

Terms of reference

Mid-Term Evaluation of UN Women Central African Republic Strategic Note (2023-2027)

1. Purpose and use of the evaluation

This Mid Term Evaluation (MTE) is a systematic and independent assessment of UN Women's contributions to gender equality and women's empowerment in the Central African Republic (CAR) during the period June-December 2027.

The evaluation is undertaken to fulfill both accountability and learning objectives. It will assess the relevance, performance, and strategic positioning of UN Women programming in CAR and generate evidence to inform future programme design and strategic decisions.

Specifically, the MTE will be used to:

- strengthen learning and evidence-based decision-making within the UN Women Country Office;
- ensure accountability to stakeholders regarding the results achieved through UN Women programming;
- identify lessons learned and good practices to inform future strategic planning and programme implementation.

The evaluation will also contribute to institutional learning within UN Women by documenting approaches and strategies that have proven effective in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

Intended users

Primary users of this evaluation include:

- UN Women Central African Republic Country Office
- UN Women West and Central Africa Regional Office
- Independent Evaluation and Audit Services (IEAS)

Secondary users include:

- Government institutions of the Central African Republic
- United Nations agencies operating in CAR
- development partners and donors
- civil society organizations and women's organizations
- the UN Resident Coordinator's Office.

The evaluation will also provide insights into the contribution of UN Women to the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) in CAR and to national development and peacebuilding priorities.

2. Objectives of the evaluation

The objectives of the Mid Term Evaluation are to:

1. Assess the relevance, performance and implementation progress of UN Women's programming in CAR.

2. Examine the strategic positioning and comparative advantage of UN Women within the national institutional environment and the UN system.
3. Assess how human rights principles, gender equality commitments, disability inclusion and the principle of “leaving no one behind” are integrated into UN Women programming.
4. Identify lessons learned and good practices to inform future strategic planning and programme design.

3. Evaluation questions

The evaluation will address key questions structured around the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, complemented by attention to gender equality, human rights, disability inclusion and the principle of leaving no one behind.

Relevance and coherence

To what extent are UN Women CAR’s thematic focus and implementation strategies relevant and aligned with the UNSDCF, international commitments, and national priorities and policies, including the needs of women and girls within the humanitarian and peacebuilding context?

Effectiveness

To what extent have UN Women interventions contributed to progress in women’s political participation and leadership; women’s economic empowerment; women’s participation in peacebuilding and humanitarian processes; gender mainstreaming across the UN system and national institutions?

Efficiency

To what extent has UN Women effectively utilized financial, human and institutional resources to achieve results?

Sustainability

To what extent are the results achieved by UN Women interventions likely to be sustained beyond the period of implementation?

Human rights, gender equality and inclusion

To what extent have UN Women interventions integrated human rights principles, gender equality commitments, disability inclusion and the principle of leaving no one behind?

4. Scope of the evaluation

The Mid Term Evaluation will cover UN Women programming implemented in the Central African Republic during the period January 2023 to December 2025. The evaluation will examine UN Women’s Strategic Note implementation, including: projects and programmes implemented during the evaluation period, joint programmes in which UN Women participates and, UN Women’s normative and coordination roles within the UN system.

The evaluation will assess progress to date in the following thematic areas of UN Women programming: women’s political participation and leadership, women’s economic empowerment, women, peace and security and humanitarian action, coordination and normative mandate on gender equality.

The evaluation will examine how UN Women has leveraged partnerships with government institutions, civil society organizations, development partners and other UN entities. The evaluation will primarily focus on UN Women activities at the country level. References to regional or global UN Women structures will only be included where they directly influence programme design, implementation or results.

5. Evaluability assessment

During the inception phase, the evaluation team will conduct a rapid evaluability assessment. This assessment will examine: the clarity and coherence of the programme theory of change, the quality and measurability of indicators in the Development Results Framework; the availability and quality of monitoring data, the accessibility of programme documentation and the feasibility of assessing programme results given the operating environment. The evaluability assessment will also identify potential limitations related to data availability and contextual constraints.

6. Context for gender equality and women's empowerment in the Central African Republic

The Central African Republic remains a highly fragile context, characterized by recurrent conflict, persistent political instability, and a protracted humanitarian crisis, with an estimated 72.5 per cent of the population living in poverty. Women represent slightly more than half of the population and face disproportionate levels of vulnerability due to limited access to economic opportunities, education, justice and basic social services. Nearly 45 percent of households are headed by women, many of whom rely on subsistence agriculture and informal economic activities for their livelihoods.

These conditions have significantly affected development outcomes and the realization of women's rights. Despite the ratification of major international and regional instruments promoting gender equality, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Maputo Protocol, gender inequalities remain widespread across economic, social and political domains.

Education and economic participation

Gender disparities in education remain significant and contribute to persistent inequalities in economic participation. While a majority of boys transition from primary to secondary education, only 46 percent of girls make this transition, and female illiteracy remains high. These educational disparities translate into limited access to formal employment opportunities for women.

Women are concentrated in informal economic activities, particularly agriculture and small-scale trade, and face structural barriers to accessing productive resources such as land, credit and markets. Data on registered enterprises indicate that women own a minority of businesses across most economic sectors.

Gender-based violence and access to justice

Gender-based violence remains widespread in CAR and is exacerbated by decades of conflict and institutional fragility. National studies report high prevalence rates of emotional, economic, physical and sexual violence affecting women and girls. Access to justice for survivors remains limited due to weak institutional capacity, limited service coverage and social norms discouraging reporting. Survivors frequently rely on informal community mediation rather than formal judicial mechanisms.

Women, peace and security

Women have been disproportionately affected by conflict and displacement yet remain underrepresented in formal peace processes and decision-making structures. Women constituted only 8 of the 78 delegates participating in the negotiations leading to the 2019 Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation and represented 17 percent of participants in the 2022 National Dialogue.

At the community level, women increasingly participate in local peace initiatives, including local peace and reconciliation committees where they represent approximately 34 percent of members. However, women remain underrepresented in the security sector and continue to face barriers to participation in national peacebuilding and governance processes.

Humanitarian context and social vulnerability

The humanitarian situation remains severe, with large segments of the population facing food insecurity, displacement and limited access to basic services. External economic shocks and climate-related events, such as flooding, have further increased social and economic vulnerabilities. These challenges disproportionately affect

women and marginalized groups, including women with disabilities, ethnic minorities and internally displaced populations.

Policy frameworks and institutional context

Gender equality is addressed within several national policy frameworks, including the National Gender Policy, the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, and the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan (RCPCA). However, implementation remains constrained by limited institutional capacity and resource constraints.

7. Description of the UN Women programme in CAR

UN Women operates in the Central African Republic through its integrated mandate, encompassing normative support, operational programming and coordination across the United Nations system to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

UN Women's Strategic Note 2023-2027 aligns with national priorities and key international frameworks guiding development and peacebuilding in the country. In particular, the Strategic Note is aligned with the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan (RCPCA) and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2023-2027, which define the overarching strategic priorities for the United Nations system in CAR.

Within this framework, UN Women contributes to national efforts to advance gender equality and women's empowerment by supporting institutional reforms, strengthening women's participation in governance and peacebuilding processes, expanding women's economic opportunities, strengthening gender data systems and promoting coordinated action for gender equality across the UN system and national institutions.

Normative role

UN Women supports the development and implementation of policies, legal frameworks and institutional mechanisms aimed at promoting gender equality and women's rights. This includes technical support to national institutions for the integration of gender considerations into legislation, public policies and national planning processes.

UN Women also contributes to strengthening national capacities for the production, analysis and use of gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data, which are essential for evidence-based policymaking and monitoring of progress toward gender equality.

Coordination role

As the lead UN entity on gender equality, UN Women plays a key role in promoting gender mainstreaming across the United Nations system in CAR. This includes supporting coordination mechanisms aimed at ensuring that gender equality considerations are integrated into UN programming and policy dialogue with national institutions and development partners.

UN Women also engages with civil society organizations, including women's organizations, to strengthen their participation in national policy processes and to amplify women's voices in public decision-making

Operational role

UN Women supports initiatives aimed at improving women's access to economic opportunities, strengthening women's leadership and promoting women's participation in peacebuilding and recovery processes.

Operational interventions focus on strengthening women's capacities and leadership, expanding women's access to productive resources and economic opportunities, and supporting initiatives that promote women's participation in community-level and national governance processes.

In fragile and conflict-affected contexts such as CAR, UN Women programming also seeks to support women's participation in peacebuilding, conflict prevention and humanitarian response initiatives, including efforts linked to the implementation of the national action plan on Women, Peace and Security.

During the period under review, implementation of the SN in CAR has been organized around several thematic areas that reflect both national priorities and UN Women’s comparative advantage. These include:

- Governance and women’s participation in public life, including support to women’s leadership and political participation;
- Women’s economic empowerment, including initiatives aimed at strengthening women’s livelihoods and economic resilience;
- Women, Peace and Security and humanitarian action, including support to women’s participation in peacebuilding and community reconciliation processes;
- Strengthening coordination and normative frameworks for gender equality, including policy support and gender mainstreaming within the UN system.

Across these thematic areas, UN Women programming also emphasizes cross-cutting priorities such as strengthening women’s organizations, promoting positive social norms related to gender equality and supporting institutional capacities for gender-responsive governance.

8. Methodology for the evaluation

The evaluation will use a mixed approach and will conduct primary data collection using both qualitative and quantitative data and analysis. Explicitly, the evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the evaluation guidelines and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), in particular those which mandate the integration of a human rights perspective and gender equality in the evaluation approach and process.

The evaluation team is expected to reconstruct, validate and identify the strengths and shortcomings of the Program's change theory and its results framework. The team should also identify challenges and gaps in Program implementation for future programmatic improvement.

The evaluation should be participatory and inclusive. The evaluation will define in the initial phase how the process will ensure stakeholder participation at all stages, with a particular focus on rights holders and their representatives.

The evaluation will take steps to ensure the quality of data, the reliability and validity of data collection tools and methods, and their sensitivity to gender equality and human rights ; and data should be checked against other sources (triangulated) to ascertain findings.

In this effort, a wide range of data sources should be used, including documents, field information, institutional information systems, financial records, beneficiaries, staff, donors, experts, government officials, community groups, etc.

The methodology will take into account the security environment and comply with the United Nations principle of “Do no harm”.

Purposive sampling will be representative of the main implementing partners. The evaluation team will specify how it will account for the diversity of stakeholders and take steps to ensure the reliability of data collection tools and methods, and their sensitivity to gender equality and human rights.

9. Stakeholder participation and evaluation governance

All UN Women evaluation processes establish mechanisms to ensure high quality evaluation processes and products, as outlined in the UN Women Evaluation Policy and the Manual (in English) . The Evaluation Report will follow the standard outline as set out in the Guide to Mid Term Evaluations at UN Women while also complying with the [UN Writing Manual](#) . The Evaluation Report Quality Assurance Criterion (GERAAS) will be used to ensure quality (See Annex 1). All products are subject to quality assurance review by the peer reviewer, GRE and evaluation management group.

UN Women CAR will support the organization of the various meetings planned during the evaluation process (facilitation for data collection, validation, dissemination, etc.). Aspects of the evaluation such as office space, administrative and secretarial support, telecommunications, photocopies of documentation, travel, etc. as well as the design and dissemination of data collection tools will be the responsibility of the team.

Within six weeks of the completion of the evaluation, UN Women-CAR is responsible for preparing a management response that addresses the findings and recommendations to ensure learning and inform implementation.

Deliverables

Initial design report (deliverable 1)

The evaluation team will propose a methodology with an evaluation matrix and data collection instruments and an evaluation plan as part of the inception design report. The latter will specify the part that belongs to the documentary review, observation, interviews and group discussions, without forgetting the participation of the stakeholders concerned. A work plan and implementation schedule will also be included in the report. The inception report, taking into account collection tools, including remote collection tools for some localities, given the security crisis will be reviewed by the management group and the evaluation reference group. Each group has seven working days to formulate and transmit these comments, which must be taken into account by the evaluation team in a satisfactory manner before the validation of the document by the management group.

Presentation of the preliminary results and the pre-report (Milestone)

The evaluation team will facilitate a PowerPoint presentation session of the preliminary results, following the preliminary data collection and analysis phase. Thus, the findings and general trends will be the subject of examination and discussion with the members of the reference group and those of the management group. This session allows at this stage to gain information, comments and orientations before deepening and finalizing the data analysis and starting the drafting of the evaluation report.

report (deliverable 2)

The first version of the evaluation report includes findings, conclusions and recommendations listed logically and by order of priority. It outlines the methodology, data collection and analysis processes, in line with UN Women's GERAAS parameters. This report will be submitted for examination and comments to the evaluation management group and the reference group, which have 7 working days to respond. These comments should be satisfactorily taken into account by the evaluation team before submitting the report to IES.

Final evaluation report (deliverable 3)

The final evaluation report will be considered as such once it has been ascertained that it takes into account all the comments received from the management group and the reference group. It will be cleared on the basis of its alignment with the GERAAS parameters and inclusion of feedback.

11. Composition and qualifications of the evaluation team

Evaluation Team Leader (Senior Consultant)

The Senior Evaluation Consultant will lead the evaluation and ensure methodological rigor and quality assurance.

Junior Evaluation Consultant

The Junior Evaluation Consultant should have: a master’s degree in social sciences, economics, development studies or related field; at least five years of experience in evaluation or programme analysis; familiarity with gender equality programming; strong analytical and writing skills; experience working in fragile or conflict-affected contexts.

Fluency in French is required. Working knowledge of English is desirable.

12. Timeline

The evaluation will take place during the period of April-December 2025.

Phase	Timeline
Vacancy publication and selection of applicants	April-May 2025
Contract finalization and onboarding of consultant	May-June 2025
Preparation and desk review	June-July 2025
Inception report submission and review	July-August 2025
Data collection and Preliminary findings presentation	September-October 2025
Data analysis	November 2025
Draft evaluation report	November-December 2025
Final evaluation report	January 2026

13. Ethical considerations

UN Women has developed [a UN Women Consultant Evaluation Agreement Form](#) for evaluators to sign as part of the procurement process, which is based on the [UNEG Ethical Guidelines](#). These documents will be annexed to the contracts. All data collected by team members should be submitted to the Evaluation Manager in Word, PowerPoint or Excel formats and is the property of UN Women. Proper data storage is essential to ensure privacy.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 “UN Women GERAAS evaluation quality assessment checklist”

https://gate.unwomen.org/resources/docs/SiteDocuments/GERAAS%20Guidance%20Note_Aug%202019%20final.pdf

Annex 2 UN Women Consultant Evaluation Agreement Form

- [UN Women Consultant Evaluation Agreement Form](#)
- [UNEG Ethical Principles and Code of Conduct](#)

Annex 3 Evaluation Standards and Rules (UNEG)

- <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/2787>

Annex 4 UN Women Evaluation Manual

- <https://genderevaluation.unwomen.org/-/media/files/un%20women/gender%20evaluation/handbook/evaluationhandbook-fr-web.pdf?la=en&vs=2038>
- <https://genderevaluation.unwomen.org/en/evaluation-handbook/country-portfolio-evaluation-guidance>

Annex 5 Gender Equality and Human Rights Data Resources

- The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) – Universal Human Rights Index: <https://uhri.ohchr.org/fr/>
- UN Statistics – Gender Statistics: <http://genderstats.org/>
- UNDP Human Development Report – Gender Inequality Index: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii>
- The World Bank – Data and Statistics on Gender Equality: <http://datatopics.worldbank.org/gender/>
- Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Social Institutions and Gender Equality Index <http://genderindex.org/>
- The World Economic Forum – Global Gender Gap Report: <http://www.weforum.org/issues/global-gender-gap> c
- A list of UN reports, databases and records related to gender equality and women human rights can be found here: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/directory/statistics_and_indicators_60.html