



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

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Evaluation

Corporate Evaluation Plan

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 CEP outlines the corporate evaluations to be managed by the Independent Evaluation Office in the period 2014-2017, aligned with the UN-Women's Strategic Plan 2014-2017. It foresees a total 16 corporate evaluations in four years, including 7 major evaluations, 5 evaluations that are narrower in scope, and 4 meta-analyses 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 Strategic Plan 2014-2017 in order to cover its impact areas and Organization Effectiveness and Efficiency Framework output clusters.

The total funding requirement to implement the CEP is estimated at US\$ 3,350,000 over four years (an annual average of US\$ 837,000), excluding staff costs and other costs related to strengthening the decentralized evaluation function, promoting United Nations coherence, and strengthening national evaluation capacity.

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

A. Background and purpose of the Corporate Evaluation Plan

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. This document presents the plan for corporate evaluations to be managed by the Independent Evaluation Office in the period 2014-2017 and is aligned with the 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.

B. Scope of the Corporate Evaluation Plan

5. Two types of evaluations are undertaken by UN-Women: corporate and decentralized. The proposed CEP is limited to the corporate evaluations to be undertaken by the Independent 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.
6. The overall focus of the CEP and the basis for prioritization is UN-Women's Strategic Plan 2014-2017. In particular, the proposed CEP focuses on the six impact areas and the output

clusters of Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency Framework set out in the Strategic Plan.

C. Intentionality and use of corporate evaluations

7. 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.
8. 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 the Independent Evaluation Office, while the management responses are presented by the Deputy Executive Director.

D. Process to develop the Corporate Evaluation Plan

9. As specified in the UN-Women's Evaluation Policy, the Independent Evaluation Office prepared the CEP 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 approve it.
10. The Independent Evaluation Office finalized the CEP, 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 on the Evaluation Function.
11. This plan should be viewed as flexible and responsive to the changing context and emerging priorities. To increase the utility of evaluations, the CEP 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.

E. Selection approaches and criteria

Overall principles

12. 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;
 - c) Alignment with *United Nations Evaluation Group Norms and Standards*, *United Nations Evaluation Group Ethical Guidelines* and *United Nations Evaluation Group Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation*.

Gender equality and human rights responsive evaluation

13. Considering the mandate to incorporate human rights and gender equality in all United Nations 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 an 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 analyse 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 analysing the inequalities, discriminatory practices and unjust power relations that are central to development problems.

United Nations coherence on gender equality and the empowerment of women and joint evaluation

14. 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 United Nations Development Assistance Framework evaluations at the decentralized level. In addition, the Independent Evaluation Office led the first-ever joint corporate evaluation of joint gender programmes with four United Nations agencies and the governments of Spain and Norway in 2012-2013. The CEP takes into account this principle and includes a Joint Systemic Review of Gender Equality in Development and collaboration on Evaluation of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment to be led by the Joint Inspection Unit.

Criteria to select corporate evaluations

15. The selection of evaluations to be included in the CEP is informed by: the need to provide adequate evaluation coverage of Strategic Plan impact areas and Organization Effectiveness and Efficiency Framework (OEEF) output clusters, the evaluation targets outlined in the Evaluation Policy and Strategic Plan, and its intentionality and intended use.
16. According to the Evaluation Policy, during the Strategic Plan life cycle, the Independent Evaluation Office 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).
17. The selection of corporate evaluations is based on eight key parameters divided into two levels of priority. The first-level priorities include the following three parameters:
 - 1) **Relevance of the subject:** 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?
 - 2) **Risk associated with the intervention:** 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?
 - 3) **Significant investment:** Is the intervention considered a significant investment in relation to the overall portfolio?

Second-level priorities include the following three parameters:

- 4) **Demands for accountability from stakeholders:** Are stakeholders specifically requesting the evaluation? Can the demand be satisfied through an evaluation that is already planned?
- 5) **Potential for replication and scaling-up:** 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?
- 6) **Potential for joint evaluation:** Does the evaluation present a clear opportunity to evaluate jointly with other partners (United Nations country teams, national governments, etc.)?

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

- 7) **Feasibility for implementing the evaluation:** 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?

- 8) **Filling a knowledge gap:** Will the evaluation help 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.

F. Selected corporate evaluations 2014-2017

18. The list of recommended evaluations presented in Table 1 ensures a comprehensive coverage of key results areas of the 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 CEP, notably: violence against women; women's leadership and participation in peace and security; and joint evaluation of joint gender programmes in the United Nations system. The proposed evaluations comply with the requirements of the Evaluation Policy and its eight parameters for prioritising the selection of corporate evaluations. The CEP foresees the delivery of one or two major evaluations and one or two smaller evaluations per year, including the production of a meta-analysis of decentralized evaluation reports to be presented to the Executive Board through the Annual Evaluation Report. A total of 16 corporate evaluations, including 7 major evaluations, 5 evaluations that are narrower in scope and 4 meta-analyses of decentralized evaluations are planned to be delivered within the four-year cycle.

Table 1. Corporate evaluations 2014-2017

<i>Number and scale</i>	2014-2015 Planned corporate evaluations	Evaluation type	Compliance with commitments/requirements
Total: 5	<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 Strategic Plan cycle
Joint	Joint systemic review of gender equality in development	Systemic review to be led by UN-Women, jointly with other key stakeholders	Evaluation Policy commitment to United Nations system-wide coherence on evaluation of gender equality and women empowerment
	External assessment of UN-Women Evaluation Policy ¹	Organizational performance, carried out by the Joint Inspection Unit	Evaluation Policy requirement
	Peer review of UN-Women evaluation function	Organizational performance, carried out by	Evaluation Policy requirement

¹ This external assessment was originally planned to be carried out in 2015. However, to be able to use it strategically to inform the United Nations Evaluation Group Peer Review, it was decided, in consultation with the Global Evaluation Committee, Senior Management, the Joint Inspection Unit and United Nations Evaluation Group, to carry it out in early 2014 to be able to share the findings with the United Nations Evaluation Group in a timely manner.

		the United Nations Evaluation Group	
	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 during the Strategic Plan cycle
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 Strategic Plan cycle
	Meta-analysis of decentralized evaluations	Meta-analysis and meta-evaluation	Requested by the Executive Board

Number and scale	2016-2017 Planned corporate evaluations	Evaluation type	Compliance with commitments/requirements
Total: 4	<i>Evaluations planned in 2016</i>		
Major	Thematic evaluation of UN-Women contribution to governance and national planning (Impact Area 5)	Thematic	Evaluation Policy requirement to evaluate each thematic area during the Strategic Plan cycle
Major	Thematic evaluation of women's political participation and leadership (Impact Area 1)	Thematic	Evaluation Policy requirement to evaluate each thematic area during the Strategic Plan cycle
Joint	Evaluation of United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment	System-wide evaluation led by the Joint Inspection Unit; UN-Women to be part of the Evaluation Management Group	System-wide evaluation policy
	Meta-analysis of decentralized evaluations	Meta-analysis and meta-evaluation	Requested by the Executive Board
Total: 3	<i>Evaluations planned in 2017</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 Strategic Plan cycle
Major	Evaluation of organizational effectiveness at country and regional levels (OEEF Output Cluster 2)	Organizational performance	Evaluation Policy requirement to conduct at least one organization performance evaluation during the Strategic Plan cycle
	Meta-analysis of decentralized evaluations	Meta-analysis and meta-evaluation	Requested by the Executive Board

	An additional evaluation to be identified in 2016		
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G. Resource framework

19. Based on the actual cost of previous corporate evaluations managed by the Independent Evaluation Office of UN-Women and other sister United Nations agencies, the estimated cost for major global thematic evaluations is US\$ 350,000. The estimated cost for more narrowly scoped evaluations is US\$ 200,000 and approximately US\$ 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 the Independent Evaluation Office staff closely scope, prepare and manage evaluations, including quality assurance and dissemination of evaluation results, while implementation is carried out by consultant teams.

Table 2. Resource framework for 2014-2017 corporate evaluations

Year	Score/Scale	2014-2017 Planned corporate evaluations	Estimated cost (US\$)
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 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 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	Thematic evaluation of UN-Women contribution to governance and national planning (Impact Area 5)	350,000
	Major	Thematic evaluation of women's political participation and leadership (Impact Area 1)	350,000
	Joint	Evaluation of system-wide action plan/gender equality within United Nations system	200,000
		Meta-synthesis of decentralized evaluations	50,000
		<i>Total estimated cost in 2016</i>	950,000
2017	Major	Evaluation of UN-Women strategic partnerships on gender equality and women's empowerment (OEEF Output Cluster 1)	350,000
	Major	Evaluation of organizational effectiveness at country and regional levels (OEEF Output Cluster 2)	350,000
		Meta-synthesis of decentralized evaluations	50,000

		An additional evaluation to be identified in 2016	200,000
			<i>Total estimated cost in 2017</i>
			950,000
			GRAND TOTAL
			3,350,000

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

H. Risk framework

20. 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 CEP to address any major changes in UN-Women's strategic framework.

I. Implementation approach and reporting

21. A rolling approach is proposed that will allow scoping of proposed evaluations for a given year and preparation of an appropriate annual workplan, within the broader framework of the overall CEP. The annual 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.

22. 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 CEP 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 2014-2017

This annex represents the application of selection criteria from the Evaluation Policy to recommended evaluations for the 2014-2017 period. The Independent Evaluation Office recommends that the selected evaluations meet at least five criteria out of eight. For additional information on selection criteria, please refer to paragraphs 15-17 on “Criteria to select corporate evaluation”.

Planned corporate evaluations	Application of selection criteria								
2014	RS	RI	SI	DAS	PRS	JE	FIE	KG	Number
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	RS	RI	SI	DAS	PRS	JE	FIE	KG	Number
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 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	RS	RI	SI	DAS	PRS	JE	FIE	KG	Number
Thematic evaluation of UN-Women contribution to governance and national planning (Impact Area 5)	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
Evaluation of system-wide action plan/gender equality within the United Nations system	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	8
Meta-synthesis of decentralized evaluations	x			x	x		x	x	5
2017	RS	RI	SI	DAS	PRS	JE	FIE	KG	Number
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 organization effectiveness at country and regional levels (OEEF Output Cluster 2)	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	7
Meta-synthesis of decentralized evaluations	x			x	x		x	x	5

Note: RS indicates relevance of the subject; RI, risk associated with the intervention; SI, significant investment; DAS, demands for accountability from stakeholders; PRS, potential for replication and scaling-up; JE, potential for joint evaluation; FIE, feasibility for implementing the evaluation; and KG, filling a knowledge gap.