



EVALUATION USE STRATEGY

UN WOMEN'S STRATEGY TO STRENGTHEN EVALUATION USE THROUGH COMMUNICATION, KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND ADVOCACY

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION SERVICE



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UN Women Independent Evaluation, Audit and Investigation Services

Independent Evaluation Service

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FOREWORD

At UN Women, our commitment to gender equality is anchored in values of accountability, transparency and learning. Evaluation plays a vital role in advancing these values, providing the evidence needed to understand what works, challenge assumptions and drive meaningful change for women and girls around the world.

However, the true power of evaluation lies not only in the process but also in using evaluation findings alongside our stakeholders—the Executive Board, donors, civil society, senior leaders, project managers, academics, think tanks—and many others who turn evidence into action.

This Evaluation Use Strategy comes at a pivotal time. As the organization enters the final year of its Strategic Plan (2022–2025) and prepares for the next planning cycle, the development landscape is marked by tightening resources and competing priorities. In this context, it is more important than ever to ensure that evaluation findings are not only published, but fully applied to improve programmes, inform decisions, guide policy and inspire innovation. With growing demands for accountability, value for money and transformative results, our evaluations must move beyond static reports to generate real-world influence and impact.

The strategy is grounded in deep reflection and evidence from self-assessments, consultations and lessons learned across all regions and levels of the organization. It sets out a clear vision, structured approach and practical pathways to ensure evaluation use becomes a consistent, strategic and measurable part of how UN Women operates.

Evaluation use is not the responsibility of one office. It is a shared commitment. This strategy calls on all of us – leaders, evaluators, planners, programme managers and partners – to bring evidence to the centre of our work. Together, let us use evaluations not only to assess our progress but to accelerate it.

This Evaluation Use Strategy was developed by UN Women’s Independent Evaluation Service (IES) as part of its ongoing efforts to strengthen the use of evaluation for learning, accountability, and impact across the organization. The process was enriched by the collective contributions of many colleagues who played vital roles throughout its development.

We are especially grateful to the IES team for their collaborative review, thoughtful feedback, and strategic suggestions that shaped the direction and substance of this strategy. Sincere thanks also go to the colleagues who contributed to the initial situational analysis, helping to identify opportunities and barriers to evaluation use across UN Women. Appreciation is likewise extended to those who supported the preparatory work, including the development of the concept note, internal consultations, and early design of this document.

This strategy is the result of many rounds of reflection, collaboration, and shared commitment—and we thank everyone who contributed to making it a meaningful and actionable roadmap for strengthening evaluation use at UN Women.



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DEFINITIONS AND KEY CONCEPTS

ADVOCACY

Advocacy is a **deliberate process to directly and indirectly influence decision makers**, stakeholders and relevant audiences to support and implement actions to contribute to changes in the lives of women and girls and the full enjoyment of their rights. It represents a set of strategic actions and, at its most vibrant, will influence the decisions, policies, practices and attitudes of others. For the purpose of this strategy, it is a process designed to promote the use of evaluation at UN Women and beyond.

Source: UN Women does not have a common definition of advocacy. The definition used here is adapted from the proposed definition of policy advocacy from the Corporate Evaluation of UN Women's policy advocacy work (2022) and the [UNICEF Advocacy Toolkit](#) (2021).

EVALUATION

An evaluation is "a **systematic and impartial assessment that provides credible and reliable evidence-based information about the extent to which an intervention has resulted in progress (or the lack thereof)** towards intended and/or unintended results regarding gender equality and the empowerment of women. As a process itself, evaluation is also a means to enhance gender equality and the empowerment of women through the incorporation of gender equality and human rights perspectives into evaluation approaches, methods, processes and use. Accordingly, not only does evaluation act as an important driver of positive change towards gender equality and the empowerment of women, but the way in which the evaluation process itself is undertaken empowers the stakeholders involved".

Source: UN Women (2020). [Evaluation Policy of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women](#).

EVALUATION USE

Evaluation use, or evaluation utilization, occurs when evaluation information in the form of findings, or evaluation practice, has **influence on the actions or thoughts of stakeholders**.

Source: UNEG (2016). [Evaluation Use in the UN System: Conclusions from the Data](#). The definition is originally from Alkin, M. C. (2005). Evaluation Use. In S. Mathison (Ed.). Encyclopedia of Evaluation (1st ed). United States of America: Sage Publications, p. 143. In accordance with this definition, the terms evaluation use and evaluation utilization are used interchangeably in the strategy. It is important to note that there is a lack of consensus on the definition of evaluation use; [A Guide: Integrating communication in evaluation](#) (2016).

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Knowledge management "is a **set of practices and processes that enable an organization to generate, systematize and share cutting-edge knowledge** both internally and externally. In doing so, it promotes efficiency, reduces duplication and fosters learning and innovation. Through knowledge management, knowledge is transformed into an asset that can make the organization more efficient and effective. The objective of knowledge management is to produce and deliver the right knowledge, in the right format, to the right person at the right time in the right context."

Source: UN Women (2018). [UN Women Knowledge Management Strategy](#) 2018-2021.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

Strategic communication is the **purposeful use of communication by an organization to fulfill its mission**. It involves the planned use of communication actions, messages and channels to inform, influence and engage key stakeholders to achieve measurable results.

Source: UNICEF (2018). [Evaluation Communication and Advocacy Strategy](#).

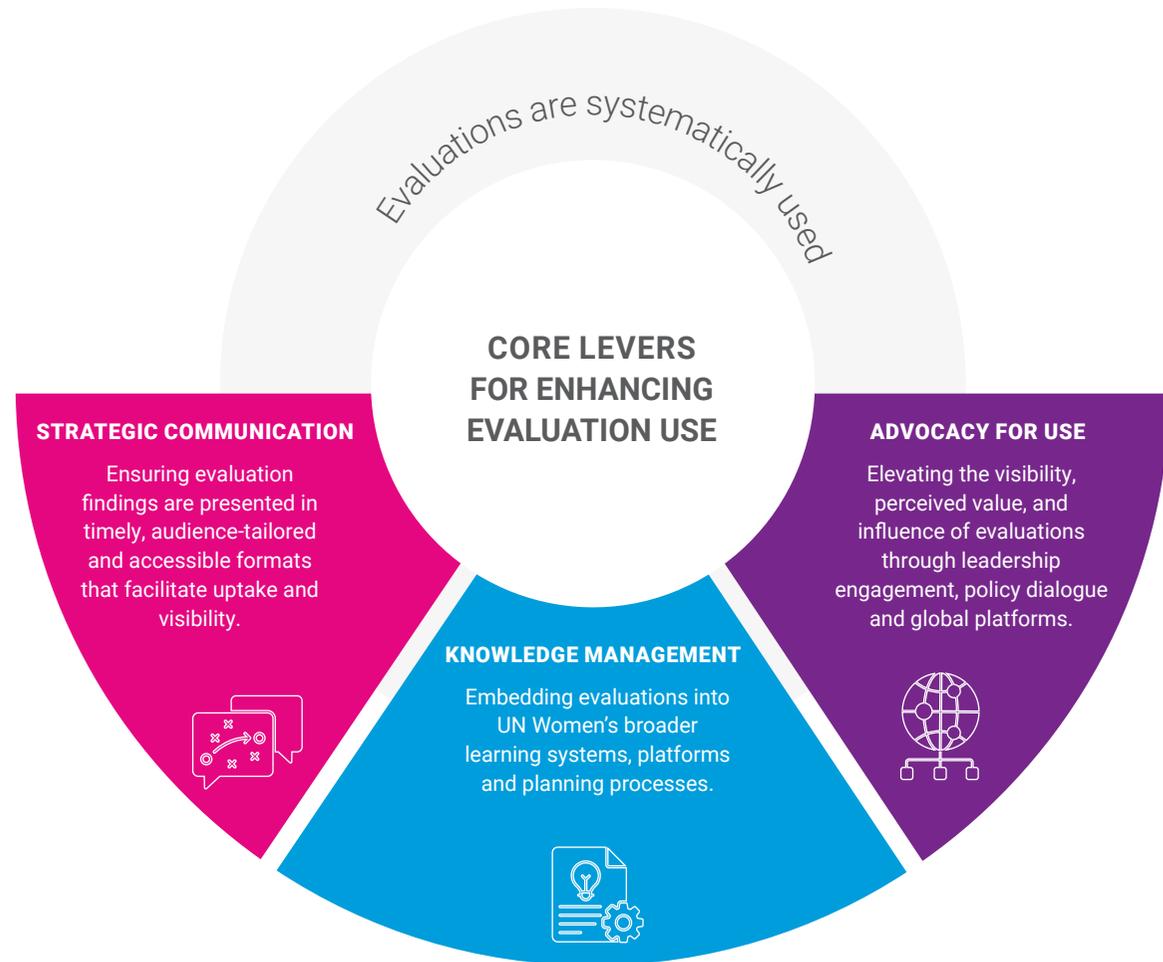
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Evaluation is a cornerstone of UN Women’s commitment to transparency, accountability and learning. It provides the evidence base to understand what works, identify what needs to change and accelerate progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Yet, the value of evaluation lies not only in its quality or credibility but in how it is used.

The UN Women Evaluation Use Strategy sets out a bold and practical road map to ensure that evaluations are actively and consistently used across the organization and beyond. It responds to a shared recognition that evaluations must move beyond static reports to become dynamic tools for learning, decision-making and influence. Grounded in extensive inputs—including a 2024 self-assessment of the evaluation function, global stakeholder consultations and lessons learned from past initiatives—the strategy is designed to address persistent barriers to evaluation use. These include uneven follow-up on findings, fragmented communication practices, limited visibility and a lack of systematic monitoring on how evaluations are applied in practice.

As shown in Figure 1, the strategy is built around three core levers for change: Strategic Communication, Knowledge Management and Advocacy for Use.

FIGURE 1
Core levers for enhancing evaluation use



These levers are operationalized through a structured strategic framework, consisting of four interconnected outcomes, as illustrated in Figure 2.

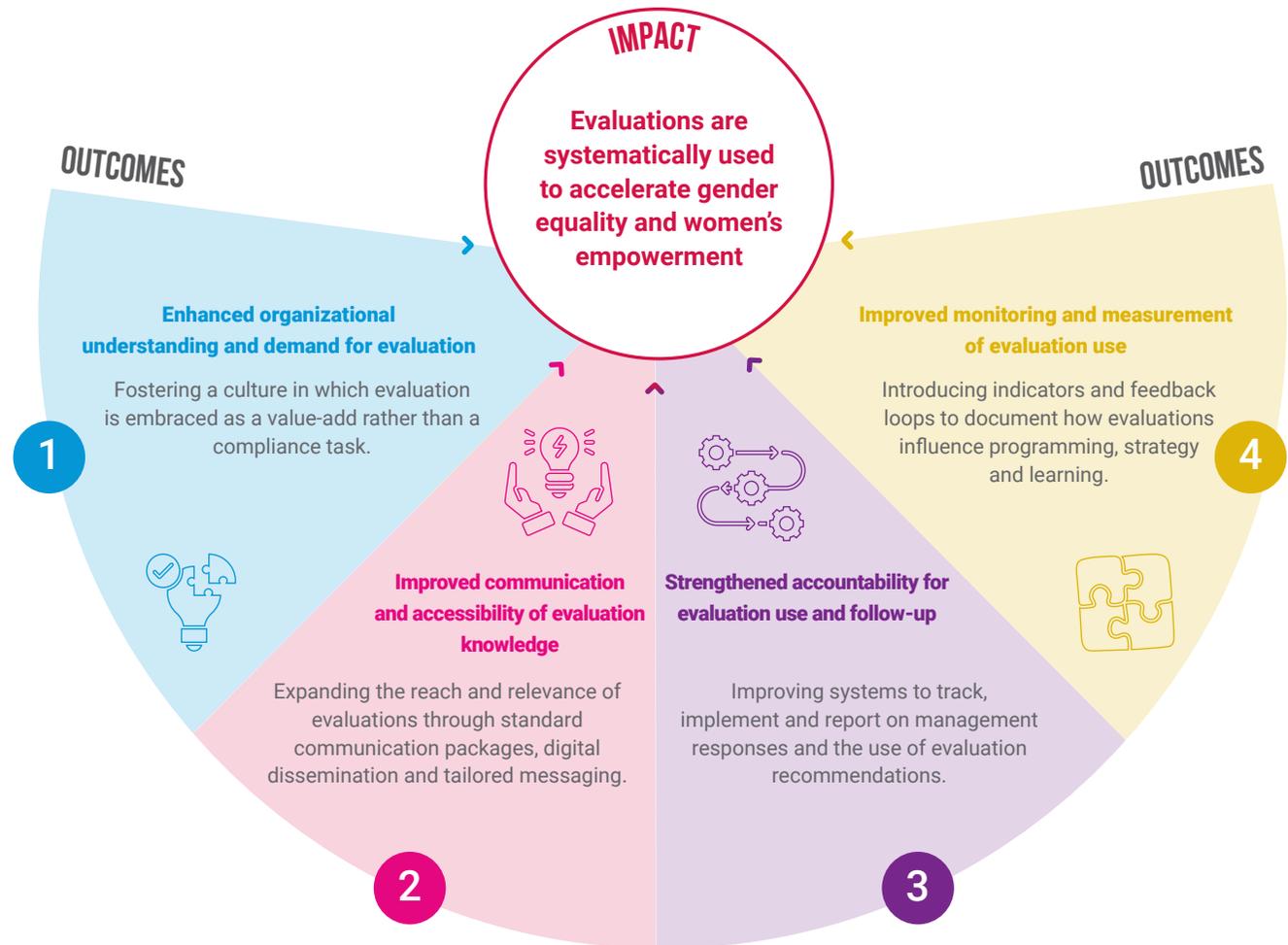
To achieve these outcomes, the strategy outlines a set of implementation pathways—a coordinated set of actions and outputs that will be phased in across the 2025–2030 period. These include evaluation use toolkits, communication templates, training events, tracking dashboards, synthesis products and collaboration mechanisms with other divisions.

It outlines clear roles and responsibilities for Independent Evaluation Service (IES) staff, country-level monitoring and evaluation (M&E) focal points, communications and knowledge management personnel, and senior leadership—ensuring shared ownership and integrated implementation.

An accompanying performance framework introduces Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure success over time, with annual reporting and reflection built into IES’ core work planning.

Ultimately, this strategy positions evaluation not only as a mechanism for accountability but as a driver of continuous improvement, policy influence and organizational learning. By bringing evaluation to the centre of decision-making, it helps UN Women deliver more effective, inclusive and transformative results for women and girls worldwide.

FIGURE 2
Strategic Framework for operationalizing the levers for change



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of the UN Women Evaluation Use Strategy is to enhance the systematic utilization of evaluations across all dimensions of the organization's mandate—normative support, operational activities and coordination—by strengthening the ways in which evaluation findings and processes are communicated, managed and advocated for. Rooted in the recognition that evaluations are not ends in themselves but tools for learning, accountability and strategic decision-making, this strategy aims to transform evaluative evidence into actionable insights that inform programming, policymaking and organizational development.

Informed by the [UN Women Evaluation Strategy 2022–2025](#), this Evaluation Use Strategy builds on the commitment to make evaluation a central driver of results-based management and gender equality transformation. It addresses longstanding barriers to evaluation use –such as inadequate dissemination, fragmented communication, weak knowledge integration and limited follow-up mechanisms—while capitalizing on opportunities to amplify evaluation's value across the organization.

This strategy is specifically focused on enhancing the use of findings, with attention to both instrumental (direct application) and conceptual (indirect learning) uses of evaluations. While recognizing that process use is a critical feature of gender-responsive evaluations (already addressed in UN Women's

Evaluation Handbook and evaluation guidelines), this strategy focuses on the use of findings to ensure that the insights generated through evaluations tangibly shape decisions, resource allocations, programme improvements and advocacy efforts. It discourages symbolic or token use of evaluation (e.g. box-checking) and instead promotes purposeful engagement with evidence to drive change.

The scope of this strategy encompasses three core functional levers of evaluation use:

- **Strategic communication:** Ensuring evaluation findings are presented in timely, audience-tailored and accessible formats that facilitate uptake and visibility.
- **Knowledge management:** Embedding evaluations into UN Women's broader learning systems, platforms and planning processes.
- **Advocacy for use:** Elevating the visibility, perceived value, and influence of evaluations through leadership engagement, policy dialogue and global platforms.

Importantly, the management response system—as defined in the [UN Women Evaluation Handbook](#)—is integral to this strategy. By strengthening how management responses are developed, tracked and applied, the strategy reinforces accountability and ensures that evaluation findings translate into meaningful action beyond compliance.

While primarily oriented towards independent evaluations led by the Independent Evaluation Service (IES), this strategy is also designed to strengthen the use of decentralized evaluations conducted at regional and country levels. As such, it is relevant not only for IES staff but also for country-level M&E focal points, knowledge management officers, communications personnel, programme managers and senior leaders who play a role in promoting evidence-informed decision-making.

The Evaluation Use Strategy will be implemented across two Strategic Plan cycles (2025–2030), providing a long-term vision to institutionalize evaluation use practices across all levels of UN Women. Its design is grounded in data from a recent self-assessment of the evaluation function, stakeholder feedback and United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) evaluation use frameworks. The strategy will be accompanied by practical tools, dissemination templates and performance indicators to support implementation and measure results.

Ultimately, this strategy envisions a culture in which evaluation is not only conducted rigorously, but also actively used to challenge assumptions, guide decisions, inspire innovation and accelerate progress towards gender equality. This vision recognizes the need for context-specific tailoring and regional adaptation to address capacity disparities and ensure that evaluation use is meaningful and feasible in all settings.

1.2 OVERVIEW OF THE EVALUATION USE STRATEGY

The UN Women Evaluation Use Strategy (2025–2030) provides a comprehensive framework to systematically enhance the use of evaluations across the organization through three interconnected levers: communication, knowledge management and advocacy. Rooted in the Evaluation Strategy 2022–2025 and the Charter of the Independent Evaluation, Audit and Investigation Services (IEAIS), the strategy responds to persistent gaps in evaluation use identified by internal assessments, global good practices and the evolving demands of a complex development environment.

Recognizing that evaluations are most effective when their findings influence decisions and drive improvements, this strategy focuses explicitly on enhancing the use of evaluation findings—both instrumental use (direct application of findings and implementation of recommendations) and conceptual use (use of findings and insights to inform thinking, discourse and learning). While process use—the learning that occurs throughout the evaluation process—is a key tenet of gender-responsive evaluations, it is addressed in complementary resources such as the UN Women Evaluation Handbook and Country Portfolio Evaluation Guidelines. Therefore, this strategy is purposefully scoped to deepen the uptake and utility of evaluation results and management responses.

The strategy responds to several interlinked needs:

- A growing demand for timely, relevant and well-communicated evaluations to inform policy and programming.
- The need for strategic dissemination and accessibility of evaluation knowledge.
- The importance of institutionalizing evaluation use as a core element of organizational learning and decision-making.
- The imperative to elevate the visibility and credibility of the evaluation function internally and externally.

Anchored in these needs, the strategy is organized around four strategic outcomes: Enhance understanding and demand for evaluation; Improve strategic communication of evaluation knowledge; Strengthen accountability for evaluation follow-up; and Improve measurement of evaluation use.

FIGURE 3
Strategic outcomes for strengthening evaluation use



The strategy will guide both independent evaluations led by IES and decentralized evaluations managed by headquarters divisions, Regional and Country Offices. It targets multiple audiences, with a primary focus on internal stakeholders—including senior managers, programme staff, M&E personnel and thematic leads—who are key drivers of decision-making and implementation. However, it also provides adaptable approaches for engaging external stakeholders, donors, UN partners and evaluation networks.

As shown in Figure 4, several guiding principles underpin this strategy to ensure alignment with UN Women’s commitment to gender equality, results-based management, organizational learning, and the ethical use of evidence.

The strategy introduces a set of minimum communication requirements for evaluations—including standardized briefs, presentations and webinars—with templates and dissemination strategies to be integrated from the evaluation inception phase. It also outlines optional products for enhanced outreach (e.g. Transform magazine features, infographics, blogs) and proposes innovations such as the use of AI-enhanced platforms for accessibility and dissemination via the GATE system and SharePoint.

In the area of knowledge management, the strategy emphasizes the integration of evaluative evidence into existing communities of practice, Strategic Note development, internal workshops and thematic webinars.

It calls for improved tagging, searchability and use of evaluation findings across digital platforms, as well as stronger collaboration with knowledge management focal points at all levels.

The advocacy component of the strategy seeks to increase the visibility of evaluation by promoting its relevance to gender equality outcomes, linking evaluation findings to high-profile campaigns (e.g. HeForShe, Generation Equality and 16 Days of Activism) and reinforcing evaluation’s role in strategic positioning, policy dialogue and donor engagement.

Finally, the strategy lays out a monitoring framework with standardized indicators to assess the reach, uptake and influence of evaluation use efforts. It defines clear roles and responsibilities for IES staff, M&E focal points, communications officers and knowledge management personnel, supported by an implementation plan, governance structure and templates.

By addressing known bottlenecks in evaluation use and introducing actionable solutions grounded in evidence, the Evaluation Use Strategy positions UN Women to fully leverage evaluation as a tool for learning, advocacy and transformative impact— ultimately accelerating progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.



Photo: UN Women/Ruhani Kaur

FIGURE 4

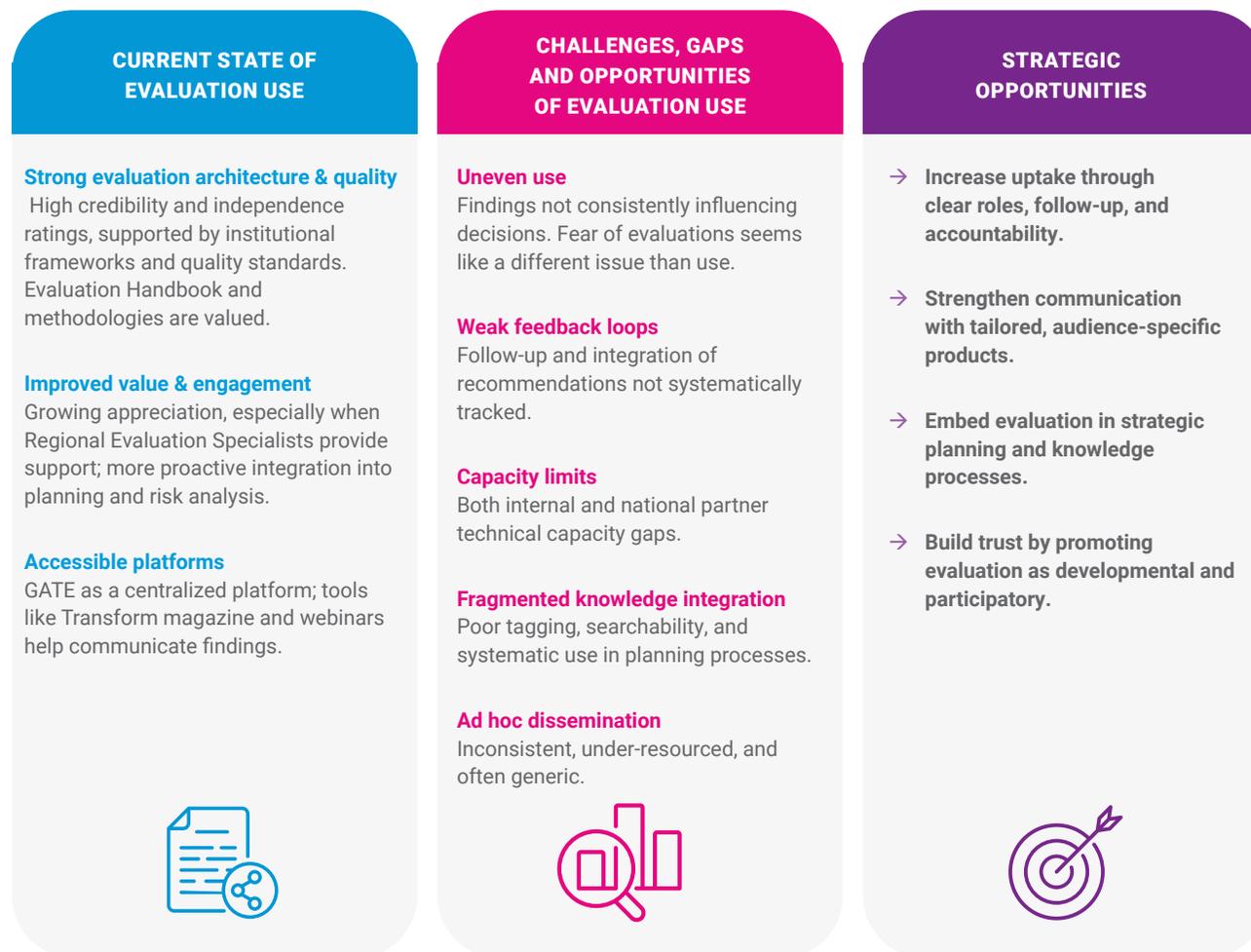
Principles underpinning evaluation use and learning



2. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

The following analysis is grounded in a comprehensive self-assessment exercise conducted by IES in early 2024. This exercise aimed to evaluate the current state of evaluation use across UN Women and inform the development of this strategy. Using the UNEG Self-Assessment Maturity Matrix as a framework, the assessment synthesized multiple data sources: a global feedback survey of 84 internal and external stakeholders; five regional and headquarters-based focus group discussions with over 30 personnel; and a targeted document review of evaluation practice. These inputs provided rich, multi-dimensional insights into how evaluations are currently used, what barriers persist and where opportunities for increased uptake and learning exist. The findings below, summarized in Figure 5, reflect the diverse perspectives of M&E specialists, programme staff, regional evaluation advisers and external consultants, and represent a critical evidence base for shaping a forward-looking, action-oriented Evaluation Use Strategy.

FIGURE 5
Findings from the 2024 Self-Assessment on Evaluation Use at UN Women



3. AUDIENCE

3.1 INTERNAL AUDIENCE

Effective evaluation use requires deliberate targeting and engagement of internal audiences who influence or directly participate in decision-making, programming, policy development, learning, communications and accountability processes. This strategy adopts a multi-audience approach to internal stakeholders, recognizing the diverse roles they play in ensuring that evaluations are not only completed but also acted upon, disseminated and translated into knowledge and learning.

The following internal audiences are prioritized within this Evaluation Use Strategy:

I. SENIOR LEADERSHIP

This includes the Executive Director, Deputy Executive Directors, Directors of Divisions, Regional Directors and Country Representatives. Senior leaders are instrumental in driving a culture of evaluation use by:

- Requesting strategic evaluations and ensuring alignment with decision-making moments.
- Championing the use of findings in programmatic and strategic decisions.
- Allocating resources and staff time to implement and follow up on recommendations.
- Modelling behaviour that treats evaluation as a developmental and learning tool.

II. PROGRAMME AND OPERATIONS STAFF

This includes programme managers, team leads, technical specialists and operations officers at headquarters, regional and country levels. These teams are often responsible for implementation of evaluation recommendations and are key users of evaluation evidence for programme design, delivery and refinement. The strategy seeks to:

- Improve access to relevant evaluation findings across thematic areas.
- Strengthen understanding of the differences between evaluations, reviews and audits.
- Promote participatory engagement throughout the evaluation cycle to enhance ownership and learning.

III. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT (RBM) PERSONNEL

This includes M&E specialists, officers, analysts and focal points across all offices. As primary custodians of decentralized evaluations and key facilitators of the evaluation function, these personnel are central to operationalization of this strategy. The strategy will support M&E staff by:

- Providing improved templates and guidance for communicating findings.
- Offering knowledge-sharing opportunities and learning exchanges.
- Equipping focal points with tools to monitor follow-up and promote use.

IV. REGIONAL EVALUATION SPECIALISTS

Regional Evaluation Specialists, an integral part of IES, play a critical role in strengthening the quality, relevance and uptake of decentralized evaluations. They are essential actors in:

- Coaching and quality assurance support for decentralized evaluations.
- Promoting the use of evaluations across regional strategic priorities.
- Ensuring follow-up and management response compliance.

V. THEMATIC AND TECHNICAL LEADS

This includes gender specialists, policy leads, human rights advisers and thematic teams (e.g. EVAW, WEE, WPS, etc.). These stakeholders can champion the use of evaluation findings to refine approaches, advocate for programmatic shifts and shape knowledge products. To strengthen their engagement, the strategy will:

- Identify relevant evaluation findings aligned with thematic priorities.
- Create issue-specific briefs and synthesis materials.
- Offer technical webinars and round tables to facilitate uptake.

VI. STRATEGIC PLANNING, COORDINATION AND

LEARNING FOCAL POINTS

Strategic planning specialists and learning focal points at headquarters, Regional Office and Country Office levels serve as critical bridges between evaluation, RBM and planning functions. By integrating evaluation findings into Strategic Note development, mid-term reviews and country-level reporting frameworks, these personnel play an enabling role in institutionalizing evaluation use.

The strategy encourages closer alignment between these functions by:

- Promoting shared evidence repositories.
- Embedding evaluation findings into planning templates.
- Linking strategic planning and evaluation timelines.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

PERSONNEL

This group includes communications officers, knowledge management specialists and digital platform managers across offices. They help tailor and disseminate evaluation products, especially at the decentralized level, to internal and external audiences; provide intranet visibility; and produce briefs, videos, infographics and knowledge products. The strategy will:

- Establish suggested minimum standards for evaluation communication products for decentralized evaluations.
- Develop ready-made templates and tools for evaluation knowledge products.
- Encourage greater integration of evaluations into campaigns, webinars and internal newsletters.

VIII. INDEPENDENT EVALUATION SERVICE (IES)

Finally, IES itself plays a dual role—primarily as a producer of evaluation knowledge and also as an enabler and promoter of evaluation use across the organization. As the lead entity for implementation, IES will ensure:

- Coordination across roles for communications, knowledge management and use.
- Integration of evaluation use principles from inception to follow-up.
- Quality assurance and monitoring of use and learning outcomes.

In summary, internal audiences span a wide range of functions and influence. This strategy acknowledges that evaluation use is not the responsibility of a single unit, but rather is a shared institutional practice that requires clear roles, tailored engagement and alignment with each group's purpose, incentives and capacity. By identifying these audiences explicitly, the strategy establishes the foundation for differentiated actions, tools and accountability mechanisms that will follow in subsequent sections.



Photo: UN Women/Eva Sibanda

3.2 EXTERNAL AUDIENCE

In addition to strengthening internal engagement, the Evaluation Use Strategy prioritizes the targeted engagement of external audiences who are key stakeholders in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment, influencing policy, funding and accountability landscapes. These audiences not only benefit from evaluation insights but also help amplify, validate and operationalize findings within broader development ecosystems.

This strategy emphasizes that evaluation products must be timely, credible, accessible and relevant to these external actors. Strategic dissemination, tailored messaging and collaborative learning opportunities will be used to enhance the external use, influence and visibility of UN Women's evaluation work.

I. MEMBER STATES AND THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

UN Women's Executive Board and contributing Member States are critical consumers of corporate evaluation findings. Evaluations provide evidence for:

- Oversight of UN Women's performance and accountability.
- Informing governance decisions.
- Validating organizational strategies and programmatic priorities. To ensure relevance and accessibility, the strategy will continue to:
 - Present key findings and strategic evaluation summaries at board sessions.
 - Provide executive-level briefs.
 - Align evaluation communication timelines with Executive Board meetings.

II. DONORS AND FUNDING PARTNERS

Donors increasingly expect rigorous, transparent and timely evidence on programme effectiveness and impact. Evaluations are key tools for:

- Demonstrating accountability for results and value for money.
- Strengthening case-making for continued or expanded investment.
- Showcasing learning and innovation.
- To ensure relevance and accessibility, the strategy will continue to:
 - Draw on credible evaluation findings and lessons learned when preparing donor-facing materials, where relevant.
 - Strengthen the integration of evaluation evidence in donor reporting and strategic discussions, in collaboration with Strategic Partnerships and Resource Mobilization colleagues.

III. UN SYSTEM PARTNERS AND INTER-AGENCY

MECHANISMS

UN Women plays a key role in UN system coordination on gender equality. Evaluation findings contribute to:

- Promoting both the use and conduct of gender-responsive evaluations within the UN system.
- System-wide learning through joint evaluations and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) evaluations and the System-Wide Evaluation Office.

- Strengthening UN coherence and joint accountability (e.g. submitting evaluations in the UNEG database) and informing UN inter-agency platforms (e.g. UNEG, UNDAFs, Sustainable Development Goal [SDG] monitoring, regional evaluation networks).

To ensure relevance and accessibility, the strategy will continue to:

- Contribute findings to relevant inter-agency evaluation and knowledge management platforms.
- Present evaluations in inter-agency learning forums (e.g. UNEG webinars, evaluation networks).
- Expand joint evaluation and knowledge-sharing efforts with sister agencies.

The Maturity Assessment highlighted IES' active participation in initiatives such as EvalGender+, the SDG Synthesis Coalition and UNEDAP, demonstrating strong external influence that this strategy aims to scale and systematize.

IV. CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS (CSOS), WOMEN'S RIGHTS GROUPS AND GRASSROOTS MOVEMENTS

These actors are vital implementation partners, advocacy allies and sources of community insight. They can use evaluations to:

- Inform programming, advocacy campaigns and accountability mechanisms.
- Strengthen partnerships with UN Women through evidence-based dialogue.
- Hold the entity accountable to the rights of women and girls.
- To ensure relevance and accessibility, the strategy will continue to:
- Prioritize making key evaluation findings more accessible to CSOs and local partners through simplified briefs and visual summaries, subject to available resources.
- Support the production of infographics, translated briefs (in major UN languages, where feasible) and community webinars or learning sessions to help localize key insights and expand reach.

Stakeholders in several focus group discussions emphasized the need to expand access to evaluations beyond UN Women and translate insights into formats usable by partners and beneficiaries.

V. NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

As UN Women works closely with national partners, especially through policy support and normative frameworks, evaluations are key tools for:

- Supporting national planning, budgeting and gender-responsive governance.
- Informing national evaluations and statistical systems.
- Promoting gender-responsive accountability.
- To ensure relevance and accessibility, the strategy will continue to:
- Share key evaluation findings with ministries and public institutions in ways that align with country-level policy dialogue and planning cycles.
- Contribute, where appropriate, to strengthening national gender statistics and evaluation systems by making tools and lessons learned available for adaptation.
- Encourage the use of evaluation insights to inform national planning, budgeting and governance discussions, while respecting that stakeholder engagement remains primarily the role of Country Offices and senior leadership.

The Maturity Assessment emphasized the importance of supporting National Evaluation Capacity Development as a pathway to broader evaluation use.

VI. ACADEMIA, THINK TANKS AND EVALUATION NETWORKS

Academic institutions and evaluation networks are key multipliers of evaluation knowledge. They provide platforms for:

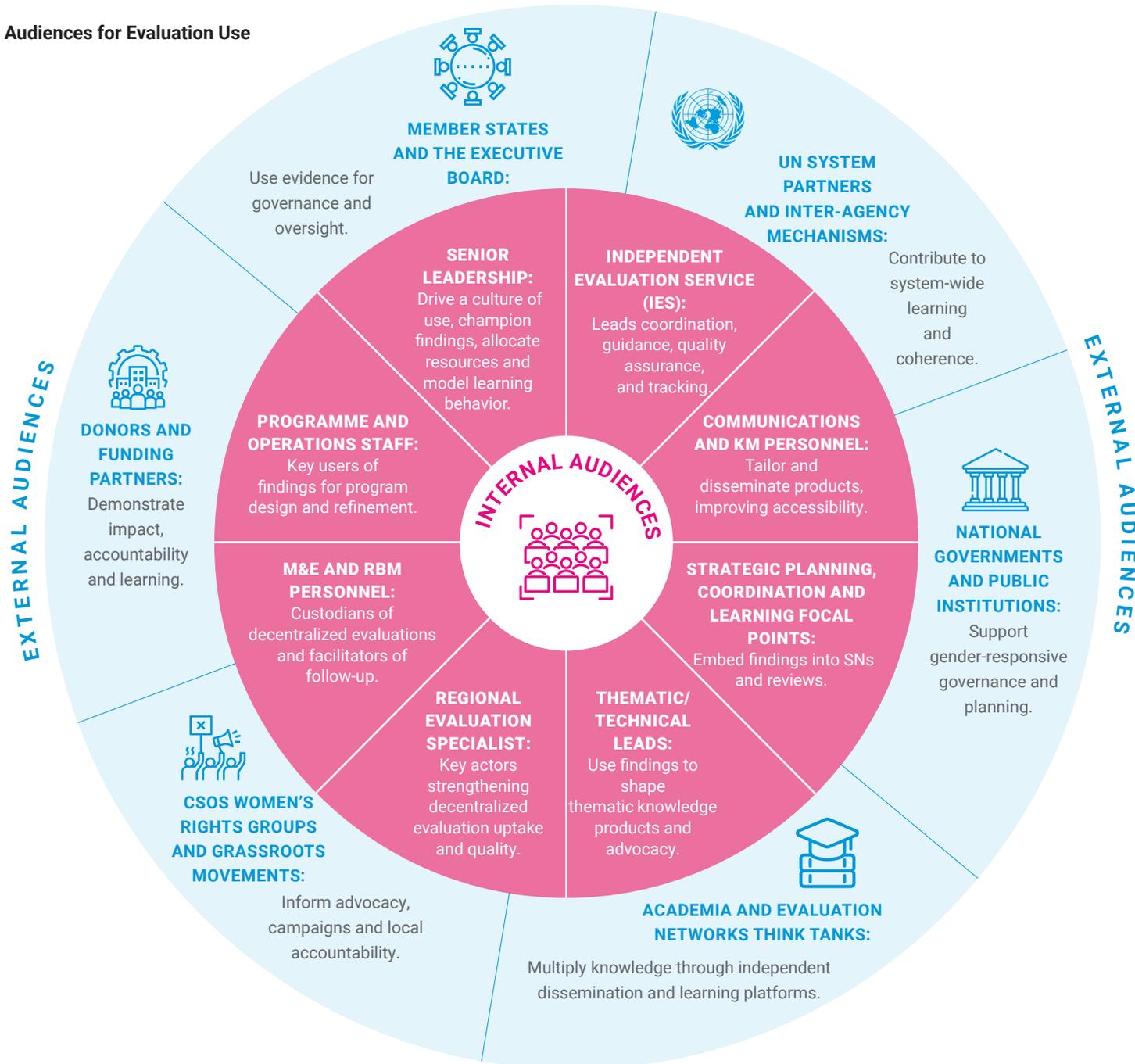
- Independent peer review and dissemination of findings.
- Uptake of UN Women evaluation methods and insights into academic and professional development curricula.
- Collaboration on evaluation methods, thematic analysis and learning agendas.

To ensure relevance and accessibility, the strategy will continue to:

- Share key evaluation briefs, methods and findings in accessible formats for academic audiences, where feasible and aligned with existing work.
- Support cross-institutional learning opportunities—such as webinars, case studies or joint discussions—in collaboration with academic and evaluation networks, as far as possible.
- Engage selectively with evaluation associations (e.g. IDEAS national societies) to exchange lessons learned and amplify good practices, recognizing resource constraints. In summary, external audiences span governance, funding, implementation and knowledge ecosystems. Tailoring communication and engagement approaches to their specific roles, capacities and interests is essential to ensuring that evaluations not only inform UN Women's internal decisions but also shape the broader global gender equality agenda.

FIGURE 6

Key Internal and External Audiences for Evaluation Use



4. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

4.1 VISION (IMPACT)

The vision of the Evaluation Use Strategy is that evaluations are systematically used to accelerate gender equality and women's empowerment by informing decisions, strengthening accountability and fostering institutional learning across all levels of UN Women and its partners.

By 2030, UN Women envisions an organizational culture where:

- Evaluation is embedded in strategic and operational decision-making processes.
- Evaluation findings are routinely accessed, discussed and acted upon by internal and external stakeholders.
- Knowledge generated through evaluations contributes directly to programmatic improvements, policy innovation, donor engagement and normative positioning.
- The visibility and credibility of UN Women's evaluation function are enhanced across the UN system and development community.
- Evaluation is not only a tool for accountability but also a catalyst for learning, adaptation and transformative change in support of gender equality.

This vision aligns with the broader institutional goal of leveraging evaluation to support UN Women's triple-mandate – normative, operational and coordination roles—by ensuring that credible evidence is not only generated but meaningfully applied.

In realizing this vision, UN Women will contribute to a more evidence-driven and inclusive development ecosystem, where evaluations are valued not merely for compliance but for their power to improve lives, policies and systems—especially for women and girls left furthest behind.



4.2 OUTCOMES

To achieve the vision of a more evidence-informed and learning-driven organization, the Evaluation Use Strategy is structured around four strategic outcomes that directly respond to the current barriers, needs and opportunities identified across UN Women's evaluation ecosystem.

Each outcome reflects a distinct area of change that the strategy seeks to achieve by 2030, and will be pursued through coordinated actions by IES, regional specialists, M&E staff, communications teams and programmatic leadership across the organization. As shown in Figure 7, the strategy's four outcomes aim to embed evaluation more deeply across UN Women by strengthening organizational understanding and demand for evaluation; improving the communication and accessibility of evaluation knowledge; reinforcing accountability for follow-up and use; and systematically monitoring and measuring how evaluations are applied. Together, these four outcomes provide the strategic backbone of the Evaluation Use Strategy. Each is supported by a set of outputs, actions and indicators detailed in subsequent sections of the strategy framework (Sections 4.3 and 4.4), ensuring the transition from vision to operational reality.

FIGURE 7

Strategic outcomes for strengthening evaluation use

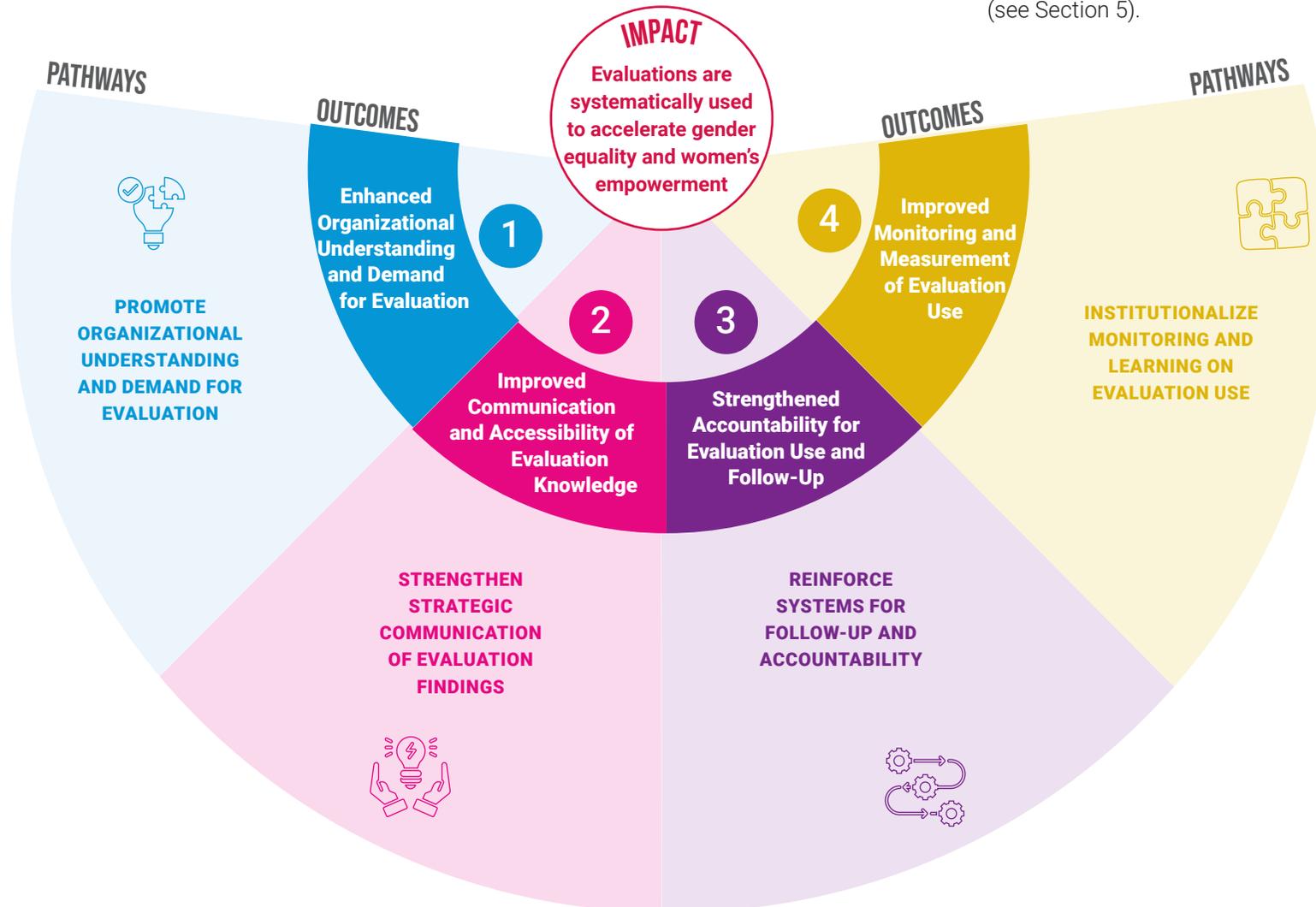


4.3 PATHWAYS FOR INFLUENTIAL EVALUATION (ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS)

Achieving the strategic outcomes of this Evaluation Use Strategy requires a set of coordinated, practical actions that will embed evaluation use across UN Women’s systems, teams and workflows.

These actions are organized under four pathways, each corresponding to one of the strategy’s outcomes. For each pathway, this section outlines key activities and their associated outputs that will drive progress and institutionalization.

Together, these four pathways create a coherent and actionable road map for translating strategy into practice. Each set of activities and outputs will be phased in over the 2025 – 2030 implementation period, with resource mapping, roles and responsibilities, and timing further detailed in the implementation plan (see Section 5).



PATHWAY 1

PROMOTE ORGANIZATIONAL UNDERSTANDING AND DEMAND FOR EVALUATION

KEY ACTIVITIES

- Develop and roll out an internal campaign (“Evaluation for Action”) to promote the value of evaluation across the organization.
- Hold regular brown-bag sessions, webinars and learning cafés on evaluation use and learning stories.
- Integrate evaluation orientation modules into staff onboarding, M&E training and leadership development programmes.
- Profile champions of evaluation use (e.g. Country Representatives, programme leads) through internal communications.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

- Evaluation Use Orientation Package and Communications Toolkit.
- Monthly learning events featuring evaluation insights and success stories.
- Internal microsite or SharePoint hub consolidating evaluation use resources.
- Annual “Evaluation Use Awards” or recognitions.



LINKED TO OUTCOME 1:
Enhanced organizational understanding and demand for evaluation

PATHWAY 2

STRENGTHEN STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION OF EVALUATION FINDINGS

KEY ACTIVITIES

- Develop standardized templates for evaluation briefs, infographics, PowerPoint decks and social media assets.
- Require communication plans for all corporate and strategic evaluations, developed at the inception stage.
- Partner with regional communications focal points to adapt, co-produce and disseminate regionally relevant content—such as localized infographics, short videos in local languages, or case examples that reflect specific contexts.
- Update and integrate evaluation content on GATE, internal portals and external-facing platforms.
- Upload relevant evaluation reports to the UNEG website to support wider knowledge sharing and peer learning.
- Explore the use of AI tools (e.g. generative AI, chatbots) to expand the reach and accessibility of evaluation knowledge products.
- Pilot innovative formats such as podcasts and AI-enabled multimedia stories to engage diverse audiences and share evaluation insights in new ways.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

- Evaluation Communications Toolkit (with templates and dissemination guidance).
- Minimum communication package for every evaluation (brief, slide deck, social media asset).
- Repository of good practice briefs, visuals and digital stories.
- Piloted AI-enabled communication products (e.g. chatbot, podcast episodes) to test new formats for sharing evaluation insights.
- Dissemination plans for corporate evaluations and thematic syntheses.
- Annual “Evaluation Use Awards” or recognitions.



LINKED TO OUTCOME 2:
Improved communication and accessibility of evaluation knowledge

PATHWAY 3

REINFORCE SYSTEMS FOR FOLLOW-UP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

KEY ACTIVITIES

- Strengthen the GATE system to better track and visualize the status of management responses and action implementation.
- Develop guidance and tools for integrating evaluation recommendations into Strategic Notes, annual work plans and programme design.
- Support regional and country teams to develop internal mechanisms for follow-up (e.g. action trackers, check-ins).
- Include evaluation use and follow-up in audit readiness checklists and operational dashboards.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

- Revised guidance on management response development and follow-up.
- Integrated management response tracking feature within GATE or linked systems.
- Internal briefing note templates for using evaluations in Strategic Note development.
- Quarterly status dashboards or reports on evaluation uptake.



LINKED TO OUTCOME 3:
Strengthened accountability for evaluation use and follow-up

PATHWAY 4

INSTITUTIONALIZE MONITORING AND LEARNING ON EVALUATION USE

KEY ACTIVITIES

- Define and integrate KPIs for evaluation use in corporate reporting systems.
- Launch an annual Evaluation Use Snapshot Survey for IES-led evaluations across all offices and regions.
- Document and disseminate “use stories” and case studies of influence (e.g. policy change, programme redesign).
- Collaborate with knowledge management and RBM teams to embed evaluation findings in results reporting and lessons-learned systems.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

- Annual Evaluation Use Report or dashboard.
- Evaluation Use Case Study Series (digital and PDF format).
- Evaluation Use KPIs integrated into Strategic Plan reporting.
- Synthesized use-tracking findings presented at IEAIS and senior management team meetings.



LINKED TO OUTCOME 3:
Strengthened accountability for evaluation use and follow-up

4.4 THEORY OF CHANGE

The theory of change for this Evaluation Use Strategy (see Figure 8) illustrates how strengthening communication, follow-up systems, audience engagement and learning mechanisms will collectively lead to more systematic and impactful use of evaluations across UN Women. By investing in practical enablers—such as leadership and technical capacity, corporate systems and guidance, digital platforms and cross-functional collaboration—the strategy aims to translate its key activities and outputs into short and long-term outcomes that ultimately accelerate gender equality and women’s empowerment through evidence-informed action.

4.5 MEASURING SUCCESS

To ensure accountability, learning and course correction, this strategy establishes a practical framework for measuring success. This includes a robust set of KPIs to track progress, outcomes and influence over time.

As illustrated in Figure 9, the strategy defines a practical set of KPIs aligned with its four outcomes to monitor progress and impact over time. These include tracking staff understanding and demand for evaluation; the quality and reach of communication products; timely follow-up on management responses; and documented evidence of how evaluations are used in planning and reporting.

Data will be collected through surveys, analytics, trackers and reports, with shared responsibilities across IES, Regional Evaluation Specialists, M&E focal points, and programme and planning teams to ensure consistent monitoring, accountability and learning.

These KPIs will serve as the foundation for annual reporting, strategy reviews and accountability to both internal and external stakeholders. Progress will be summarized in a dedicated “Evaluation Use Dashboard” and reflected in corporate reporting mechanisms aligned with the Strategic Plan.



Photo: UN Women/Satu Bumi Jaya

FIGURE 9

KPIs for tracking evaluation use progress

	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPI)	DATA SOURCE/FREQUENCY	RESPONSIBILITY
OUTCOME 1 Enhanced understanding and demand for evaluation 	% of staff who report understanding the value of evaluation	Annual survey / Pulse check	IES KM focal point / Training
	# of internal events promoting evaluation use	IES Event Tracker / Quarterly	IES KM focal point
	% of staff who report understanding the value of evaluation	Desk review / Strategic planning	IES KM focal point + RES + Country and regional office M&E focal points
OUTCOME 2 Improved strategic communication of evaluation knowledge 	% of evaluations with complete comms package (brief, slide, social asset)	GATE / Evaluation tracker	IES KM focal point + Evaluation managers + RES
	# of downloads / views of evaluation products	Web analytics / Quarterly	IES KM focal point
	% of strategic notes or workplans referencing evaluation findings	IES / Regional comms reports	IES KM focal point + Regional comms focal points + RES
OUTCOME 3 Strengthened accountability for evaluation follow-up 	% of evaluations with management response submitted within 6 weeks	GATE / Quarterly	IES KM focal point + Evaluation managers + Country and regional office M&E focal point
	% of management response actions marked completed within 12 months	GATE / Management response tracker	IES KM focal point + RES + Country and regional office M&E focal points
	# of evaluations cited in proposals or donor reports	Programme reports / Annual	Country and regional office programme & Planning teams + IES KM focal point
OUTCOME 4 Improved measurement of evaluation use 	# of use stories or case studies published annually	IES learning outputs	IES KM focal point + country and regional office M&E focal point
	% of country and regional office evaluations reporting follow-up actions	RES reporting / Annual	RES + Country and regional office M&E focal point + IES KM focal point
	Evaluation use KPI score integrated into strategic plan reporting	Corporate M&E system	IES KM focal point + Corporate planning / M&E unit

5. IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 COMMUNICATION APPROACHES

Effective communication is a cornerstone of evaluation use. To ensure that evaluation findings are understood, accessible and applied, this strategy prioritizes targeted, timely and audience-sensitive communication approaches that will be adopted to support implementation of the Evaluation Use Strategy; strengthen the reach and relevance of UN Women's evaluation function; and ensure demand-driven, stakeholder-informed scoping from the outset.

Communication is not an end-stage activity; it is a strategic function embedded across the evaluation life cycle from scoping to dissemination and follow-up. This section outlines the communication approaches that will be adopted to support implementation of the Evaluation Use Strategy and strengthen the reach and relevance of UN Women's evaluation function.

I. AUDIENCE-TAILORED MESSAGING

Recognizing the diversity of internal and external stakeholders, evaluation messages and products will be tailored by audience type, purpose and channel. This includes:

- Senior leaders: concise talking points, executive briefs, high-level summaries.
- Programme teams and M&E staff: actionable findings, slide decks, briefs and templates for integration into planning.

- Donors and external partners: one-pagers, infographics and outcome stories showing impact and value for money.
- Civil society, government and advocacy audiences: simplified summaries, translated materials and community webinars.

Templates and message maps will be provided to support consistent and tailored messaging.

II. MINIMUM COMMUNICATION PACKAGE FOR EVERY EVALUATION

All corporate and strategic decentralized evaluations will include a standardized communication package as a minimum requirement. This package will be developed in coordination with communications focal points and will include:

- Evaluation brief (2–3 pages).
- PowerPoint summary slide deck.
- Optional: Infographic, blog or podcast. This minimum package complements the internal webinars and learning sessions described in Pathway 1, which help strengthen direct engagement and uptake.

III. STRENGTHENED DIGITAL PRESENCE

To enhance discoverability and usability of evaluations, the strategy will invest in improving the presentation and visibility of evaluation knowledge across platforms:

- Upgrade GATE tagging, categorization and filters to support better searchability.
- Enhance the evaluation presence on UN Women's intranet and external website.
- Share key evaluation findings on SharePoint workspaces, community of practice sites and internal newsletters.

Innovative approaches such as AI-powered search functions, evaluation chatbots or audio brief summaries will be explored over the implementation period.



IV. INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS

Evaluation communication will be embedded into broader institutional campaigns and global moments such as:

- Generation Equality Forum.
- International Women's Day.
- Commission on the Status of Women.
- 16 Days of Activism.
- Launches of Strategic Plans, Strategic Notes or major programme roll-outs.
- Milestones of the Gender Equality Acceleration Plan.

By aligning with these high-visibility moments, evaluation messages can reach broader audiences and reinforce key institutional narratives.

V. COLLABORATION WITH REGIONAL AND COUNTRY-LEVEL COMMUNICATIONS FOCAL POINTS

The strategy promotes horizontal collaboration between IES and regional/country communications staff to adapt and localize evaluation messages. This includes:

- Developing regionally tailored visuals and knowledge products.
- Supporting translation and cultural adaptation of briefs.
- Amplifying evaluation messages through regional social media channels and networks.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS AND GUIDANCE

IES will develop and maintain a set of practical tools to support consistent, high-quality communication of evaluations, including:

- Communications toolkit (updated annually).
- Message maps and "elevator pitch" scripts for key topics.
- Content calendars and dissemination templates.
- Evaluation Visual Identity Guidelines (aligned with UN Women branding).

VII. MONITORING COMMUNICATION REACH AND ENGAGEMENT

- The effectiveness of communications will be tracked through:
 - Web and social media analytics (views, shares, downloads, time on page).
 - Qualitative feedback from focal points and evaluation users.
 - Inclusion of communications indicators in the evaluation.

Use KPI Framework (see Section 5.4). Lessons will be documented annually and shared across the evaluation community of practice.

This communications approach reflects a shift from static, technical dissemination to dynamic, audience-responsive engagement, ensuring that evaluations not only inform but inspire action across the organization and beyond.



Photo: UN Women/Catianne Tijerina

5.2 KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT APPROACHES

To ensure evaluations contribute meaningfully to institutional learning and strategic adaptation, this strategy incorporates a set of integrated knowledge management approaches. These approaches aim to position evaluations not only as technical products but as strategic knowledge assets that inform decisions, foster innovation and accelerate gender equality outcomes.

At its core, the strategy promotes a shift from evaluation as output to evaluation as knowledge—knowledge that is dynamic, contextualized and embedded in how UN Women plans, learns and delivers.

I. FRAMING EVALUATIONS AS KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS

All evaluation reports, briefs, syntheses and tools will be recognized and managed as part of UN Women's broader knowledge ecosystem. This includes:

- Tagging evaluations by thematic area, region and Strategic Plan outcome.
- Producing an evaluation abstract for each evaluation for the synthesis studies.
- Positioning evaluations as key evidence sources in programme design, Strategic Note development and donor reporting.
- Including evaluations in learning agendas, knowledge plans and innovation pipelines.

IES and knowledge management focal points will collaborate to ensure evaluations are included in thematic knowledge repositories and mapped across organizational learning systems.

II. IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY AND ORGANIZATION OF EVALUATION KNOWLEDGE

The strategy prioritizes making evaluations easier to find, interpret and use by:

- Enhancing the usability of GATE or other digital systems (e.g. better filters, tagging, cross-linking with management responses).
- Integrating evaluations into internal knowledge management platforms (e.g. SharePoint knowledge hubs, Results Management dashboards).
- Embedding “evaluation use snapshots” within internal knowledge portals and intranet homepages.

A long-term vision includes exploring interoperable tagging systems across GATE, SharePoint and Strategic Note repositories.

III. EMBEDDING EVALUATIONS IN COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE AND LEARNING AGENDAS

To maximize their influence, evaluations must feed into regular dialogue and decision-making spaces. This will be achieved by:

- Presenting key evaluation findings in community of practice webinars and thematic discussions.
- Highlighting lessons learned from evaluations in annual Strategic Note reviews, midterm strategy assessments and learning weeks.
- Co-developing short “learning notes” or “insight briefs” based on evaluations, tailored to priority learning questions.

This approach aligns with the Knowledge Management Strategy's emphasis on practice-driven learning and internal collaboration.

IV. SUPPORTING DOUBLE-LOOP LEARNING AND ADAPTIVE PROGRAMMING

Evaluation use will move beyond “what worked” to also examine why and under what conditions, enabling more adaptive, gender-transformative programming. To support this:

- IES and knowledge management teams will co-develop thematic synthesis reports that highlight emerging patterns across evaluations.
- Case-based learning exercises (e.g. “deep dives”) will be piloted to explore success factors and unintended outcomes.
- Country Offices will be supported to document and reflect on how evaluations led to course corrections or design shifts.

V. TOOLS AND SYSTEMS TO INSTITUTIONALIZE EVALUATION KNOWLEDGE

To embed evaluation use in knowledge workflows, the following tools and systems will be strengthened:

- A central evaluation knowledge catalogue that links GATE reports to thematic communities of practice and planning portals.
- Evaluation briefs and synthesis summaries integrated into strategic planning toolkits.
- Crosswalk tools to help connect evaluation findings with Strategic Plan indicators and thematic priorities.
- A curated “Evidence for Action” internal hub linking evaluations to organizational priorities and learning goals.

VI. TRACKING KNOWLEDGE USE AND CONTRIBUTION

Knowledge management indicators will be included in the overall Evaluation Use KPI Framework, including of:

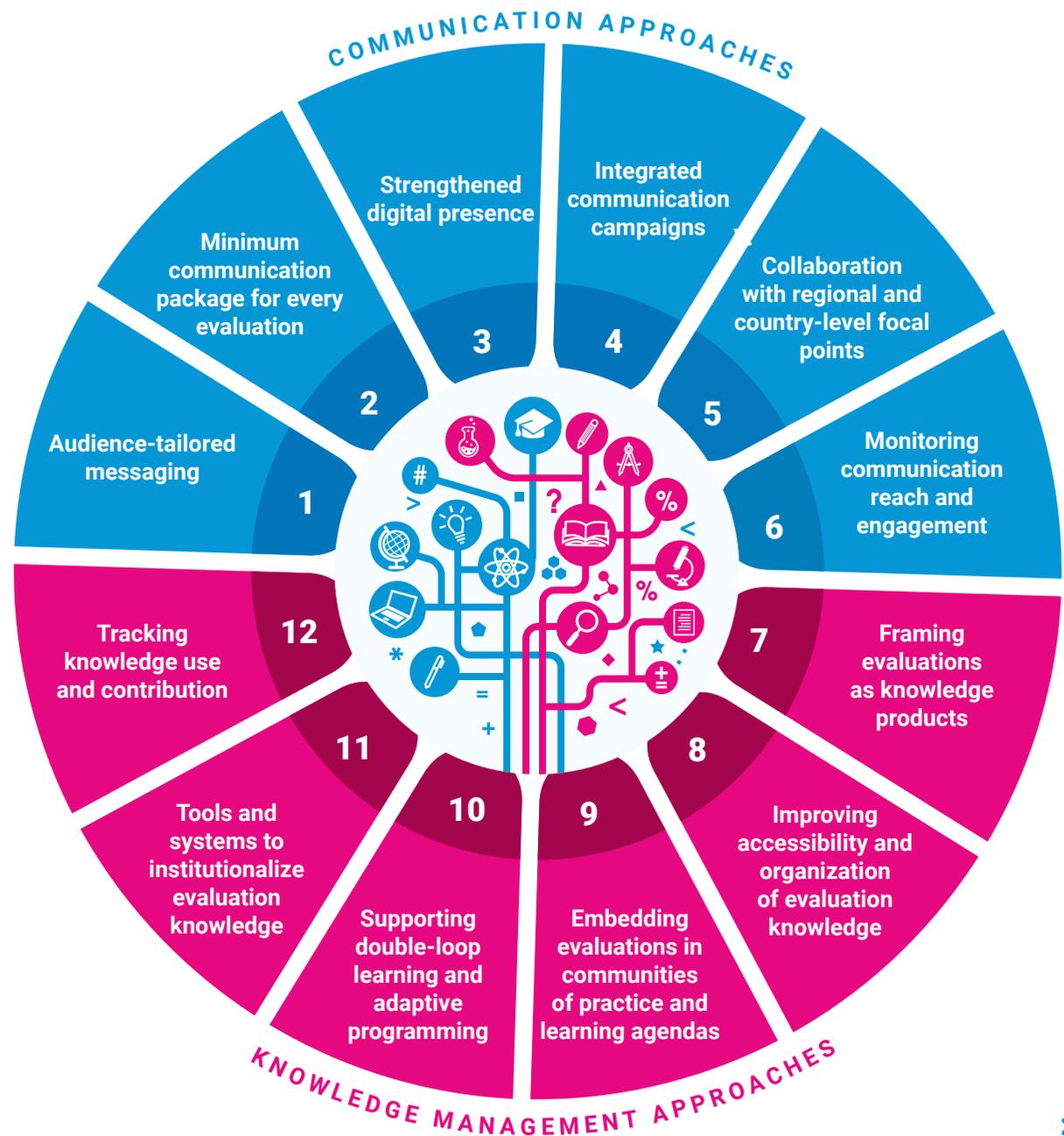
- Evaluations cited in Strategic Notes, proposals or donor reports.
- Internal products drawing on evaluation evidence (e.g. guidance, position papers).
- Community of practice events or learning products integrating evaluation findings.

These data points will inform annual reflections on learning and use, and support institutional memory.

This knowledge management approach reframes evaluations as living evidence – meant not just to assess, but to inform, connect and catalyse progress across the organization.

FIGURE 10

Communication and knowledge management approaches



5.3 ADVOCACY APPROACHES

Evaluation use is not only a technical function, it is a strategic and political act. To maximize influence, this strategy incorporates a set of advocacy and leadership engagement approaches that position evaluations as drivers of credibility, accountability and visibility for UN Women's gender equality mission.

These approaches aim to shift mindsets; elevate the profile of evaluations; and embed their use in the daily decisions of leaders, partners and advocates, both internally and externally.

I. POSITIONING EVALUATION AS A STRATEGIC ASSET

UN Women will strengthen the narrative that evaluation is central to achieving its triple mandate. This includes:

- Framing evaluations as contributions to strategic positioning, not only accountability.
- Using evaluation insights to inform policy stances, flagship initiatives and global advocacy platforms (e.g. Generation Equality, Commission on the Status of Women, HLPF).
- Highlighting how evaluation contributes to institutional integrity, learning and effectiveness in donor-facing dialogues.

Evaluation briefs and talking points will be aligned with strategic priorities and global messaging frameworks.

II. ENGAGING SENIOR LEADERSHIP AS CHAMPIONS OF USE

Active and visible leadership support is critical to signal that evaluation use matters. This strategy promotes:

- Briefing senior leaders on evaluation findings before major decision points (e.g. Strategic Plan reviews, resource mobilization rounds, Strategic Note endorsements, reviews of organizational risks).
- Inviting leaders to open or speak at evaluation dissemination events.
- Profiling "evaluation use champions" in internal communications and leadership updates.
- Integrating evaluation use into onboarding for new senior staff, including Country Representatives and Directors.

Senior-level scorecards or dashboards may include evaluation use metrics to reinforce accountability.

III. LINKING EVALUATIONS TO HIGH-LEVEL ADVOCACY MOMENTS

UN Women will leverage key global and regional platforms to advocate with evidence, by:

- Featuring findings in speeches, press releases or advocacy briefs around International Women's Day, Commission on the Status of Women, UNGA and global policy launches.
- Coordinating with Communications and Advocacy Divisions to embed evaluation data into thematic campaigns (e.g. EVAW, WEE, care economy).
- Using evaluations to influence multi-stakeholder partnerships, including with donors, governments and civil society.

Examples from successful policy influence stories will be documented and used to train staff on strategic use.

IV. PROMOTING EVALUATION USE BEYOND UN WOMEN

As a leader in gender-responsive evaluation, UN Women will advocate for evaluation use across the development and humanitarian sector. This includes:

- Sharing good practices and learning through UNEG, EvalPartners, EvalGender+ and regional evaluation networks.
- Co-authoring joint learning products with sister agencies and governments.
- Supporting national partners and gender advocates to use UN Women evaluations in their own strategies and campaigns.
- Contributing evidence from evaluations to global public goods (e.g. SDG tracking, GEI reports, OECD reviews).

This external advocacy will reinforce UN Women's role as a credible voice for evidence-based action on gender equality.

V. INSTITUTIONALIZING ADVOCACY METRICS AND INCENTIVES

To track progress and incentivize leadership engagement, the strategy includes:

- Monitoring the number of leadership speeches, campaigns or decisions referencing evaluation findings.
- Including evaluation use as a theme in leadership retreats, Country Representative meetings and regional reviews.
- Creating a repository of "evidence-informed decisions" as part of institutional knowledge.

This strategy goes beyond sharing findings. It aims to elevate evaluations as advocacy tools, mobilize leadership buy-in and foster a culture where evidence drives change at all levels.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Implementing the Evaluation Use Strategy will rely on existing capacities within UN Women, particularly within IES and its close collaborators across divisions and offices. Rather than creating new structures, the strategy embeds use-promoting actions into ongoing responsibilities, encouraging collaborative and practical approaches that maximize current resources.

As shown in Figure 11, implementation of the Evaluation Use Strategy depends on clearly defined roles and collaboration across all levels: IES at headquarters leads coordination, guidance, capacity-building and strategic engagement; Regional Evaluation Specialists support decentralized implementation and quality assurance; M&E focal points at country and regional levels champion practical use by integrating findings into planning and tracking follow-up; programme and planning teams act as primary users by applying evaluation evidence in strategy, proposals and donor reports; and senior management sets the tone for accountability by requesting, modelling and reinforcing the use of evaluations in key decisions.

FIGURE 11
Roles and responsibilities for implementing the Evaluation Use Strategy



UN WOMEN EXISTS TO ADVANCE WOMEN'S RIGHTS, GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS.

As the lead UN entity on gender equality and secretariat of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, we shift laws, institutions, social behaviours and services to close the gender gap and build an equal world for all women and girls. Our partnerships with governments, women's movements and the private sector coupled with our coordination of the broader United Nations translate progress into lasting changes. We make strides forward for women and girls in four areas: leadership, economic empowerment, freedom from violence, and women, peace and security as well as humanitarian action.

UN Women keeps the rights of women and girls at the centre of global progress – always, everywhere. Because gender equality is not just what we do. It is who we are.



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