Terms of Reference

Evaluation of UN Women Regional Office of Asia and the Pacific Strategic Note (2023-2025)

I.   Evaluation Purpose and Use

The UN Women Independent Evaluation Service (IES) evaluates the work of UN Women to enhance organizational accountability, provide evidence-based information for decision-making and to contribute to learning on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The primary purpose of the Regional Office Asia and the Pacific (RO) Strategic Note (SN) evaluation is to assess the contributions of UN Women in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in the Asia Pacific region of the current Strategic Note 2023-2025, with a view to previous efforts that fall under the UN Women Strategic Plan 2022-2025 and the previous RO SN 2019-2022. The aim of the evaluation is to support enhanced accountability for development effectiveness and learning from experience and support decision-making for the office moving forward, namely the new Strategic Note of the RO Asia and the Pacific 2026-2030[1].

The primary intended users of the evaluation (outlined in the box below) are the UN Women Regional Office, offices that the RO oversees (Non-physical presence or NRAs[2] include: Sri Lanka, Cambodia and the Philippines, and Thailand as a host Country Office), Country Office personnel, UN Women Senior Management and other relevant personnel at the headquarters, regional and country levels. The evaluation may be useful for other actors working with RO, including partner governments, civil society, UN agencies, INGOs, and NGOs, forums and platforms, NPP national partners and key regional partners, as well as donors, and private sector. The primary intended uses of this evaluation are:

- Support decision-making regarding the development of the next Strategic Note.
- Accountability for the development effectiveness of the existing Strategic Note in terms of UN Women's contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment as well as organizational effectiveness, learning, and knowledge management.
- Learning on effective, promising and innovative strategies and practices.
- Capacity development and mobilization of regional stakeholders to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Primary & Secondary Intended Users	Primary Intended Use			
	Learning & Knowledge Generation	Strategic Decision-Making	Accountability	Capacity Development & Mobilisation
UN Women ROAP & NRA Personnel	X	X	X	

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[1] The RO has requested an extension so that the new SN initiates in 2027, but this has not yet been confirmed at the time of the TOR drafting.
[2] The term 'non-resident' refers to offices previously known as program presences, as well as UN program countries in which UN Women does not having a physical footprint. In this instance, reference is made to the latter (where UN Women has no physical footprint). Source: UN Women ROAP Strategic Note 2023 – 2025)

UN Women CO personnel	X	X	X	
UN Women HQ Senior Management	X	X		
UN Women IEAS	X			
UN Coordination Partners	X		X	
Primary Target groups (individuals, communities, programme/project partners)	X		X	X
National and local governments	X		X	X
Regional partners	X	X	X	X
Civil Society Representatives	X	X	X	X
Donors & Multilateral Partners	X	X	X	

II.   Evaluation Objectives and Scope

The evaluation will apply the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) evaluation criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability) and a Human Rights and Gender Equality criterion. The evaluation has the following objectives:

1. Assess effectiveness and organizational efficiency in progressing towards the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women results.
3. Assess the relevance and coherence of UN Women's regional programme, vis-a-vis the UN system, and the added value of UN Women at the regional level in the Asia and the Pacific region.
4. Analyse how a human rights approach and gender equality principles are integrated in the design and implementation of UN Women's work at the regional level and contribute to transformative change and sustainability of efforts.
4. Provide lessons learned and actionable recommendations to support UN Women strategic positioning at the regional level moving forward.

This evaluation will answer the key questions below. During the inception phase after consultation with the management and Reference Groups the evaluation team will revise the questions to ensure they reflect the priorities of key stakeholders and elaborate the sub-questions in the evaluation matrix:

1. To what extent is UN Women's regional thematic focus and strategies for influencing normative level efforts relevant and effective for advancing regional/sub-regional policy frameworks and agreements on gender equality and women's empowerment? [relevance, effectiveness]
2. How effectively is UN Women leveraging its coordination mandate to strategically position itself and contribute to a more coherent and gender-responsive approach by UN partners and other development actors with respect to gender equality and women's empowerment in the region? [external coherence]

3. How are Regional Office efforts supporting internal coherence, catalyzing efforts at country level and bridging corporate and country level efforts across UN Women offices in the region to ensure a coherent approach to achieving its integrated mandate to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women? (internal coherence]

4. To what extent is UN Women RO Knowledge Management (KM), Results-Based Management (RBM), capacity development, resource mobilization and partnership development and management, as well as advocacy and communications effectively catalyzing and supporting the delivery of UN Women results in the region? [organizational efficiency]

5. Has the portfolio been designed and implemented according to human rights, LNOB, including disability perspective, social and environmental safeguards and development effectiveness principles (ensuring national ownership and sustainability of programming efforts)? [human rights and gender equality, and sustainability]

Evaluation scope

The entire programme of work and UN Women's integrated mandate will be assessed, including its contributions in the operational, coordination and normative spheres. The evaluation will focus on the current SN cycle (2023-2025), but will also include efforts that spillover from the former SN cycle (2019-2022) given that it will also cover the UN Women Strategic Plan period. With the understanding that the current SN cycle will not be complete, the evaluation will analyze work completed through Q3 2024 and ensure a formative analysis of the RO strategy moving forward. The timing is aimed at feeding into the planning of the next Strategic Note, which should be scheduled to commence in 2025.

UN Women has been planning a corporate "pivot to the regions and countries" which will be rolled out in Q4 2024 – 2025.[3] And the RO is planning a functional review to initiate in Q1 2025. Thus, the evaluation will attempt to ensure complementarity in scope by excluding a review of operational structures, including the regional programmes that support RO SN implementation. However, aspects related to the operational structures may emerge.

The geographic scope will include the Asia and the Pacific region where UN Women is operating. However, the regional programmes will not be assessed in terms of their development results, as most areas have been evaluated. A meta-synthesis of evaluations[4] including evaluations undertaken between 2019-2023 will inform insights on regional programmatic results.

Limitations

The key limitations may relate to selection bias if the evaluation team is not able to reach key stakeholders engaged or benefitting from UN Women's work. The ongoing change management "pivot to the regions and countries" may also imply changes at regional level, thus there may be a level of uncertainty regarding future efforts, which may result in bias. It will also be difficult to tease out regional office contributions versus country office contributions to results given that regional programmes are often implemented

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[3] UN Women email correspondence, **Kirsi Madi,** *Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director of Resource Management, Partnerships and Sustainability,* July 2024.
[4] All UN Women evaluations can be found on GATE: https://gate.unwomen.org/EvaluationUnit/FullDetails?EvaluationUnitId=132

primarily at the country level. The evaluation will primarily rely on the meta-synthesis of evaluations to draw findings related to contributions to the SN DRF, and thus may not be up to date.

III. Context for gender equality and the empowerment of women in Asia and the Pacific

The Asia-Pacific region is significantly off track in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the 2030 target. According to the 2024 Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the region is projected to delay until 2062 achievement of the SDGs, overshooting the original schedule by 32 years.[5] The report finds that progress towards the 2030 Agenda remains uneven and inadequate within the region, and Asia and the Pacific is set to achieve only one third of the necessary progress by 2030.

The report reveals that women and girls in Asia and the Pacific face considerable challenges when it comes to accessing education and employment opportunities. These challenges make it harder for them to enter the labor market. The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly exacerbated gender inequalities in the region, particularly affecting women's economic empowerment. While there are some positive trends, such as increased access to finance among women in South Asia—where the proportion of women with financial accounts rose from 24% to 66% between 2011 and 2021[6]—recent data reveals concerning disparities. Women are disproportionately more likely than men to leave paid jobs to undertake unpaid family responsibilities, including caring for the sick and homeschooling children. [7] This has led to greater job and income losses among women, contributing to widening gender gaps in income.

Recent reports also highlight persistent challenges related to ending violence against women and girls (EVAWG). UN Women notes that women and girls in Asia and the Pacific face alarming rates of gender-based violence, with issues including domestic violence, sexual assault, and harmful practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation prevalent across the region. The report emphasizes the need for strengthened legal frameworks and comprehensive support services to address these pervasive issues. [8]

Climate change-related disasters and hazards pose significant risks in the Asia and the Pacific region, disproportionately affecting women and girls. Asia and the Pacific is the most disaster-prone region in the world. In 2022, floods were the deadliest, accounting for 74.4 per cent of disaster events in the region and 88.4 per cent of total deaths globally. [9]According to the Global Climate Risk Index, 6 out of the 10 countries most affected by climate change from 2000 to 2019 are located in Asia and the Pacific.[10] According to recent reports by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), women are more vulnerable to the impacts of

[5] UN News. (2024, February). Asia-Pacific off track on path to SDGs, UN data shows. Retrieved from https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/02/1146617

[6] UNDP. (2024). *Making our future: New directions for human development in Asia and the Pacific: Regional human development report*. United Nations Development Programme. Retrieved from: https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2023-11/undp_regional_human_development_report_web_final_0.pdf

[7] UN Women. (2022). *Two years on: The lingering gendered effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in Asia and the Pacific*. Retrieved from https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/06/two-years-on

[8] UN Women. (2023). *Turning promises into action: Gender equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. UN Women Asia-Pacific. Retrieved from https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2023/09/turning-promises-into-action

[9] United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) & United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). (2023). *EmPower: Women for Climate-Resilient Societies Programme Brief*. Retrieved from https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2023/06/empower-women-for-climate-resilient-societies-programme-brief

[10] Germanwatch. *Global Climate Risk Index*. Retrieved from https://www.germanwatch.org/en/cri

climate change due to socio-economic factors and cultural roles that often limit their mobility and access to resources. For instance, in regions prone to cyclones and floods, women often bear the brunt of displacement, loss of livelihoods, and increased caregiving responsibilities. The ADB's report on Gender Equality and Climate Change in Asia and the Pacific[11] highlights that up to 80% of those displaced by climate-related disasters in some areas are women. This exacerbates existing gender inequalities and places additional burdens on women's health, safety, and economic stability.

The Global Peace Index highlights that many countries in the Asia-Pacific region have ongoing conflicts or are in post-conflict situations, with key areas of concern including Afghanistan, Myanmar, and parts of the Philippines. South Asia recorded a deterioration in peacefulness over the past year and remains the second least peaceful region overall.[12] Multiple and overlapping crises, including political instability, violent extremism, and conflict, have significantly impacted the Asia and the Pacific region. These crises are often linked to factors such as authoritarian governance, rising socio-economic inequalities, and identity-based tensions stemming from ethnic, religious, and political divisions. A UNDP report notes that women are continuously and often disproportionately affected by acts of violent extremism. Gender inequality and misogyny are central to the propagation of violent extremism.[13] The interconnected nature of these crises underscores the need for comprehensive approaches that address root causes while promoting inclusive governance and social cohesion.

Investing in advancing women's leadership and effective participation across all sectors, is key to gender-responsive political and governance systems and processes - and to efforts to strengthen legal frameworks that promote, enforce, and monitor gender equality (SDG Target 5.1). While more women are increasingly becoming political representatives, the progress remains uneven across different regions. For instance, between 2000 and 2020, the proportion of parliamentarians who were women globally rose from 13% to 20%, though this lags behind the global average of 25%.[14] Regionally, representation varies significantly: South and South-West Asia reported the lowest at 17.3%, followed by the Pacific at 18%, North and Central Asia at 21%, South-East Asia at 21.4%, and East and North-East Asia at 21.7%.[15]

The Asia and the Pacific region face significant challenges in upholding the rights of both persons with disabilities (PWDs) and diverse SOGIESC (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sex Characteristics), highlighting deep disparities in social and legal protections. An estimated 690 million people with disabilities live in the Asia and the Pacific region, constituting about 15% of the population. PWDs in the Asia and the Pacific region often face significant barriers to economic and social participation. Employment rates among PWDs are significantly lower than the general population, and those who are employed typically earn less. For example, in countries like Bangladesh, China, and Indonesia, the

[11] Asian Development Bank. (n.d.). *Gender equality and climate change in Asia and the Pacific*. Asian Development Bank. Retrieved from https://www.adb.org/publications/gender-equality-climate-change-asia-pacific

[12] Institute for Economics and Peace. (2023). *Global Peace Index 2023*. Retrieved from https://www.economicsandpeace.org/reports

[13] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2022). *Prevention of Violent Extremism: 2022 Annual Report*. Retrieved from UNDP website.

[14] UNDP. (2024). *Making our future: New directions for human development in Asia and the Pacific: Regional human development report*. United Nations Development Programme. Retrieved from: https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2023-11/undp_regional_human_development_report_web_final_0.pdf

[15] UN ESCAP, UN Women, SDG 5 profile, 2022, p.1-3; UN ECOSOC, HLPF, Progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals – Report of the Secretary-General

employment gap between PWDs and non-disabled individuals is substantial. [16] In the region, rights pertaining to LGBTIQ+ and social acceptance vary widely, with Taiwan legalizing same-sex marriage in 2019, while countries like Malaysia and Brunei criminalizing same-sex relations. In medical contexts, there are reports of abuse, ill-treatment and torture occurring via so-called "conversion therapy" and forced genital and anal examinations on LGBTIQ+ people.[17] A 2019 global study found that conversion therapy was prevalent, with 26 per cent in the region terming it 'very common.'[18]

UN Women in the Regional Office Asia and the Pacific

UN Women's [Regional Architecture](#) outlines that "the six regional offices will be responsible for managerial and programme oversight, quality assurance, technical and operational support and policy advice for country offices in their region, including with regard to the UN Women normative function. They will also be responsible for inter-agency coordination at the regional level, including the UN Women's United Nations Development Group partners, as well as the Regional Coordination Mechanism convened by the regional commissions and non-core resource mobilization and partnership. The regional offices will promote closer partnership with civil society, including through regional civil society advisory groups. They will engage with regional bodies and processes, facilitate knowledge management within their region and between regions, support regional and country-level actions under trust funds managed by UN Women and support stronger advocacy and communications across the region."

The UN Women Regional Office for Asia-Pacific (RO) is in a region that is host to 42 UN Member States where it oversees and supports 22 countries across the region. At the regional level, the Strategic Note (SN) is the main planning tool for UN Women's support to normative, coordination and operational work in the region. The SN aims that "women and girls in all their diversity within the Asia-Pacific region, effectively engage with and leverage normative frameworks, gender-responsive policies, laws and institutions, and strategic partnerships with both state and non-state actors, securing better access to opportunities, resources and services, in full enjoyment of their fundamental human rights and freedoms."

The RO provides oversight (programmatic and operational), quality assurance, technical assistance and policy services (normative and thematic) on UN coordination, strategic planning, program development, management, and operational issues, as well as representational and advocacy support to UN Women's presences. Additionally, the RO provides support on Knowledge Management (KM), Results-Based Management (RBM), capacity development, resource mobilization and partnership development and management, as well as advocacy and communications efforts. The RO also leads on and manages regional and/or multi-country programming initiatives to advance gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE). Where UN Women is non-resident, the RO focuses on normative support and UN

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[16] United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. (2021). Disability at a glance: Asia and the Pacific 2020. Retrieved from: https://www-unescap-org.webpkgcache.com/doc/-/s/www.unescap.org/knowledge-products-series/disability-glance

[17] UN Women. (2022). *LGBTIQ+ equality and rights: Internal resource guide*. UN Women. https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2023/06/lgbtiq-equality-and-rights#view

[18] Outright Action International, 2019. 'Harmful Treatment: The Global Reach of so-called conversion therapy'.

Coordination to advance GEWE, by leveraging regional UN Coordination mechanisms and processes, and based on requests from UN Resident Coordinators (RCs).

The RO SN (2023-2025) focuses on six UN Women Strategic Plan systemic outcomes to drive results across the RO's thematic areas i.e., Inclusive governance, Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG), Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE), Women Peace and Security (WPS), Climate Change, Humanitarian Action (HA) and DRR. These outcomes are: i) SP Outcome 1: Normative frameworks and gender-responsive laws, policies, and institutions, ii) SP Outcome 3: Positive social norms (including by engaging men and boys), iii) SP Outcome 4: Women's equitable access to services, goods, and resources, iv) SP Outcome 5: Women's voice, leadership and agency and v) SP Outcome 6: Production, analysis and use of gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data and knowledge. The SN Theory of Change (ToC) is elaborated in Box 1.

Box 1: Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific Strategic Note Theory of Change 2023-2025

IF, women and girls in all their diversity:
• Effectively contribute to, and benefit equally from the full operationalization of global normative frameworks, policies, laws and financial instruments and inclusive governance systems and institutions, at all levels (across the humanitarian development-peace nexus)
• Benefit equally from opportunities, goods, services and resources, in full enjoyment of their social and economic rights and freedoms
• Exercise their leadership, voice and agency, without fear of retaliation, in development and crises-affected contexts
IF:
• Both state and non-state actors and communities, collaborate with women and girls in promoting zero tolerance of harmful gender (and other) stereotypes, discriminatory social norms and all forms of VAWG
• Both state and non-state actors contribute to the production, analyses and leveraging of gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data to inform decision-making, budgeting, monitoring and reporting on normative commitments to advance gender equality and women's empowerment
• The UN regional development and humanitarian architecture strengthens collective and coordinated action to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women in its planning, resourcing and partnerships, in development and crises-affected contexts.
THEN: Women and girls in all their diversity within the Asia-Pacific region will be empowered to effectively engage with and leverage normative frameworks, gender-responsive policies, laws and institutions, and strategic partnerships, with both state and nonstate actors, securing better access to opportunities, goods, resources and services, in full enjoyment of their fundamental human rights and freedoms
BECAUSE:
• Women and girls in all their diversity will be able to lead and/or contribute to defining efforts to operationalize global normative frameworks on GEWE including institutional policies and arrangements, and the utilization of state resources (at all levels, and across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus)
• Both state and non-state actors and communities will take action on collaboration with women and girls in both promoting a lack of tolerance of harmful stereotypes, discriminatory social norms, and VAWG, and in effectively preventing and responding to violations
• Women and girls will have equal access to developmental opportunities, goods, services and resources
• Women and girls will be able to freely exercise their leadership, voice and agency in political and governance processes and efforts (in development and crises-affected contexts)
• Both state and non-state actors will produce, analyze and utilize gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data to inform decision-making, budgeting, monitoring and reporting on normative commitments to advance gender equality and women's empowerment
• The UN regional development and humanitarian efforts to advance GEWE, will be more strengthened and coordinated action to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women in its planning, resourcing and partnerships, in development and crises-affected contexts.

The total resource requirements of the Strategic Note for 2023 were US $ 20 million and for 2024 are US $ 21 million. The RO is based in Bangkok, Thailand, with 83 personnel (as per RMS data extracted in May 2024).

Table 1: Regional Office Asia and the Pacific Financial Resources 2022-2024 (Source RMS; extracted in May 2024)

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Core	US $ 2,574,422	US $ 2,450,097	US $ 2,271,260	US $ 2,564,978	US $ 5,206,106	US $ 6,989,111
IB	US $ 2,104,241	US $ 2,261,310	US $ 2,483,000	US $ 2,259,751	US $ 2,201,000	US $ 2,074,127
XB	US $ 1,176,250	US $ 1,250,000	US $ 1,203,105	US $ 1,068,249	US $ 1,143,500	US $ 352,400
Non-Core (available)	US $ 9,697,889	US $ 11,046,094	US $ 11,759,577	US $ 11,917,004	US $ 10,619,611	US $ 9,606,690
Non-core (to be mobilized)	US $ 241,312	US $ 202,147	US $ 330,000	US $ 1,656,298	US $ 869,521	2,668,908
Total Resource Requirements	**US $ 15,794,114**	**US $ 17,209,648**	**US $ 18,046,942**	**US $ 19,466,280**	**US $ 20,039,738**	**US $ 21,691,236**

IV.   Evaluation Methodology

The UN Women Evaluation Policy[19] and UN Women Evaluation Handbook[20] are the main guiding documents that set forth the principles and organizational framework for evaluation planning, conduct, and follow-up in UN Women. These principles are aligned with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation[21] and Ethical Guidelines.[22]

UN Women evaluations are gender-responsive meaning that both the process and analysis apply the key principles of a human rights-based approach: they are inclusive, participatory, ensure fair power relations, and transparent; and they analyse the underlying structural barriers and sociocultural norms that impede the realization of women's rights, including marginalized groups: such as persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ status, and other groups that are affected by intersecting forms of discrimination (based on ethnicity and/or race). UN Women evaluations are also utilization-focused, which means that it will be tailored to the needs of the organization through a participatory approach from the inception through to the development of recommendations, which will facilitate production of a useful evaluation. The evaluation also takes a systemic perspective that recognizes that UN Women's contributions towards GEWE outcomes and its ability to implement its programme of work are affected by several key

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[19]   UN Women Revised Evaluation Policy, UNW/2020/5/Rev.2 ; accessible at: https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/executive%20board/2020/second%20regular%20session/unw-2020-5-rev2%20revised%20eval%20policy%20for%20endorsement%20at%20srs%202020%203%20sept%20rev.pdf?la=en&vs=3925

[20] UN Women Evaluation Handbook, 2015; accessible at: https://genderevaluation.unwomen.org/en/evaluation-handbook

[21] UNEG, "Norms and Standards for evaluation", 2016, available online at: http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914.

[22] UNEG, "Ethical guidelines", 2008, available online at: http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/102.

influencing factors, such as socio-cultural norms, harmful practices, international donor and financing environment, political environment, environmental risks or humanitarian crises, security concerns, and local partners capacity and commitment. Information on each of these factors will be collected to provide a coherent picture on the wider systems at play that affect the ability of the organization to contribute towards GEWE and reach the most vulnerable groups of women in the region.

Several Regional Offices are planning similar exercises during the same time period and the Regional Evaluation Specialists will coordinate to ensure synergies between these evaluations to maximize use from a corporate perspective. This may entail a common survey deployed to the regions or the selection of common case studies.

The evaluation is employing a non-experimental, theory-based approach using mixed qualitative and quantitative methods. A re-constructed Theory of Change will be used as the basis for contribution analysis. Case studies will be the primary source of information for the assessment of contributions to outcomes in the selected thematic or operational area. The possibility to employ participatory data collection methods will be explored during the inception stage. The evaluation will employ the following methods of analysis and data collection:

A. **Interviews** with key informants identified through the stakeholder analysis (across all stakeholder groups).
B. **Surveys** of UN Women personnel and external partners (UN partners and regional partners).
C. **Observation** of meetings, facilities or specific project interventions during potential field visits.
D. **Focus Group Discussions**. To the extent possible outcome harvesting or storytelling with key stakeholders and partners and potentially women and male rights holders that have participated in programming efforts of UN Women related to the selected case studies.
E. **Case studies** will be identified for a more in-depth look into priority areas.

Key document analyses undertaken primarily during the inception phase will inform the evaluation approach and help to contextualize findings, conclusions and recommendations. The team will utilize different analytical frameworks such as from a diverse SOGIESC perspective, the building block framework to look at the integrated mandate, and gender at work framework. The following analyses will also inform the overall evalaution:

I. *Evaluability assessment:* to help determine the evaluation approach and gaps in data, the quality of the programme logic (linkages between the outcomes, outputs and indicators) as articulated in the strategic note development results framework and organisational effectiveness and efficiency framework, the availability of baseline data, and the availability of documents necessary for the evaluation will be assessed.

II. *Contextual analysis:* this will include an analysis of the key external influencing factors identified above and how they may affect realization of women's rights in the region.

III. *Content analysis* on the extent to which gender-transformative approach is applied:
   - Portfolio Analysis of UN Women SN & Project Documents: The evaluation will undertake a desk-based portfolio analysis that includes a synthesis of secondary results data for the Development Results Framework and the Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency

Framework of the ROAP.
- Meta-synthesis of evaluations: The evaluation will undertake a meta-synthesis of those evaluations conducted in the region between 2019-2023 which meet UN Women quality requirements. The main purpose is to aggregate and collate key insights, findings, and recommendations that have emerged from the region to identify lessons learned and good practices for strengthening future programming.

IV. **UN Women financial analysis** will explore the budget, expenditure and trends in type of expenditures.

The methods will include a wide range of data sources (including documents, potential field visits and observation, institutional information systems, financial records, beneficiaries, staff, funders, experts, government officials, community groups, etc.). NVivo qualitative analysis software will be used to analyse interviews and focus group discussions. Multiple lines of evidence will inform the contribution analysis. Sources and methods of information will be triangulated to ensure robust findings that can be used with confidence. The inception report will provide more details on the selected approach and methods based on desk review and evaluability assessment, scoping interviews, and consultations with the RO and Evaluation Reference Group (ERG).

Data collection methods and processes should be gender-responsive[10] and data should be systematically disaggregated by sex and, to the extent possible, disaggregated by age, geographical region, ethnicity, disability, migratory status and other contextually relevant markers of equity[11]. Specific guidelines should be observed, namely the UNEG guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations (2014) and UN Disability Inclusion Strategy Evaluation Accountability, 2019.

The evaluation should adhere to and be guided by the UNEG Norms and Standards (2016) and the UNEG Ethical Guidelines (2020) at every stage of the evaluation process, observing the principles of integrity, accountability, respect and beneficence.

V. Stakeholder Participation

A human rights-based stakeholder mapping will be completed by the evaluation team during the inception phase. The evaluators are expected to discuss during the Inception Workshop how the process will ensure participation of a diverse range of stakeholders at all stages:
1. Design (inception workshop);
2. Consultation of stakeholders;
3. Interpretation;
4. Reporting and use.

The evaluators are expected to validate findings through engagement with stakeholders at stakeholder workshops, debriefings or other forms of engagement.

A reference group will be established representing UN Women key government, civil society, donor and UN system partners. The reference group will be asked to engage and provide input at every stage of the evaluation process, from design to preliminary results and final draft report. The reference group plays a critical role through remote and in-person meetings in ensuring a high quality, transparent process,

providing insights on the key questions and approach, ensuring factual accuracy, ensuring gaps and misinterpretation of information is avoided. They will also be key informants. The reference group also plays a key role in the dissemination of the evaluation findings and recommendations and ensuring the use of the information by UN Women and key partners.

VI.   Management and quality assurance

All evaluation processes at UN Women establish mechanisms to ensure high quality evaluation processes and products as outlined in the UN Women Evaluation Policy and Handbook. The Evaluation Report will adapt the approach outlined in the UN Women Country Portfolio Evaluation Guidance and should also follow the United Nations Editorial Manual. The UN Women Evaluation Report Quality Assurance (GERAAS) criteria will be used to assure quality (See Annex 1). All products are subject to quality assurance review by the peer reviewer, the ERG, and the evaluation management group.

This evaluation will have the following structures (as seen in the figure below):

1. **Oversight:** The Director of the Independent Evaluation and Audit Service oversees all activities, while the Chief of Independent Evaluation Service is responsible for the evaluation related activities; both will review the key products of the evaluation.

2. **Team Leader:** The Regional Evaluation Specialist of the Independent Evaluation Service will manage the coordination and day-to-day management, and serve as the team leader, leading methodological approach, collection of data, analysis and writing; as Team Leader, she will also be responsible for overseeing the work of the team members, managing the contracts and assuring quality of the work.

3. **Evaluation team**: The evaluation team members will include the evaluation analyst responsible for key analytical tasks, systematization of information and contribution to analysis and report and presentation preparation and the international evaluation consultant who will support the entire evaluation process. The team will be supported in these tasks by the research and evaluation intern and where relevant national evaluation consultants or interpreters.

4. **Evaluation Management Group** for administrative support and accountability: Regional Director and/or Deputy Director, functional and/or thematic area representative and the Regional Evaluation Specialist (Team Leader).

5. **Evaluation Reference Group** for substantive technical support: Regional and National (NRA) government partners, Civil Society representatives, Development partners/donors and UN partners at the regional level.

6. **Peer Review** for methodological guidance and feedback: 1 IES staff will be engaged as peer reviewer of the evaluation.

Evaluation Governance Structure
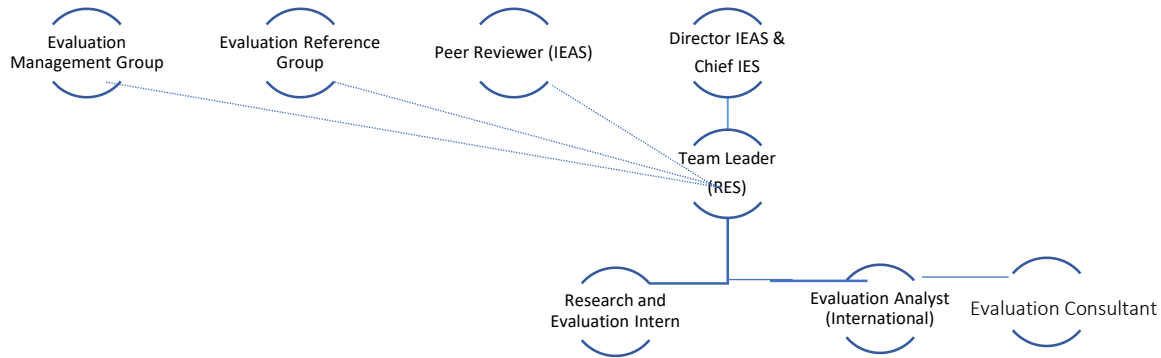
VII.   Timeframe and key milestones

The evaluation will take place between September 2024 and February 2025. The preparation stage was initiated in July 2024 through the drafting of the TOR. There will be a theory of change (TOC) workshop in September 2024 and an inception presentation in early October 2024. Data collection will take place in October /November 2024. The preliminary findings presentation will take place in December. The evaluation report will be drafted and validated by stakeholders between December and January 2025; the draft evaluation report will be submitted to the ERG in January for review. Final formatted products will be ready in February/March 2025 according to UN Women branding guidelines for technical publications. Evaluation dissemination and management response should be initiated by March/ April 2025.

Phase	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Preparation								
Desk review	●	●						
Theory of Change Workshop with ROAP		●						
Inception meeting with ERG			●					
Data collection & Analysis phase								
Survey				●				
Data Collection + Debriefing				●	●			
Analysis					●			
Report Phase								
Preliminary findings workshop with ERG					●			
Draft report shared with ERG						●		
Final report						●	●	
Communication products (brief + PPT)							●	●

VIII.   Ethical code of conduct

UN Women has developed a [UN Women Evaluation Consultants Agreement Form](#) for evaluators that must be signed as part of the contracting process, which is based on the [UNEG Ethical Guidelines](#). These documents will be annexed to contracts. All data collected by the team members must be submitted to the evaluation manager in Word, PowerPoint or Excel formats and is the property of UN Women. Proper storage of data is essential for ensuring confidentiality. The UNEG guidelines note the importance of ethical conduct for the following reasons:

1. Responsible use of power: All those engaged in evaluation processes are responsible for upholding the proper conduct of the evaluation.
2. Ensuring credibility: With a fair, impartial and complete assessment, stake- holders are more likely to have faith in the results of an evaluation and to take note of the recommendations.
3. Responsible use of resources: Ethical conduct in evaluation increases the chances of acceptance by the parties to the evaluation and therefore the likelihood that the investment in the evaluation will result in improved outcomes.

The evaluation value added is its impartial and systematic assessment of the programme or intervention. As with the other stages of the evaluation, involvement of stakeholders should not interfere with the impartiality of the evaluation. The evaluation team has the final judgment on the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation report, and the team must be protected from pressures to change information in the report.

Annex 1 UN Women GERAAS evaluation quality assessment checklist
- [http://www.unwomen.org/~/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/aboutper cent20us/evaluation/evaluation-geraasmethodology-en.pdf](#)

Annex 2 UN Women Evaluation Consultants Agreement Form
- [UN Women Evaluation Consultants Agreement Form](#)
- [UNEG Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct](#).

Annex 3 UNEG Norms and Standards for evaluation
- [http://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/2787](#)

Annex 4 Resources for data on gender equality and human rights
- UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) – Universal Human Rights Index: [http://uhri.ohchr.org/en](#)
- UN Statistics – Gender Statistics: [http://genderstats.org/](#)
- UNDP Human Development Report – Gender Inequality Index: [http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii](#)
- World Bank – Gender Equality Data and Statistics: [http://datatopics.worldbank.org/gender/](#)
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Social Institutions and Gender

Index: http://genderindex.org/
- World Economic Forum – Global Gender Gap Report: http://www.weforum.org/issues/global-gender-gap
- A listing of UN reports, databases and archives relating to gender equality and women's human rights can be found at: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/directory/statistics_and_indicators_60.htm