



META-ANALYSIS BRIEF



## WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM UN WOMEN EVALUATIONS?

### A meta-analysis of evaluations managed by UN Women in 2017

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As part of UN Women's continuous focus on promoting learning and knowledge management, the Independent Evaluation Service undertakes an annual meta-analysis of evaluations. The meta-analysis maximizes the influence and use of evaluative evidence by synthesizing corporate and decentralized evaluations for learning, accountability and improved programming.

By looking across a wide range of evaluations to identify common themes from the findings, conclusions, and lessons learned, this year's meta-analysis responded to selected operational effectiveness and efficiency results identified in the Strategic Plan 2018-2021 and also examined contributions made by UN Women to humanitarian response.

#### What did the meta-analysis find?

The evaluations concluded that overall UN Women interventions were relevant, efficient, and effective, with most achieving the expected results. The combination of UN Women convening power, partnerships and the integrated mandate contributed to achieving positive outcomes. Nonetheless, securing multi-year funding, scaling-up of high impact innovative approaches and strengthening results-based management systems that go beyond capturing immediate outputs to tracking outcomes need to be further expanded and improved.

#### RELEVANCE

Evaluations find UN Women interventions are highly relevant to normative frameworks, successful at meeting the needs of women at the national level and demonstrated

good adaptive capacity. Although UN Women projects are well designed, most evaluations found the need for more intensive situation analyses.

#### EFFECTIVENESS

UN Women evaluations found that interventions at all levels have been effective, with most achieving the expected results across all thematic areas with limited resources. Strategic partnerships, UN joint programming and openness to innovation have contributed to some of the most effective interventions.

#### EFFICIENCY

Evaluations found solid positive performance in terms of the efficiency of implementation, management arrangements, and financial planning. However, integration of monitoring, financial and reporting systems could be improved to fully support real-time programme management and effective partnership governance.

#### CULTURE OF RESULTS

Most evaluations found that results-based management systems are in place, and have improved, but require continuous investment and further strengthening.

#### SUSTAINABILITY

Despite limited evidence of explicit exit-planning in UN Women interventions, many findings on sustainability indicated that the benefits of interventions were likely to continue after programming ended due to consistent development of national and local institutional capacity.

## What did the evaluation conclude? How can UN Women improve?

**CONCLUSION #1** Despite constrained human and financial resources, evaluations found that UN Women's interventions at all levels have been effective, with most achieving the expected results. Nonetheless, UN Women should continue to improve its efforts in achieving resource targets and refine methods and systems to track and capture outcomes and impacts.

**RECOMMENDATION #1** Strengthen results-based management systems to support adaptive programme management with information on the progress of interventions along the pathways to outcomes that have been articulated in theories of change. Use evidence of progress towards outcomes to advocate for longer-term and more stable core resources to scale and accelerate successful interventions.

**CONCLUSION #2** Knowledge management is reliant on the role of regional offices to connect country-level practitioners and ensure knowledge is translated into results.

**RECOMMENDATION #2** Reduce duplication of country-level programme management functions within regional programmes, directing this capacity to support the enabling environment for participating countries. In particular, strengthen the knowledge exchange function of regional offices, including with human capital for translation of knowledge resources into regional languages.

**CONCLUSION #3** Effective UN coordination and joint programmes have been a strong driver of effective programming at the global and country levels.

**RECOMMENDATION #3** Realising the potential of UN reform to support gender equality and women's empowerment requires building on 'planning-as-one' to achieve implementation-level 'delivery-as-one'.

**CONCLUSION #4** Strategic partnerships have delivered substantive normative and operational results for UN Women, and are the heart of programme sustainability.

**RECOMMENDATION #4** Institutionalise a range of responsive (fit-for-purpose) governance practices for working with different sizes and types of partners.

**CONCLUSION #5** UN Women is overcoming barriers to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment through building alliances and networks of partners.

**RECOMMENDATION #5** Focus country-level partnerships and programming on overcoming barriers for gender equality and women's empowerment by leveraging positive external drivers of change.

**CONCLUSION #6** UN Women is uniquely positioned to address the provision of economic empowerment and access to justice for women and girl survivors of gender-based violence in humanitarian response.

**RECOMMENDATION #6** Build experience and demand for UN Women work in humanitarian action through delivering concrete results with partners in economic empowerment, access to justice, and disaster preparedness.

### SCOPE OF THE META-ANALYSIS

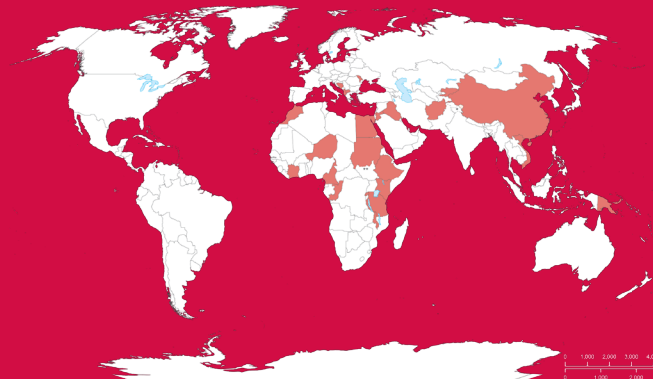
**39** EVALUATIONS

**35** DECENTRALIZED EVALUATIONS

**4** CORPORATE / HQ-LED EVALUATION

**5** PROGRAMME PRESENCE COUNTRIES PREVIOUSLY NOT COVERED

**34 COUNTRIES**



**MORE** STRATEGIC EVALUATIONS COVERED

**11** COUNTRY PORTFOLIO / THEMATIC STRATEGIC NOTE EVALUATIONS

**4** GLOBAL EVALUATIONS

**4** REGIONAL EVALUATIONS

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. \* Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties. \*\* Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined.