USE AND FOLLOW UP

The value of an evaluation exercise is determined by the degree to which UN Women staff, decision makers and stakeholders use the information to improve accountability, decision-making and learning. This chapter opens with how the use and follow-up to evaluation is critical for managing for results at UN Women. The use of evaluation is facilitated through the mandatory disclosure of evaluation reports and development of management responses and action plans for all evaluations. This chapter also provides guidance on how to disseminate evaluation findings in a user-friendly manner that is targeted to relevant stakeholder audiences.
A. USING EVALUATION FOR MANAGING FOR RESULTS

Evaluations can be effective tools to support managing for results, but they are only beneficial if used. Gender-responsive and utilization-focused evaluations should be designed and managed with its intended use (and users) in mind. Good use of evaluation results is more than action by the manager to respond to recommendations. It is about engaging with stakeholders to implement change.

Evaluations are undertaken for different purposes, each with their own intended use. Use should be considered in the context of the programme being evaluated (addressing recommendations) and in the context of broader learning for the organization and others undertaking gender equality and women’s empowerment work. The majority of UN Women evaluations will be used to inform the design of new programmes and future operational and strategic planning. However, evaluations may also be used to change ideas and understanding about an issue, transform relationships among stakeholders, empower communities, reframe decision-making processes, and provide justification for political action (or inaction).

Applying evaluation results at UN Women

It is the responsibility of UN Women management at all levels to ensure evaluation use by acting on evaluation recommendations and using lessons learned for future policy and programme design and development. The evaluation management response is a key tool for institutionalizing the use of evaluation (see B. Management response and action plan). However, the next and most important step is for UN Women managers to apply the lessons learned and implement recommendations in enhancing existing and designing new UN Women programmes and strategies at all levels of the entity: from the lower project-level planning to strategic planning. Thus, the strategic plan, strategic notes, AWPs, and programme and project documents should all reflect lessons learned from evaluation.

There are many ways to facilitate follow up and implementation of evaluation recommendations. Examples include:

- Following up on and monitoring the implementation of the management response and corresponding action plan

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Box 20.

**USING EVALUATION RESULTS:**
Kenya Country Office

*Evaluation of the Gender and Governance Programme III (GGP III).*

GGP III represented the third phase (2009-2013) of the GGP launched in September 2004. The programme worked to promote equal opportunities and access to services for both men and women, addressing the need to include women’s issues in governance structures, and supporting women’s leadership at national and local levels. The overall goal of GGP III was to ensure that Kenyan women and men are able to access services and opportunities and exercise their rights equally. UN Women partners included more than 40 civil society organizations and key government agencies like the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development; National Commission on Gender and Development; and government institutions.

As this was the final phase of the GGP with no possibility of extension, UN Women decided to incorporate the evaluation recommendations into the next UN Women programming cycle (Strategic Note 2014-2018). Additionally, as the evaluation coincided with the planning cycle for both the government of Kenya and the United Nations in Kenya, the evaluation findings and recommendations could be used as inputs to these processes. Once the draft evaluation report was issued, UN Women convened a broad stakeholders meeting (beyond the reference group) to discuss the draft recommendations, validate them and also draft a roadmap on how to implement the recommendations. UN Women then organized a consultative planning workshop for the UN Women Strategic Note 2014-2018. During this meeting, various stakeholders were asked to present their strategic plans and highlight areas of collaboration with UN Women while also taking the evaluation recommendations into consideration. The evaluation recommendations were thus incorporated in the design of UN Women continued work on gender equality and women’s empowerment and reflected in the UNDAF.

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Kenya Country Office
• Meta-analyses undertaken by IEO and ROs to look across a number of evaluations to identify trends in findings, recommendations and lessons learned
• Creating a checklist based on evaluation recommendations and using it during programme formulation
• Regular discussion of evaluation reports in management meetings
• Incorporating follow-up actions to evaluations in strategic notes and AWPs
• Committing to present evaluation results and planning for follow-up at key meetings, such as with donors
• Encouraging and valuing constructive self-criticism at the individual staff level

B. MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN

The development of the management response by the responsible parties is mandatory for all evaluation reports. The management response is a tool for UN Women to respond to the evaluation recommendations and specify how it will follow up, who is responsible, and by when the action will be implemented in order to improve the overall performance and quality of ongoing and future programmes and strategies. The management response must be concrete, actionable and owned by evaluation users. The management response indicates whether or not management agrees, partially agrees or disagrees with key strategic recommendations and critical issues. In the case of partial agreement or disagreement, the reason should be explained.

UNEG has identified three preconditions to aid effective evaluation management response and follow-up processes that incorporate human rights and gender equality principles34,35:

1) The involvement of internal and external stakeholders: Active engagement of stakeholders is a core principle of gender-responsive evaluation and will ensure ownership of the process.

2) Quality evaluation recommendations: An effective management response is dependent on the formulation of evaluation recommendations that are

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realistic and reflect an understanding of the office or division and programme context and potential constraints to follow-up (see Box 21).

3) Evaluation credibility: An evaluation must be considered credible in order to garner support for the implementation of the recommendations, in particular when dealing with sensitive issues such as those related to gender equality and women’s empowerment. The level of impartiality, transparency, quality, appropriate methods used, and level of participation of key stakeholders determines the credibility of an evaluation.

Box 21. Ensuring high-quality recommendations

It is the responsibility of the evaluation team to formulate recommendations that are (as described in Tool 14. GERAAS evaluation report quality assessment checklist):

- Supported by evidence and conclusions
- Developed with involvement of relevant stakeholders
- Relevant to the object and purposes of the evaluation
- Clearly identify the target group for each recommendation
- Clearly stated with priorities for action made clear

The report should describe the process followed in developing the recommendations including consultation with stakeholders. Each evaluation recommendation should be clearly linked to the conclusions and findings of the evaluation and clearly understood by the responsible actor. The evaluation manager should facilitate a process for validating the recommendations to ensure that they are formulated in an effective manner.

Ownership of the evaluation report and its recommendations by all stakeholders is necessary to facilitate following up on actions to be taken by UN Women and its partners. Nevertheless, it is important to strike a balance between promoting ownership of the evaluation recommendations and ensuring independence of the process.
Engaging stakeholders in the development of the management response

The participation of programme stakeholders in the development of the management response is critical to ensuring evaluations are learning exercises and contribute to programme improvements and evidence-based decision-making. The development of the management response provides an opportunity to hold a dialogue with all evaluation stakeholders to reflect on the evaluation findings, recommendations and lessons and to incorporate them in ongoing programmes and programme formulation. The management response can be an opportunity to create a stronger programme and to work closely with programme partners to make the necessary changes.

Thus, preparation of the management response should be done in a consultative manner with feedback from different levels and partners of the respective programme. Inputs should be sought from all parties to whom specific evaluation recommendations are addressed, including partners (government, non-governmental organizations, etc.) and donors. Stakeholder engagement may also enable the office to explain the rationale for acceptance or non-acceptance of recommendations based on feasibility, as UN Women is ultimately accountable for implementation of the management response. The investment of time and resources involved with the development of the management response needs to be considered and budgeted for by the office or division commissioning the evaluation.

UN Women responsibilities are as follows:

- The management response (see Tool 16. Management response template) must be developed within six weeks after completion of the evaluation report and disclosed on the GATE website.

- A UN Women representative or director of the office or division that commissioned the evaluation is ultimately responsible and accountable for the management response development, approval and implementation.

- The evaluation manager is responsible for facilitating the process for developing the management response and action plan and submitting the approved management response and quarterly updates on the status of its implementation to the M&E officer or focal point.

- The M&E officer or focal point is responsible for inputting the management response into GATE and updating its status of implementation on a quarterly basis based in consultation with the evaluation manager.
UN Women offices should take the lead or participate in the development of a management response to joint evaluations where UN Women participates (see Box 2. When is an evaluation considered a joint evaluation?) Even when partner entities do not want to develop a joint management response, UN Women should still develop its own management response. In the case of joint evaluations, management response may either follow the UN Women format or the one suggested by partners. The responsible UN Women office should take responsibility for developing a management response for recommendations directed to UN Women, as well as for facilitating and supporting partners in developing their own response. For recommendations directed to the UN country team—e.g., in UNDAF evaluations—UN Women should facilitate, in cooperation with UN country team members, a joint management response. The joint evaluation report and only the section of the management response where UN Women is accountable should be uploaded in GATE. The joint evaluation management response process may require more time than the management response process for UN Women managed evaluations.

The IEO, through the regional evaluation specialists, can provide advice on how to formulate and manage the process for an effective management response. However, the main responsibility for the actual content of the management response rests with the office representative or director.
Box 22.

DEVELOPING A JOINT MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:
Multi-country Office Maghreb

Final evaluation of the multisectoral programme for the fight against GBV through the empowerment of women and girls in Morocco.

The Millennium Development Goal gender programme “Tamkin” was a joint programme that was implemented with the participation of 13 ministries, several non-governmental organizations, and universities. It was supported by eight UN agencies. The programme was evaluated in 2012 and the report was widely disseminated. The programme put in place coordination mechanisms to promote a multi-sectoral and integrated approach by the various stakeholders for ending gender-based violence. The programme also established participatory governance modalities that promoted dialogue between civil society and national institutions. Developing a management response and tracking the implementation of the evaluation recommendations was a very challenging stage, especially when it came to a joint evaluation of a joint programme. In this case, UN Women developed and implemented its own management response and action plan since it was not possible to mobilize all the partners after the programme was closed. Although a joint management response was not officially issued, many partners refer to the evaluation when they develop their interventions. The commitment to develop and implement the management response should be included in the signed project document, as this would hopefully enhance accountability of partners. In addition, raising awareness on evaluation practices and the importance of management response is also valuable.

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Multi-Country Office, Maghreb
C. UN WOMEN SYSTEMS TO FACILITATE USE OF EVALUATION

As indicated in Chapter 2, the IEO is dedicated to facilitating use of evaluation at UN Women. IEO does this mainly through development and maintenance of the following systems:

- **Global Accountability and Tracking of Evaluation Use (GATE):** The main purpose of the GATE is to institutionalize the use of evaluation from an accountability perspective at UN Women.

- **Gender Equality Evaluation Portal:** Serves as a tool to strengthen and promote the exchange of evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations with stakeholders and potential users in order to have a wider impact on learning and to contribute to improved policy design and programming in the area of gender equality and women’s empowerment. UN Women partners and other organizations or individuals dedicated to gender equality and women’s empowerment are encouraged to contribute their evaluation reports to the website.

- **Global Evaluation Report Assessment and Analysis System (GERAAS):** IEO produces the meta-analysis (see Chapter 6) of evaluation findings, conclusions, recommendations, good practices and lessons learned gleaned from the ‘good quality’ evaluation reports. The main purpose of this report is to facilitate learning from evaluation results and it is presented to the Executive Board and should be used by UN Women staff in the formulation of programmes and strategies (see the meta-analysis on lessons learned from evaluations conducted in 2013 as an example).

- **Global Evaluation Oversight System (GEOS):** Produces a “dashboard” report on KPIs. This report is used as an accountability mechanism, as it makes public the extent to which UN Women offices are implementing evaluation recommendations. IEO reports on the KPIs on a biannual basis to the Executive Director and Senior Management Team (see Figure 10, example of a KPI report), and on an annual basis to the Executive Board through the Annual Report on the Evaluation Function (e.g. see 2014 report), and on an ad hoc basis to auditors. The KPIs are also made public on the GATE website.
**GATE responsibilities for following up on evaluation**

The GATE website enables the dissemination of evaluations and tracking of the use of evaluation, ensuring that knowledge gained from evaluations becomes an integral part of the UN Women accountability, transparency and organizational learning process. GATE allows staff and external stakeholders to access evaluative information about UN Women work and track the status of the evaluation plan and management response and action plans. All evaluation reports and associated management responses produced by UN Women are required to be disclosed on the GATE website within six weeks of completion of the evaluation report.

It is the responsibility of UN Women offices, division representatives, and directors to ensure that the status of the management response action plan is updated on a quarterly basis. The M&E officer or focal point is responsible for liaising with evaluation managers to receive updates on the implementation of the management response action plan and input the changes into GATE. Tracking the implementation of the management response is a means to support managers in ensuring accountability towards evaluation results. It is included in the GEOS as a KPI of the evaluation function: KPI 7—Use of evaluation, including management response.
On the homepage of the GATE website, internal and external users can access a tool to produce their own analytical reports on GATE contents, such as the implementation status of management responses in a particular region. UN Women managers should use these reports to monitor their progress with the evaluation plan and implementation of management response.

Figure 11 illustrates the office and division responsibilities with respect to the management response. The M&E officer or focal point is responsible for managing contributions to GATE, as outlined in GATE Guidance and in the Evaluation Chapter of the POM.

Figure 11. UN Women evaluation process: management response
D. COMMUNICATING EVALUATION RESULTS

Effective communication and dissemination of evaluation results will not only contribute to greater accountability for UN Women, but also enable partners to learn about UN Women work and contribute to broader knowledge generation on programming for gender equality and women’s empowerment.

UN Women discloses all evaluation reports to the public within six weeks of completion.

Evaluation dissemination strategy

An evaluation dissemination strategy is a systematic plan for disseminating evaluation results to key internal and external stakeholders through diverse, effective, creative and barrier-free methods. It is recommended that every evaluation have such a strategy. The aim of the strategy is to ensure the communication of evaluation results and the experiences and lessons emerging from UN Women work. Systematically planning for the dissemination of the evaluation results is the best way to ensure evaluation products and the results of an evaluation go beyond a mere internal exercise. It helps to contribute to the utility of evaluations and utility is a key principle that should guide all UN Women evaluations. The budget for the dissemination strategy should be included in the overall budget for the evaluation developed during the planning stage.

The office or division commissioning an evaluation has the main responsibility for developing the evaluation dissemination strategy (usually done by the evaluation manager and may be in coordination with a communication officer). However, evaluation reference and management groups or other relevant stakeholders may also play a role in providing inputs for the strategy and disseminating the results through their respective channels. The development of the evaluation dissemination strategy begins at the initiation of the evaluation and should be finalized and implemented during the final stage of the evaluation (see Tool 15. How do you develop an evaluation dissemination strategy?).

Ensuring accessible evaluation products

Key to UN Women’s commitment to gender-responsive evaluation processes is making evaluation products accessible and barrier-free for women and other groups subject to discrimination as key users of the evaluation. The evaluation
Box 23.

DISSEMINATION AND USE OF EVALUATION:
Ethiopia Country Office

Evaluation of Ethiopia UN Joint Programme on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

UN Women and the UN Population Fund launched the Ethiopia UN Joint Programme on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment with funding from the Government of Spain. The overall goal of the programme was to ensure and support the implementation of national commitments to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment, fighting violence against women in Ethiopia. An end of programme evaluation was conducted in 2013 to identify lessons that can improve UN Women’s and UN Population Fund’s future initiatives towards ending violence against women.

Once the final evaluation report was issued, UN Women Ethiopia organized a meeting to share with relevant stakeholders how UN Women planned to respond to evaluation recommendations and to get partners’ point of view as well as to facilitate learning. Prior to the meeting UN Women distributed the final evaluation report to all of its partners including potential donors. This meeting was of significant importance for UN Women future programming. It provided a forum for relevant stakeholders to visit the proposed evaluation management response plan and UN Women’s programmatic prospects on ending violence against women and girls and provided feedback, which enabled UN Women to strengthen its priority area of focus on ending violence against women and girls. It also gave the assurance needed to other development partners present during the meeting that UN Women is serious in ensuring delivery of results by taking into account lessons learned into its future plans and programmes. Representatives from the donor community, civil society organizations, key government institutions and other relevant stakeholders who took part in the meeting appreciated UN Women’s approach in dissemination and use of the evaluation results.

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UN Women Ethiopia
manager needs to consider and use audience appropriate means for sharing the evaluation results, in order for stakeholders to understand and participate in plans to act on recommendations. For example, language, accessibility to internet and connectivity issues need to be explored when matching the type of product to the audience.

While the evaluation products used should be based on the target audience, at a minimum, the types of products identified in Table 5 are recommended for gender-responsive evaluation at UN Women.

Table 5. Key evaluation products and target audience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key evaluation product</th>
<th>Main audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation report (with executive summary): necessary for accountability purposes</td>
<td>UN Women office managing the evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management and reference groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Donors and other partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation brief: outlines the key evaluation findings and recommendations in a short</td>
<td>UN Women senior managers and other staff members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and reader friendly manner</td>
<td>Management and reference groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Donors and other partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other external audiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-media presentations (PowerPoint, webinar, video, photo exhibition): illustrates</td>
<td>UN Women senior managers and other staff members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>key findings or a case study through accessible audio visual means</td>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civil society and women’s movement organisations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National counterparts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other external audiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management and reference groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Donors and other partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USE &amp; FOLLOW-UP STAGE</td>
<td></td>
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<td>-----------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did the country representative or deputy representative lead the development of the management response?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did the M&amp;E officer or focal point upload the management response in the GATE system within six weeks of finalization?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did the country representative approve the management response in the GATE website?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the country representative or deputy representative ensuring timely implementation of key actions of the management response?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the M&amp;E officer or focal point updating the status of the implementation of the management response key actions on a quarterly basis?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did the M&amp;E officer or focal point implement the evaluation dissemination strategy to ensure access to evaluation results and to facilitate learning?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Global Accountability and Tracking of Evaluation Use (GATE): http://gate.unwomen.org

• Gender Equality Evaluation Portal: http://genderevaluation.unwomen.org

• Tool 1. Evaluation process standards for decentralized evaluation

• Tool 14. GERAAS evaluation report quality assessment checklist

• Tool 15. How do you develop an evaluation dissemination strategy?

• Tool 16. Management response template


• UN Women intranet: https://unwomen.sharepoint.com/
  • GATE Guidance
  • POM, Chapter 5 Evaluation

• UN Women: http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library
  • Global Evaluation Report Assessment and Analysis System (GERAAS)

• UNEG: http://unevaluation.org/
  • Good practice guidelines for following up to evaluations