN Women's strategic framework.

9. Implementation approach and reporting

A rolling approach is proposed which will allow scoping of proposed evaluations for a given year and preparation of an appropriate annual workplan, within the broader framework of the overall Corporate Evaluation Plan. The annual evaluation workplan will be presented for consideration of the Global Evaluation Committee and approval of the Executive Director at the end of the previous year. This will allow preparatory work to begin and would facilitate a prompt start for implementation of the annual workplan in the year of expected delivery. Within the limits of the resource framework described above, the preparatory work of evaluations should be initiated in the previous year.

At the same time, a degree of flexibility would also be required to accommodate unanticipated high priority demands: for example, collaboration with other agencies in joint evaluations (such collaboration tends to be proposed at short notice). Given human and financial resource constraints, accepting major new commitments would require existing commitments within the Evaluation Plan to be deferred or dropped. In such cases, the Global Evaluation Committee will be consulted.

Annex 1: definitions of typology of corporate evaluations

Strategy/policy evaluation is an assessment of the implementation of and/or compliance with a strategy or policy. It analyses the design, coherence and long-term impact of a set of programmes within a particular framework;

Normative support evaluation is an assessment of the work carried out by UN-Women to support the development of norms and standards in conventions, declarations, resolutions, regulatory frameworks, agreements, guidelines, codes of practice and other standard-setting instruments, at the global, regional and national levels. The Entity's normative work also includes support for the implementation of these instruments at the policy level, namely, their integration into legislation, policies and development plans, and for their implementation at the programme level;

Evaluation of organizational performance is an evaluation of an organization's capacity to efficiently manage its assets for the achievements of results and its capacity for innovation and change. It involves examining its decision-making processes and organizational structures and institutional capacities;

Thematic evaluation is an assessment of a thematic area of work. It analyses multiple programmes addressing a theme with a view to understanding the combined results in an area and better understanding the opportunities, challenges and gaps in programming and results. It can be conducted at the global, regional or country level.

Annex 2: Application of selection criteria for corporate evaluations 2014-2017⁵

Annex 2 below represents the application of selection criteria from the Evaluation Policy to recommended evaluations 2014-2017. The EO recommends that the selected evaluations meet at least five criteria out of eight. For additional information on selection criteria, please refer to “Criteria to select corporate evaluation” at page 4.

| Planned corporate evaluations | Application of selection criteria | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|----|----|-----|---------|----|-----|----|---|
| | RS | RI | SI | DAS | PR S | JE | FIE | KG | # |
| 2014 | | | | | | | | | |
| Thematic Evaluation of Women’s Economic Empowerment (Impact Area 2) | x | x | x | x | x | | x | x | 7 |
| Joint Systemic review of gender equality | x | x | x | x | | x | x | x | 7 |
| External Evaluation of UN Women Evaluation Policy | x | x | x | x | | | x | | 5 |
| Peer Review of the UN Women Evaluation Function | x | | x | x | | | x | x | 5 |
| Meta-Synthesis of decentralized evaluations | x | | | x | x | | x | x | 5 |
| 2015 | | | | | | | | | |
| Evaluation of UN Women contribution to global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and women’s empowerment (impact area 6) | x | x | x | x | x | | x | x | 7 |
| Evaluation of UN Women contribution to the United Nations system coordination (OEEF output cluster 1) | x | x | x | x | x | | x | x | 7 |
| Meta-Synthesis of decentralized evaluations | x | | | x | x | | x | x | 5 |
| 2016 | | | | | | | | | |
| Evaluation of UN Women strategic partnerships on gender equality and women’s empowerment (OEEF output cluster 1) | x | | x | | x | | x | x | 5 |
| Evaluation of Regional Architecture (OEEF output cluster 2) | x | x | x | x | x | | x | x | 7 |
| Meta-Synthesis of decentralized evaluations | x | | | x | x | | x | x | 5 |
| 2017 | | | | | | | | | |
| Thematic Evaluation of UN Women contribution to Governance and National planning (Impact Area 5) ⁶ | x | x | x | x | x | | x | x | 7 |
| Thematic evaluation of Women’s Political Participation and Leadership (Impact Area 1) | x | x | x | x | x | | x | x | 7 |
| Meta-Synthesis of decentralized evaluations | x | | | x | x | | x | x | 5 |

⁵ For the legend of selection criteria, please refer to the paragraph “Criteria to select corporate evaluations” above

⁶ This evaluation will be initiated in 2017 but delivered in 2018.