



UN WOMEN EVALUATION STRATEGY 2026–2029



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UN WOMEN EVALUATION STRATEGY 2026–2029

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Audit and Investigation Services**

Independent Evaluation Service

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BACKGROUND

The UN Women Evaluation Strategy 2026–2029 outlines how the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) will leverage its evaluation function to support evidence-based decision-making and improve the lives of women and girls globally. This strategy is led by the UN Women Independent Evaluation Service (IES), part of the Independent Evaluation, Audit and Investigation Services (IEAIS). The strategy aligns with UN Women’s Evaluation Policy and UN Women’s Strategic Plan 2026–2029, incorporating lessons from previous strategies and broader UN system reforms.

The strategy sets forth four strategic areas of work:

- Implementing strategic corporate, regional and country portfolio evaluations.
- Implementing effective decentralized evaluation systems.
- Supporting the United Nations and national evaluation capacity development on gender-responsive evaluation.
- Strengthening evaluation dissemination and use.

Key priorities of the strategy include improving the use of evaluations by UN Women management to inform decision-making; providing timely and relevant evaluative evidence on UN Women’s contributions to development and organizational effectiveness; and increasing demand for country-led, gender-responsive evaluations that support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and beyond, including through joint and system-wide initiatives.

The 2026–2029 Evaluation Strategy has been fundamentally shaped by major institutional shifts, notably the Secretary-General’s UN80 initiative, *Shifting Paradigms: United to Deliver*¹ and UN Women’s Strategic Plan 2026–2029. The UN80 agenda signals a profound shift from assessing solely internal mandates to prioritizing joint outcomes, shared services and system-wide partnership effectiveness. These contextual factors will require upcoming evaluations to capture the efficiency and impact of integrated, cross-pillar results and system-wide accountability.

The broader UN emphasis on institutional reform, data modernization and diversified financing presents a mixed landscape of risks and opportunities for IES. IES must anticipate and navigate the political risks of a potential lack of will for gender-responsive evaluation if the broader UN focuses primarily on cost-saving and consolidation. At the country level, evaluations will continue to face persistent operational challenges, including conflicting stakeholder priorities and a lack of robust data and monitoring systems.

The planned creation of a centralized UN “Data Commons” as part of the UN80 initiative² offers significant potential for increased impact; however, IES will need to proactively develop its internal capacity and methodologies to effectively utilize interconnected data sources across the entire UN system. Ultimately, to continue providing high-quality, evidence-based evaluations that accurately reflect where UN Women is making its greatest impact, the Evaluation Strategy must be consistently revisited and responsive throughout the 2026–2029 period. Sustained responsiveness will be essential to maintain IES’ high standards while navigating an increasingly complex and integrated operating environment.

This document details the purpose and scope of the Evaluation Strategy; provides an overview of UN Women’s evaluation function and its governance; describes the strategic context that informs the strategy; lays out strategic areas of focus and results; and presents a theory of change for the evaluation function.

1 https://www.un.org/un80-initiative/sites/default/files/2025-09/UN80_WS3-1_250918_1901.pdf

2 Page 41, https://www.un.org/un80-initiative/sites/default/files/2025-09/UN80_WS3-1_250918_1901.pdf

INTRODUCTION

The UN Women Evaluation Strategy 2026–2029 serves to support UN Women’s overarching mission and enable the organization to learn, adapt and hold itself accountable to its integrated mandate of promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment. The strategy anticipates that the findings, conclusions and recommendations from its evaluations will translate into tangible and sustained management action.

The development of this strategy involved consultations with key stakeholders, including the Advisory Committee on Oversight, senior management, regional directors and IES personnel.

The Evaluation Strategy is aligned with the UN Women Strategic Plan 2026–2029, which aims to accelerate progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by 2030 through targeted, systemic change. The Strategic Plan focuses on four key impact areas:

- Enhancing women’s leadership and decision-making.
- Promoting economic empowerment in resilient economies.
- Eliminating violence against women and girls.
- Advancing gender-responsive peace and humanitarian action.

To achieve these impact areas, the Strategic Plan consolidates efforts into three systemic outcomes:

- Strengthening laws and policies that uphold women’s rights.
- Making institutions more accountable through better financing and data.
- Expanding women’s access to services and resources.

UN Women operates by leveraging its triple mandate – normative support, UN coordination and operational activities – while deepening partnerships with governments, civil society and the private sector. The Strategic Plan also emphasizes digital transformation, inclusive development and results-based

management to ensure transparency, efficiency and measurable impact, especially in contexts of crisis, conflict and climate change.

In accordance with its Evaluation Policy, IES conducts independent corporate and strategic evaluations, such as country portfolio and regional strategic note evaluations. These evaluations assess critical issues such as development effectiveness, organizational performance, and normative, coordination and operational coherence. Beyond this, IES provides technical support and quality assurance to decentralized evaluations (which assess programmatic-level issues); contributes to system-wide, global syntheses and joint evaluations supporting UN system coordination and accountability; and engages in targeted national evaluation capacity development aimed at fostering gender equality and women’s empowerment. The Evaluation Strategy supports UN Women’s Strategic Plan 2026–2029 by focusing on the following areas of work: implementing strategic corporate, regional and country portfolio evaluations; implementing effective decentralized evaluation systems; supporting UN and national stakeholder partnerships on gender-responsive evaluation; and strengthening evaluation dissemination and use. The Independent Evaluation Service has the primary responsibility to implement the Evaluation Strategy but its full implementation is supported by all UN Women.

EVALUATION FUNCTION AT UN WOMEN

EVALUATION POLICY

The UN Women evaluation function operates under the Evaluation Policy (UNW/2020/5/Rev.1). The policy establishes a framework for an independent evaluation function that provides credible evidence on UN Women's performance in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women. It also defines UN Women's role in system-wide evaluations and in promoting evaluations that are responsive to gender equality and women's empowerment, aligning with UN Women's mandate to lead, coordinate and promote accountability for these issues within the UN system.

This policy is implemented through both the UN Women Evaluation Strategy 2026–2029 and the Corporate Evaluation Plan 2026–2029. The Corporate Evaluation Plan offers a time-bound framework for systematically generating useful evaluation evidence on the performance of work under the UN Women Strategic Plan 2026–2029.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

IES was responsible for preparing the UN Women Evaluation Strategy through extensive consultations and regular interactions with the Advisory Committee on Oversight, senior management team and executive management. The strategy is subsequently shared with the Executive Board as part of the Annual Report on the evaluation function. Implementation of the Evaluation Strategy is primarily led by IES in cooperation with senior management and regional directors.

As the custodian of the UN Women evaluation function, IES bears several key responsibilities:

- Establishing and implementing effective corporate evaluation systems.
- Strengthening decentralized evaluation systems.
- Leading UN coordination on gender-responsive evaluation.
- Promoting innovation and knowledge generation concerning effective approaches to promoting gender equality through national evaluation capacity-building.
- Ensuring that evaluation findings are utilized by management and other stakeholders in UN Women's governance processes and presented and used by programme managers in their work.

In collaboration with UN Women offices and other partners, IES works to implement the UN Women Evaluation Strategy 2026–2029 to objectively assess UN Women's contributions to development results.

The UN Women Evaluation Strategy is a global strategy that pertains to all UN Women office and personnel with shared responsibility for the management of evaluations, including funding and use of evaluation results for accountability and learning.

UN Women senior management, including Deputy Executive Directors, Division Directors, Regional Directors and Country Representatives, are responsible for fostering an environment where interventions are "evaluable," meaning programmes have quality design, monitoring, reporting and documentation systems in place. Evaluation planning follows a quadrennial process, resulting in a corporate evaluation plan that is regularly reviewed and updated, and decentralized evaluation plans which are developed during preparation of Strategic Notes and annual workplans.

LESSONS LEARNED AND AREAS THAT NEED STRENGTHENING

The following challenges have been identified that require attention to enable successful implementation of the Evaluation Strategy and the achievement of its intended outcomes:

Conducting strategic IES-led evaluations at country and regional level:

Since 2020, IES has initiated IES-led evaluations to enhance the quality and timeliness of evaluative evidence, with corporate, country and regional evaluations improving UN Women's evidence base for decision-making. Stakeholders have increasingly recognized the significant contribution of these findings and recommendations to management decisions and programme implementation, expressing greater interest in demonstrating results, assessing impact and identifying opportunities for course correction. A notable challenge, however, is the limited funding for these IES-led evaluations at regional and country levels, suggesting that regional and country-level funding could significantly enhance their implementation.

Evaluation use and management action:

While evaluation findings and recommendations are well received by UN Women management and the Executive Board, there is acknowledgment that their full utilization within UN Women could be improved. The management response is identified as a crucial tool for managing evaluation use, and there is a continuous need to build awareness and understanding of the associated expectations and timelines throughout UN Women. Opportunities to increase communication and use of evaluation results beyond the teams directly involved should be consistently explored by IES. Recognizing this, IES developed the UN Women's Strategy to Strengthen Evaluation Use through communication, knowledge management and advocacy. Key aspects of this strategy include ensuring findings are presented in timely, audience-tailored and accessible formats; embedding evaluations into

UN Women's broader learning systems and planning processes; and elevating the visibility, perceived value and influence of evaluations through leadership engagement, policy dialogue and global knowledge management platforms.

Engagement in system-wide and joint evaluations, and global evaluation syntheses:

IES actively participates in UN system-wide evaluations, joint evaluations and global evaluation syntheses. The latter have proven to be an effective tool for distilling lessons and recommendations from UN evaluations that have direct implications for the entire UN system and more specifically to UN reform. IES is committed to continued partnership with UN agencies to improve efficiencies in building a robust evidence base on UN system evaluations. IES will continue to be responsive to UN reform through joint and system-wide evaluations. For joint evaluations, there is a recognized need for clearer guidelines on how to promote management accountability for the use of findings and recommendations.

National Evaluation Capacity Development (NECD):

While there has been meaningful involvement at global and some regional levels, further efforts are required to strategically prioritize NECD and strengthen its reporting mechanisms. Regions such as Latin America and the Caribbean have progressed in promoting gender-responsive evaluation and fostering institutional participation, but more tailored approaches are needed for broader reach. Resource allocation and engagement with national partners remain uneven across regions, underscoring the importance of elevating evaluation within national agendas. Sustained innovation in NECD should be supported by robust knowledge-sharing to facilitate cross-regional learning and adoption, and by new and innovative ways of working to prioritize collaborative NECD with other UN agencies.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI):

AI and machine learning offer potential to enhance the evaluation and synthesis process in many ways, including report screening, data extraction, report summarization and results communication. The growing interest in visual and AI-assisted products presents a promising opportunity to enhance the accessibility and use of evaluations. These tools also have the potential to improve resource efficiency and expand evaluation capacity. To fully harness these benefits, IES will need to continue investing in tool development and capacity-building. At the same time, it is essential to remain mindful of the ethical considerations and inherent limitations of AI technologies, ensuring their responsible and informed use. IES is committed to improving efficiencies through AI, while concurrently developing clear and strong ethical protocols for its use, in alignment with UNEG and other UN agencies. It is recognized that AI models require training on UN Women's information databases, and improved user prompts are crucial to obtain better results.

Decentralized evaluation function:

Strengthening IES' capacity to apply innovative and robust methodologies, alongside building internal organizational capacity, is vital for demonstrating meaningful results. The quality of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) within UN Women directly impacts the organization's ability to report on outcomes and the credibility of corporate, regional and country-level evaluations, which frequently rely on decentralized data. There is an urgent need to enhance M&E capabilities, particularly in more effectively measuring outcomes and integrating impact stories to capture qualitative dimensions of change. In the context of constrained resources, improving efficiency metrics is also critical for assessing value for money and identifying ways to expand reach without increasing costs.

FIGURE 1

Lessons learned and areas that need strengthening



CONTEXT AND CHANGES THAT SHAPE THE EVALUATION FUNCTION

The evaluation function is being shaped by key global and organizational dynamics. The UN80 reform agenda, alongside the evolving global development paradigm, presents both opportunities and risks. Growing demand for evidence to track the progress of reform, and the need for greater synthesis of system-wide evaluations, will be central to guiding future directions. The following contexts will influence the evaluation function:

Review of Beijing +30:

This review highlights both progress and persistent challenges. Despite 88 per cent of countries enacting laws and services against violence against women and girls and many taking legislative steps against employment discrimination, gender discrimination remains deeply entrenched. A broader erosion of democratic institutions and a growing backlash against gender equality further complicate efforts, with nearly a quarter of countries reporting that implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action is being actively undermined. This context underscores UN Women's critical role in supporting evidence-based strategies to navigate and counter resistance while advancing transformative change.

Summit of the Future:

UN Women aligns its work with the vision of reinvigorated multilateralism outlined in the Secretary-General's Common Agenda, which advocates for more inclusive, networked and effective global cooperation to accelerate progress on the SDGs. UN Women's evaluative efforts are also integrated into the UN 2.0 vision, which aims for a modernized UN system driven by innovation, strong data ecosystems, digital fluency and adaptive learning approaches informed by foresight and behavioural science. The adoption of Pact for the Future in 2024 further reinforces the imperative for evidence-based decision-making across critical areas such as sustainable development, peace and security, digital transformation and intergenerational equity. This evolving global governance landscape emphasizes the need for UN Women's Evaluation Strategy to strengthen organizational learning, accountability and responsiveness in advancing gender equality.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:

In a global landscape marked by overlapping crises and widening inequalities, the Evaluation Strategy must ensure that UN Women's contributions to the 2030 Agenda are measurable, impactful and responsive to the needs of the most marginalized women and girls.

The UN80 reform agenda:

This initiative seeks to make the United Nations more effective, agile and relevant. It comprises three core workstreams: enhancing internal efficiency (streamlining operations, relocating functions); reviewing nearly 4,000 active mandates to eliminate duplication; and exploring structural changes and programme realignment across the UN system. This agenda, driven by financial pressures and a focus on impact and transparency, will influence IES by streamlining resource allocation for evaluation and increasing the demand for data-driven decision-making, potentially elevating the role of evaluation in shaping policy and resource allocation.

UN Women Strategic Plan 2026–2029:

This plan will guide UN Women over the next four years, focusing on the "last mile" to achieve the SDGs by 2030. It is set against a backdrop of uncertain times, marked by political polarization, economic volatility, planetary crises, violent conflict and challenges to multilateralism, which threaten to reverse hard-won gains. UN Women monitors development and organizational results by tracking progress against its integrated results and resource framework, with specific baseline values, targets and milestones for each indicator, subject to data validation with field offices. Building on lessons from the previous Strategic Plan, the organization aims to enhance its internal monitoring and oversight systems, with a particular focus on tracking and reporting impact and outcome-level results. In line with the recommendations of the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review, UN Women will collaborate closely with UN partners to monitor and report on joint results using common indicators. IES will continue to benefit from its co-location with the Internal Audit Service (IAS), which focuses on organizational performance, and joint IES-IAS initiatives will be pursued where relevant and feasible as part of the Evaluation Strategy.

EVALUATION FUNCTION'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND KEY AREAS OF RESULTS

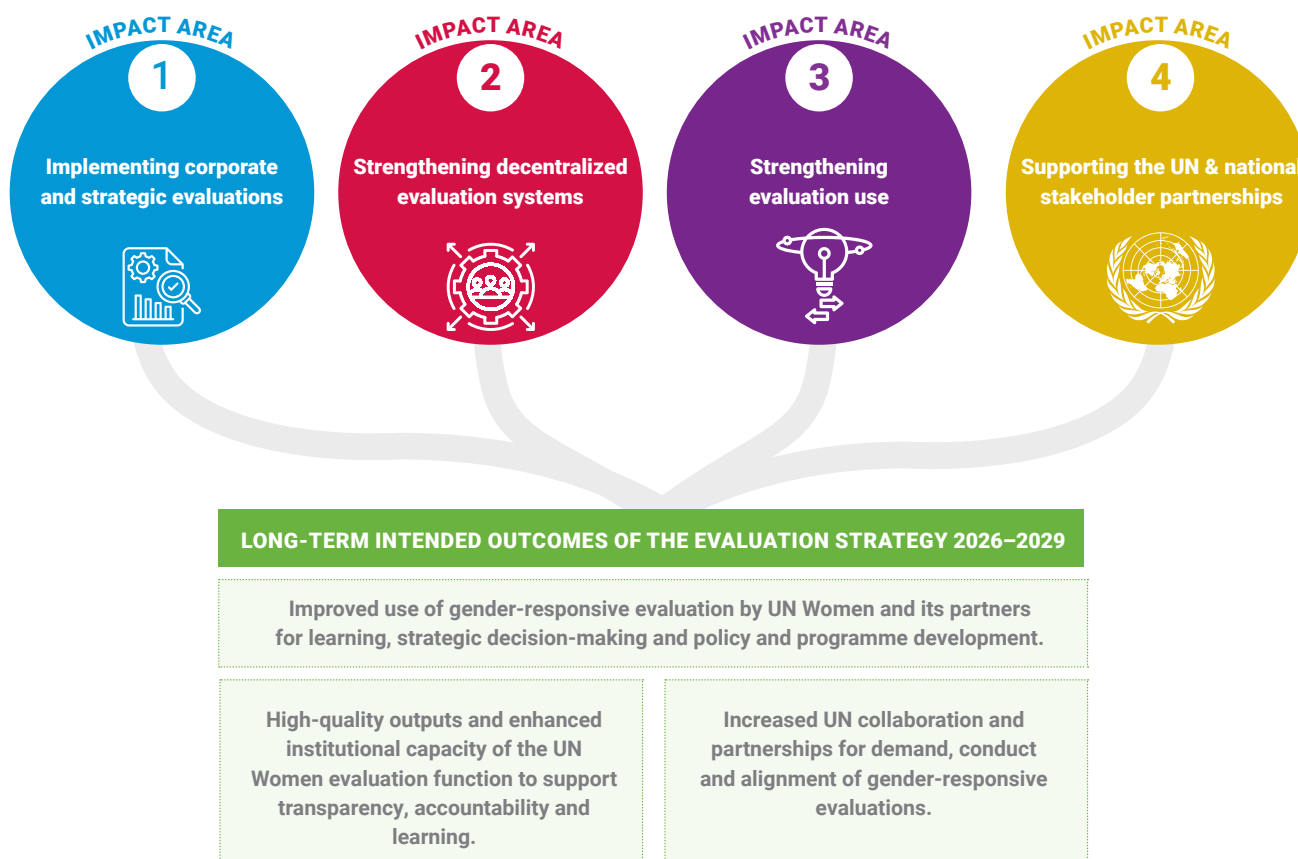
The UN Women Evaluation Strategy 2026–2029 is operationalized within the framework of UN Women's Corporate Evaluation Plan 2026–2029 and headquarters, regional and country Strategic Notes, with the intention that evaluation is fully utilized within UN Women to support organizational accountability, learning and decision-making. Applying the evaluation theory of change, four key impact areas have been identified. Their synergistic approach and strong complementarities ensure that UN Women meets the requirements outlined in the Evaluation Policy and the Strategic Plan 2026–2029 regarding monitoring, reporting and evaluation, specifically that IES will implement a corporate evaluation plan to evaluate UN Women's development results and organizational effectiveness and efficiency.

The long-term intended outcomes of the Evaluation Strategy 2026–2029 are:

- Improved use of gender-responsive evaluation by UN Women and its partners for learning, strategic decision-making and policy and programme development.
- High-quality outputs and enhanced institutional capacity of the UN Women evaluation function to support transparency, accountability and learning.
- Increased UN collaboration and partnerships for demand, conduct and alignment of gender-responsive evaluations to support accountability for international, regional and national gender equality commitments.

FIGURE 1

Four impact areas of UN Women Evaluation strategy



AREA 1 AND 2: IMPLEMENTING CORPORATE AND STRATEGIC EVALUATIONS AND STRENGTHENING DECENTRALIZED EVALUATION SYSTEMS

During 2026–2029, IES will continue to lead corporate, regional and country portfolio evaluations by implementing the IES-led evaluation model, with a significant emphasis on assessing the efficiency of the organization. Given the context of the UN 80 reform agenda, IES will develop a consistent understanding and approach to assess efficiency and conduct more nuanced analysis of budgets and organizational programme data as the organization strengthens its internal systems.

An enhanced and even stronger focus on regional and country portfolio evaluations will allow IES to fully align with the organization's pivot to the countries and regions initiative. Regional evaluation specialists are strategically placed at the field level responding to the organization's strong vision of pivot to countries and regions.

Specific results for corporate evaluations include:

- Evaluating UN Women's integrated mandate and aiming to understand its impact and efficient contribution to results.
- Innovating methodological approaches to evaluation for high-quality and credible evidence, including rapid assessments and advisories to support adaptive management. Aligning corporate and decentralized evaluation processes.
- Enhancing the usability and accessibility of evaluation findings and recommendations.

The Corporate Evaluation Plan, an integral part of the Evaluation Strategy, provides a coherent framework for systematically generating useful evaluation evidence on UN Women's results. Regional evaluation specialists will lead the conduct of strategic regional evaluations and country portfolio evaluations, which will be monitored through the Corporate Evaluation Plan.

The Evaluation Strategy highlights strong complementarities among its four pillars of work, particularly between corporate and decentralized evaluations, as they both contribute significantly to building the evidence base on UN Women's performance. UN Women aims to generate evidence on its results across its entire integrated mandate – normative, coordination and operational – through both its corporate and decentralized evaluation systems.

Decentralized evaluations constitute most UN Women evaluations and are supported by regional evaluation specialists who provide technical assistance and quality assurance to field offices. The results from decentralized evaluations complement corporate and strategic evaluations, ensuring that UN Women has timely, strategically focused and objective information on the performance of its Strategic Notes. UN Women will also continue to engage in selected system-wide evaluations related to the SDGs, particularly SDG 5, as well as global syntheses of UN evaluations and joint evaluations with UN sister agencies.

AREA 3: STRENGTHENING EVALUATION USE

Acknowledging the dual challenges of information overload and under-utilization of evaluations, the UN Women Evaluation Strategy recognizes that strategic communication alone is insufficient for promoting evaluation use. Therefore, the strategy aims to strengthen other enablers, such as knowledge management and advocacy for use.

IES developed a dedicated Evaluation Use Strategy that outlines a practical road map to ensure evaluations are actively and consistently utilized across the organization. The Evaluation Use Strategy addresses persistent barriers to evaluation use, including uneven follow-up on recommendations, fragmented communication practices, limited visibility of evaluation findings and a lack of systemic monitoring on how evaluations are applied in practice.

The Evaluation Use Strategy is built on three core levers for change:

- **Strategic Communication:** This involves ensuring evaluation findings are presented in timely, audience-tailored and accessible formats that facilitate uptake and visibility.
- **Knowledge Management:** This focuses on embedding evaluations into UN Women's broader learning systems, platforms and planning processes.
- **Advocacy for Use:** This aims to elevate the visibility, perceived value and influence of evaluations through leadership engagement, policy dialogue and global platforms.

AREA 4: SUPPORTING THE UN AND NATIONAL STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS ON GENDER-RESPONSIVE EVALUATION

UN Women plays a pivotal role in system-wide coordination and accountability for gender equality and the empowerment of women. In the long term, the UN Women evaluation function aims to increase collaboration, efficiency and alignment within the UN system regarding gender-responsive evaluation. UN Women supports other UN agencies and the broader UN system in integrating a gender perspective into their evaluations, which includes strengthening accountability to gender equality commitments and reporting on the UN-SWAP evaluation performance indicator.

Strengthening national evaluation capacities for gender-responsive M&E systems is guided by principles of national ownership and leadership. To this end, enhancing national capacity to both demand and supply high-quality, gender-responsive evaluations is a crucial contributor to achieving the SDGs. IES will continue to engage in partnerships to leverage support for increasing gender-responsive evaluation efforts for the SDGs. IES will provide limited, targeted national gender-responsive evaluation capacity development through global initiatives such as EvalGender+; strengthen partnerships with the Global Evaluation Initiative; and remain highly engaged to support national evaluation systems and capacity development in partnership with UNEG.

By putting forward this dedicated Evaluation Use Strategy, IES reaffirms its commitment to focusing on this critical area in the upcoming strategic cycle, thereby strengthening the use of evaluations for strategic decision-making.

THEORY OF CHANGE OF THE UN WOMEN EVALUATION STRATEGY

The theory of change for the UN Women Evaluation Strategy envisions gender-responsive evaluation as the agent of change in achieving UN Women's mandate and advancing the gender equality and women's empowerment agenda towards the goals of the 2030 Agenda. This theory of change guides the Evaluation Strategy, detailing how its priorities – expressed as long-term and intermediate outcomes and outputs – are essential for the UN Women evaluation function to effectively and efficiently support UN Women's mission. It identifies innovation, AI and leveraging existing partnerships and networks as key drivers for achieving long-term outcomes.

Through its four key results areas, IES aims to improve the use of gender-responsive evaluation by UN Women and its partners for learning, strategic decision-making and policy and programme development. Via its corporate and decentralized evaluation systems and a strong focus on evaluation use, UN Women seeks to provide timely and relevant evaluation evidence on its contribution to development and organizational effectiveness and efficiency. Through its UN system coordination on gender-responsive evaluation, its targeted national evaluation capacity development and its focus area on evaluation use, UN Women also endeavours to increase the demand for and conduct of gender-responsive evaluations to support accountability for gender equality commitments and ultimately achieve the SDGs.

The theory of change operates under several key assumptions:

- The UN Women evaluation function will leverage its comparative advantage and expertise, positioning gender-responsive evaluation as a potent agent of change within UN Women.

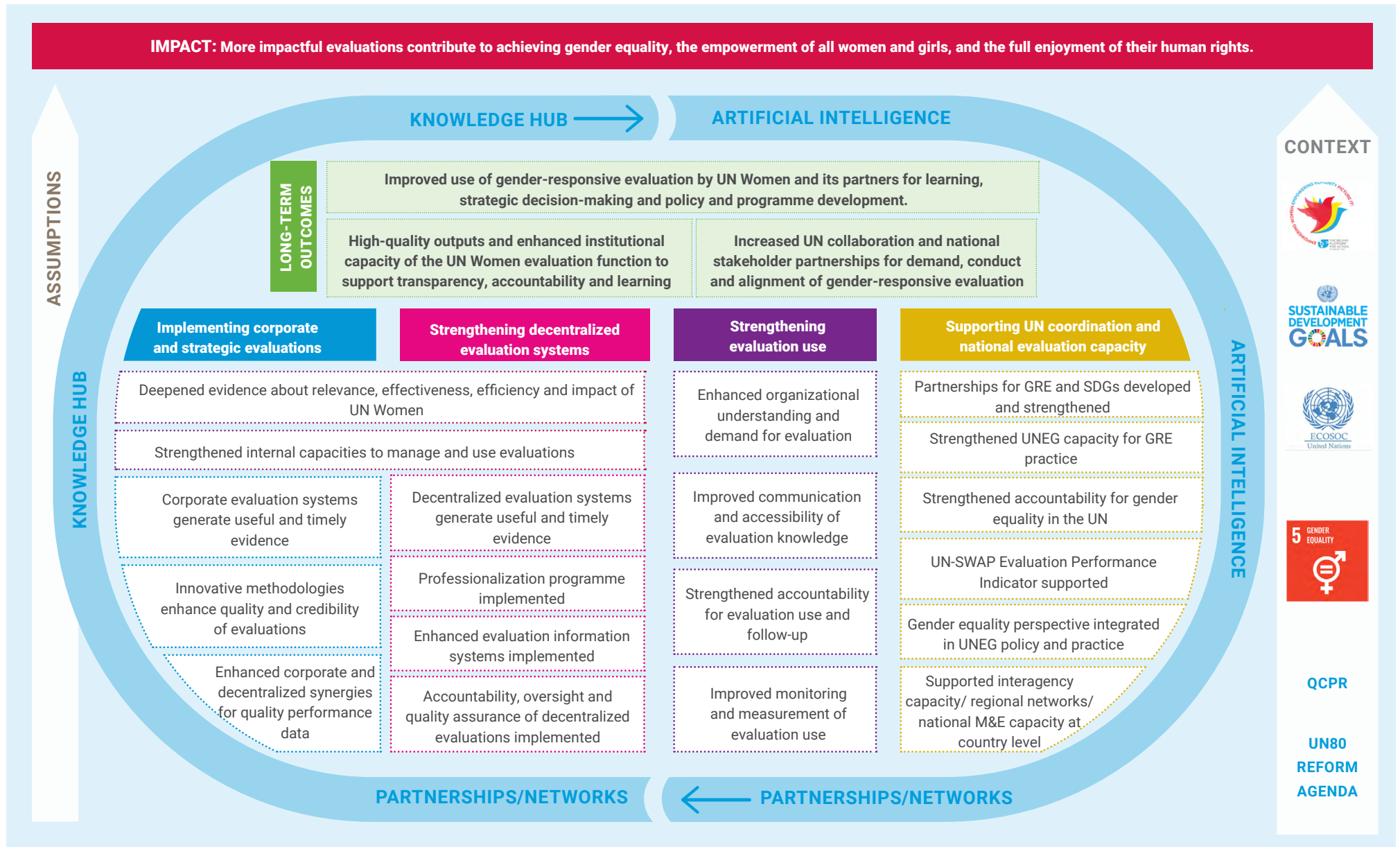
- UN Women evaluations are relevant to the UN system and national stakeholders for assessing and contributing to progress in achieving the SDGs.
- The UN Women evaluation function can build targeted evaluation partnerships and learning coalitions with UN agencies, civil society organizations and other partners to evaluate transformative change and women's empowerment.
- Support for evaluation within UN Women has improved, and adequate resources are allocated to regional and country portfolio evaluations.
- There is continuous support at all levels of UN Women, including from management and leadership, for implementing the Evaluation Strategy.

Despite these assumptions, potential risks could affect the effective implementation of the Evaluation Strategy, particularly in the new context of UN80 reform. These risks include the availability of adequate financial and human resources, the timeliness and quality of evaluations, and partnership capacity. Several external risks could directly impact the achievement of results, such as a lack of political will and support for gender-responsive evaluation, challenges in results-based programming at the country level, a lack of data and monitoring systems, and the conflicting priorities of development partners and stakeholders.

The theory of change emphasizes the interlinked nature of the UN Women Evaluation Strategic Outcome Areas, illustrating how results are catalyzed through the four strategic areas of focus and how outputs lead to outcomes, with aggregate outcomes contributing to the impact of UN Women's overall mandate.

FIGURE 3.

Theory of change



BUDGETING, IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION, AND REPORTING

IES is responsible for developing a biannual budget at the beginning of each two-year cycle. This budget specifies the regular resources required to implement UN Women's Evaluation Strategy.

The biannual budget includes:

- Salaries for IES headquarters-based evaluation specialists and regional specialists.
- Funding for key workplan activities, such as strategic evaluations at the corporate level.
- Support for selected strategic IES-led regional and country portfolio evaluations.
- Resources for communication products and knowledge management.
- Support for decentralized evaluation systems.
- Support for partnerships with the UN system and national stakeholders that promote gender-responsive evaluation.

IES reports on implementation of the Evaluation Strategy through the UN Women Annual Report on the evaluation function.



Photo: UN Women/Eva Sibanda

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1. KEY HIGHLIGHTS

KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM UN WOMEN'S CORPORATE EVALUATION PLAN 2022–2025

- 13 corporate evaluations completed covering all four impact areas of the Strategic Plan: Women's Economic Empowerment, Women's Political Participation, Ending Violence Against Women, and Women, Peace and Security.
- 4 meta-synthesis reports on areas such as advocacy and communications, a system-wide synthesis of UN evaluations on SDG 5 and UN Women's Performance Against the 2022–2025 Strategic Plan.
- 27 regional and country portfolio evaluations were completed as of June 2025: 17 country portfolio evaluations, with 15 led by IES; and 10 regional evaluations, 5 led by IES, representing a shift from small-scale, project-specific evaluations to more strategic, thematic evaluations that generate evidence on broader programmatic needs.
- IES played a strategic role in advancing evidence-based knowledge on gender equality across the UN system and beyond with key contributions such as leading the "Synthesis of UN System Evaluations on SDG 5" and co-chairing the People Pillar of the Global SDG Synthesis Coalition.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS ON INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

- IES explored and applied innovative evaluation approaches, such as a feminist collaborative approach in the corporate evaluation on social norms.
- Formative evaluations were conducted in areas such as sustainable financing and climate change to inform and shape programming.
- IES adopted a more targeted approach to integrate evaluation lessons into corporate strategic planning and decision-making processes.
- Tailored evaluation briefs and presentations were developed to support the mid-term review and development of the Strategic Plan.
- The types of evaluative exercises were diversified to include formative and rapid assessments, making them more responsive and fit-for-purpose, such as a formative assessment of UN Women's Gender Equality Accelerators (2024), which generated timely insights that contributed to refining and more closely aligning the accelerators with the Strategic Plan, including its results framework.

ANNEX 2. MONITORING AND REVIEW FRAMEWORK

Overall impact	More impactful evaluations contribute to achieving gender equality, the empowerment of all women and girls and the full enjoyment of their human rights
Long-term outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Improved use of gender-responsive evaluation by UN Women and its partners for learning, strategic decision-making, and policy and programme development. → High-quality outputs and enhanced institutional capacity of the UN Women evaluation function to support transparency, accountability and learning. → Increased UN collaboration, and national stakeholder partnerships for demand, conduct and alignment of evaluation.
Key indicators³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Financial resources invested in the evaluation function → Human resources for monitoring and evaluation → Evaluation coverage → Evaluation implementation rate → Quality of evaluation reports → Joint evaluations → Management response submission to GATE → Implementation of management response → Use of evaluations

AREA 1 AND AREA 2: IMPLEMENTING CORPORATE AND STRATEGIC EVALUATIONS AND STRENGTHENING DECENTRALIZED EVALUATION SYSTEMS



Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Deepened evidence about relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact of UN Women → Strengthened internal capacities to manage and use evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Coverage, timeliness and quality of evaluations maintained and improved → Evaluation oversight and quality assurance systems strengthened to support UN Women's accountability and learning → Innovative methodologies enhanced for high-quality and credible evaluations → Internal capacities strengthened to manage and use gender-responsive evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Percentage of planned evaluations being conducted → Percentage of financial resources spent on evaluation → Increased coverage of evaluations → Percentage of evaluations rated "good and above" → Number and percentage of IES-led evaluations → Number and percentage of joint evaluations

³ Key indicators are the evaluation key performance indicators for the UN Women Strategic Plan

AREA 3: STRENGTHENING EVALUATION USE



Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators
Enhanced organizational understanding and demand for evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → 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 recognition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Percentage of staff who report understanding the value of evaluation → Number of internal events promoting evaluation use → Percentage of Strategic Notes or workplans referencing evaluation findings.
Improved communication and accessibility of evaluation knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Percentage of evaluations with complete comms package (brief, slide deck, social media assets). → Number of downloads/ views of evaluation products. → Percentage of Strategic Notes or workplans referencing evaluation findings.
Strengthened accountability for evaluation use and follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Percentage of evaluations with management response submitted within six weeks. → Percentage of management response actions marked completed within 12 months. → Number of evaluations cited in proposals or donor reports.
Improved monitoring and measurement of evaluation use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Number of use stories or case studies published annually. → Percentage of Country and Regional Office evaluations reporting follow-up actions. → Evaluation use KPI score integrated into Strategic Plan reporting.

**AREA 4: SUPPORTING THE UN AND NATIONAL STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS
ON GENDER-RESPONSIVE EVALUATION**



Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators
<p>Strengthened UN system-wide environment and capacity for gender-responsive evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Strengthened UNEG capacity for gender-responsive evaluation practice. → Strengthened accountability for gender equality in the UN. → UN-SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicator supported. → Gender equality perspective integrated in UNEG policy and practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Percentage of UN entities supported in reporting on UN-SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicator (Target: 100%). → Lead UNEG task force (Target: At least one). → Evidence of gender perspective being integrated in key system-wide guidance documents and practices (Target: One as requested basis).
<p>Strengthened national context and capacity to conduct gender-responsive evaluation for meeting gender equality commitments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Partnerships for gender-responsive evaluation developed and strengthened. → Supported inter-agency capacity/regional networks/national M&E capacity at country level. → Technical assistance provided at regional and national level on conduct of gender-responsive evaluations. → Greater integration of gender-responsive evaluation perspective in national M&E systems, policies and practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Substantively engage in at least one global partnership (Target: at least one). → Support regional M&E inter-agency groups (Target: at least 2). → Number of UNSDCF evaluations supported (Target: at least 4). → Number of country-level evaluations on gender strategies and plans supported (Target: at least 4). → Number of national M&E systems and policies supported with gender mainstreaming advice (Target: at least 4).

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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