



REGIONAL EVALUATION ON WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

UN WOMEN AMERICAS AND CARIBBEAN REGIONAL OFFICE

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CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EVALUATION

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| Object: | Regional evaluation on work in the priority area of women's economic empowerment in the Americas and the Caribbean |
| Region: | Latin America and the Caribbean |
| Contractor: | UN Women, Regional Office for the Americas and the Caribbean |
| Period: | 2015-2019 |
| TYPE OF EVALUATION: | Formative, oriented towards organizational learning and the improvement and enhancement of work in the area of women's economic empowerment |

**Note: This document was translated from Spanish, and not all graphics in this version are available in English.*



Photos: UN Women

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

| | |
|-----------|---|
| ACRO | Americas and Caribbean Regional Office |
| AFP | Agencies, Funds and Programs |
| ATRAHDOM | Association of Home Workers and Maquila of Guatemala |
| AWID | Association for Women's Rights in Development |
| AWP | Annual Work Plan |
| BEO | Rural Women Entrepreneurs in Latin America |
| CEDAW | Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women |
| CMT | Country Management Team |
| CO | Country Office |
| CSW | Commission on the Status of Women |
| DAG-ECLAC | ECLAC Gender Affairs Division |
| ECLAC | Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean |
| EMG | Evaluation Management Group |
| ERG | Evaluation Reference Group |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations |
| FPI | Flagship Programme Initiatives |
| GIG | Interagency Gender Group |
| GIPC | Inter-Agency Public Care Policy Group |
| GTG | Gender Thematic Groups |
| GTI | Interagency Working Groups |
| IFAD | International Fund for Agricultural Development |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| INEGI | National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico |
| INMUJERES | National Women's Institute of Mexico |
| KM | Knowledge Management |
| LAC | Latin America and the Caribbean |
| MDGs | Millennium Development Goals |
| MELyT | Women, Local Economy and Territories |
| MSC | Most Significant Change |
| MyDEL | Women and Local Economic Development |
| PARLACEN | Central American Parliament |
| PFE | Principle-Focused Evaluation |
| PRIEG | Regional Policy on Gender Equality and Equity |
| RE | Realist Evaluation |
| RNFE | Rural Non-Farm Employment |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SEGEPLAN | Secretariat for Planning and Programming of the Presidency |
| SEGIB | Ibero-American General Secretariat |
| SICA | Central American Integration System |
| SIDS | Small Islands Developing States |
| STEM | Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics |
| ToC | Theory of Change |
| ToR | Terms of Reference |
| UFE | Utilization-Focused Evaluation |
| UN | United Nations |
| UN Women | United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women |
| UNC | United Nations System |
| UNCT | United Nations Country Team |

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| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNEG | United Nations Evaluation Group |
| UNFPA | United Nations Population Fund |
| UTGS | Technical Unit of the Social Cabinet of the Presidency of the Republic of Paraguay |
| VICA | Volatilidad, Incertidumbre, Complejidad y Ambigüedad |
| WEE | Women's Economic Empowerment |
| WEPS | Women Empowerment Principles |
| WFP | World Food Programme |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The purpose of this evaluation is to evaluate the contribution of the UN Women Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ACRO) to women's economic empowerment as a way of making progress towards gender equality in the region in the framework of sustainable development, Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals, and human rights principles. In particular, the evaluation seeks to identify the UN Women contributions which have supported progress in the three priority areas: i) work with rural women, ii) unpaid domestic and care work, iii) income security for women and decent work.

The regional evaluation covers the period 2015 to 2019 over two strategic plans, both global and regional. It is formative in nature and seeks to contribute to improving UN Women's approach and enhancing its work in the area of economic empowerment. The principal envisaged users of the evaluation are the UN Women Regional Office and country offices, as well as strategic partners and key stakeholders.

In line with the evaluation's ToRs, the proposed objectives are as follows:

- i. Assess the relevance of UN Women's work on women's economic empowerment at the regional and national levels (2015-2019), as well as UN Women's added value in this thematic area
- ii. Assess the effectiveness and efficiency of progress towards achieving results as defined in the 2014-2017 Plan and the 2018-2021 Plan on Women's Economic Empowerment
- iii. Identify lessons learned, best practices, key strategies, methodologies, funding mechanisms and resources that made possible UN Women's contribution to women's economic empowerment, providing recommendations for future interventions
- iv. Identify which external factors (social, cultural and political) had a significant impact on UN Women's work on Economic Empowerment (both positively and negatively)
- v. Assess how the Progress of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean report has helped improve work on women's economic empowerment

In addition, under objective (ii) the evaluation includes the criteria of relevance, sustainability, and cross-cutting approaches (gender, human rights, intersectionality, cultural relevance, interculturality, and adaptation and mitigation of climate change).

Evaluation methodology

As it is a formative evaluation, it is oriented towards organizational learning whose purpose is the improvement or enhancement of the programme. It is focused on identifying strengths and weaknesses, with the aim of proposing corrective measures and/or visualizing sub-exploited opportunities. In this *framework* it also identifies and analyzes good practices and innovations, to evaluate its value and potential for replication and escalation.

The evaluation has as approaches:

Principle-Focused Evaluation, appropriate to help innovative initiatives navigate the uncertainties and turbulence of complex dynamic systems, provides a context and environmental sensitive approach, addressing principles such as the object of evaluation. In the context of a formative evaluation, it supports greater adherence to principles.

Theory-Based Evaluation is based on program theory, which is the set of often implicit assumptions that guides the choice and design of an intervention. Therefore, the program theory represents a

hypothesis that can be tested and redefined. In this context, the Realist Evaluation emerges, which argues that for evaluations to be useful to decision makers, they must indicate "what works, under what conditions," and for "whom," rather than simply answering the question "does it work?"

Based on a **Theory of Change** (built in part with the UN Women regional team), the evaluation has contrasted explicit and implicit logical chain of interventions at both regional and country levels to understand what works/does not work, under what conditions and for whom, and based on findings and existing experience and evidence, to reconstruct an initial regional ToC the area of women's economic empowerment.

Utilization-focused Evaluation is a principle-based approach that an evaluation should be evaluated based on utility to intended users. Therefore, evaluations should be planned and carried out to improve the possible use of the findings and the process itself, to inform decisions and improve performance.

Gender and Human Rights. In evaluation these approaches are used, on the one hand, with the analysis of the extent to which interventions have positively or negatively affected gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as any group discriminated against in the enjoyment of their rights; and on the other hand, involves incorporating these dimensions into the evaluation process itself, from research design to methods for collecting and analyzing information and using and using results.

The evaluation process was guided by an evaluation matrix based on five criteria: (i) relevance, (ii) effectiveness, (iii) efficiency, (iv) sustainability and (v) cross-cutting approaches. In addition, it considered the triple mandate of UN Women (normative, programmatic and coordination dimensions).

The evaluation used both quantitative and qualitative information from various sources: documentary review, interviews and working sessions (key actors from the Regional Office and Country Offices and key partners), three thematic studies in two countries (Guatemala and Paraguay) and two surveys (to key partners and focal points in economic empowerment). In total, the evaluation includes the perspectives of 185 individual and institutional actors, including from 161 women and 24 men.

Context of evaluation

The area of economic empowerment is a priority area for UN Women towards achievement of gender equality, poverty eradication and inclusive economic growth. By prioritizing this area, UN Women recognizes the important contribution of women to the economy from their different roles (unpaid care work, business and trade, productive entrepreneurship). It also identifies that gender inequality and discrimination disproportionately affect women in terms of poverty and exploitation. In response, UN Women has programmes that promote women's ability to ensure decent jobs, accumulate assets, and influence the public institutions and policies that determine growth and development. A critical focus area involves promoting women's unpaid care work and taking steps to make it easier for women and men to combine it with paid employment. "UN Women's actions focus on supporting the most in need and marginalized women, including rural women, domestic workers, some migrants and low-skilled women", bearing in mind that "leaving no one behind" is a cross-cutting priority within the current Strategic Note (priority 5).

Based on the global report "Women's Progress in the World: Transforming Economies to Realize Rights," published in 2015 by UN Women globally, two years later UN Women's office ACRO published a regional vision of this report, called "The Progress of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean 2017", to help position the economics of women at the heart of the public agenda. This report provides with the identification of an innovative conceptual and analytical framework of three scenarios: sticky floors, broken stairs and glass ceilings, and states that women with greater disadvantages and obstacles

to economic empowerment are placed on that of "sticky floors". The six strategies that result in the report visualize for each the differentiated effects that would be expected for each of the three scenarios:

- vi. Recognize, reduce and redistribute domestic and unpaid care work.
- vii. Advance the construction of gender-focused universal social protection systems.
- viii. Create more and better jobs and transform work for women's rights.
- ix. Promote egalitarian family relationships that recognize the diversity of households in the region and the rights and duties of the parties.
- x. Create the conditions for the effective enjoyment of women's sexual and reproductive rights.
- xi. Contain the adverse effects of the economic slowdown on gender equality.

The progress report responded to the results of the evaluation *The Contribution of UN Women to Women's Economic Empowerment* which emphasized UN Women's achievements in economic empowerment in normative and policy spheres, while highlighting the need to develop a conceptual and strategic framework to articulate, give greater coherence and maximize the agency's advantages in working in economic empowerment.

Globally, UN Women's current Strategic Plan (2018-2021) drives women to access income security, decent work, and economic autonomy (Result 3). UN Women therefore focuses its contributions on three areas: (a) policies for decent work and women's social protection; (b) support for women entrepreneurs; (c) access, control and use of productive resources for rural women. In the region, despite advances in women's economic empowerment, family dynamics and patriarchal and violent patterns continue to limit their economic empowerment. As a result, UN Women focuses on protecting women's rights and access to productive and financial assets and resources, seeking access to income security, decent work, and economic autonomy. To this end, its interventions emphasize:

- ▶ Improve policies and legal frameworks to promote decent work, social protection and recognition, redistribution, and reduction of unpaid work, including specific areas of work: the economy of care and unpaid work, decent work for women, rights of domestic workers, equal pay for jobs of equal value, and gender-sensitive social protection systems.
- ▶ Increase women's access to assets, productive and financial resources in specific areas of work: women's entrepreneurship, Principles for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality in the Private Sector, innovative financing and gender impact investment, and access to land and productive resources for rural women and farmers.

List of Findings

- ▶ FINDING 1: UN Women's work on WEE is carried out within the framework of its Strategic Plan 2018-2021, international human rights treaties, as well as other international agreements and commitments. It equally supports the development and implementation of national norms and policies related to economic empowerment. Within this framework, UN Women's ability to capitalize on its triple mandate has been a key asset.
- ▶ FINDING 2: UN Women interventions related to decent work and social protection linked to domestic workers, rural and indigenous women, and migrants, are highly relevant to the regional context and needs vulnerable women's groups. UN Women has responded to inequality gaps affecting women as well as the mandate of the SDGs to leave no one behind.
- ▶ FINDING 3: National and regional partners value UN Women's specialization and legitimacy to address WEE issues, and both Country Offices and partners recognize the substantive contribution that the Regional Office offers in this respect. This provides favourable conditions to further consolidate the relevance of UN Women at regional and national levels.

- ▶ FINDING 4: The Regional Office's increased commitment, knowledge and technical contribution to the work of Country Offices work is recognized.
- ▶ FINDING 5: The 2017 Report on the Progress of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean is widely known, although not to the same degree by all sectors. It is valued and is considered useful due to its significant conceptual, analytical and strategic contributions. Internally, it could be further utilized to articulate the regional Theory of Change (ToC).
- ▶ FINDING 6: Important contributions to agenda-setting related to WEE were evidenced and recognized by partners, such as capacity strengthening, the development of strategies and drafting of norms and evidence-based public policies, as well as the empowerment of rights holders. Challenges persist in several countries in effectively implementing the legislation and norms developed.
- ▶ FINDING 7: UN Women has developed various strategies and actions to specifically address the inequality and discrimination gaps that affect the most disadvantaged and vulnerable women with different degrees of effectiveness. Increased attention on the importance of targeting is vital to achieve more significant results.
- ▶ FINDING 8: Quality evidence has been relevant in guiding working strategies. Henceforth, the promotion of knowledge management and the strategic use of information, should be enhanced.
- ▶ FINDING 9: Having a regional Theory of Change will serve as the basis for a regional strategy to guide decisions related to priorities and orientation towards impact.
- ▶ FINDING 10: The legitimacy of UN Women accentuates its advocacy capacity.
- ▶ FINDING 11: Partnerships and interactions with other stakeholders inside and outside the UN system have resulted in concrete initiatives for the integration and strengthening of gender-focused interventions aimed at enhancing WEE.
- ▶ FINDING 12: UN Women has introduced issues, approached new actors, and implemented innovative strategies, approaches and methodologies at different scales within countries in the region. The replication and/or scaling of innovations requires further analysis.
- ▶ FINDING 13: Working with macroeconomic sectors is fundamental and requires further strengthening, which in turn entails strengthening of internal capacities in this area.
- ▶ FINDING 14: Progress has been made at the country level and, to a lesser extent, at the regional level towards a WEE programmatic approach, integrating the area of work with interventions in other areas addressed by UN Women.
- ▶ FINDING 15: Despite valuing the technical assistance of the UN Women Regional Office to both the Caribbean Multi-Country Office and Haiti Country Office, there is a general perception of the need to promote and strengthen a broader regional approach. However, the challenges that this entails, such as language barriers and diverse socio-cultural contexts, are equally recognized.
- ▶ FINDING 16: With a limited budget of regular funds, the Regional Office increased and diversified its sources of WEE funding and maintained efficiency in budget execution, while delivering quality technical support. At the regional level, there has also been a budget increase based on non-regular funds.
- ▶ FINDING 17: The regional WEE teams' efforts to strengthen capacities in field offices stand out, although financial and administrative aspects had a negative impact on the scope in some cases.
- ▶ FINDING 18: The significant differences in Country Office budgets point to unequal opportunities and capacities, as well as the need to identify and clarify, in a more explicit way, the criteria for budget allocation both at the regional and country office levels, as well as the promotion of joint and innovative financing strategies.
- ▶ FINDING 19: Using its high-quality research-based knowledge products and technical assistance, UN Women is contributing to the action of partners towards WEE.

- ▶ FINDING 20: UN Women has implemented and validated relevant intervention models, replicable in other countries, and scalable to public policy. Further strengthening of the Regional Office's strategic role and the capacities of WEE focal points in knowledge management and innovation is needed.
- ▶ FINDING 21: UN Women has been able to engage a strong and diverse group of partners, laying the foundations for more structured and medium-term agreements, as well as validating its credibility and legitimacy with potential new strategic allies and partners.
- ▶ FINDING 22: UN Women's commitment to sustainability is positively valued. Financial issues are presented as the largest future threat.
- ▶ FINDING 23: Sustainability will depend on the ability to design and implement innovative financing models.
- ▶ FINDING 24: There is inadequate clarity regarding cross-cutting approaches, which reduces relevance of interventions, as well as limiting effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

Main conclusions

The UN Women Regional Office has moved towards greater clarity about its role and greater relevance of its contribution. Its support to a strategic vision of WEE in the region will be further reinforced by the regional Theory of Change outlined in the framework of this evaluation.

UN Women is recognized by national and regional partners as an actor with a unique position and legitimacy in the region to promote WEE and establish strategic alliances. This legitimacy has been strengthened with initiatives such as the 2017 Progress Report, which together with the Strategic Plan, provided a conceptual framework, promoted a programmatic approach and provided guidelines for the work of the offices (see box below).

The topic of unpaid care work illustrates a good regional practice of a collective, visionary, and pioneering effort, although still with a margin of greater strategic alignment.

A key milestone: The Report on the Progress of Women

"It is one of the most global efforts that UN Women have made to have a multidimensional and coherent interpretation of women's economic empowerment in Latin America." (Key informant interview)

The publication in 2017 of the report Progress of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean marked a turning point in the regional positioning of UN Women as a key player in promoting WEE as a central issue on the public agenda. The report marks a milestone in the region with regard to the knowledge and appreciation of the contribution of women to the economy, while showing the conditions of inequality and injustice that women in the region endure -in particular across socioeconomic, geographic, ethnic and racial groups -thus perpetuating poverty.

Through this report UN Women demonstrates that gender-based inequalities can be avoided. The report also shows that economic and social policies can contribute to creating stronger economies and more sustainable and gender-equitable societies, provided that they are designed and developed with women's rights at the heart of their priorities. 47% of partners consulted during the evaluation reported that they knew the report, of whom 92% reported having used it, mainly for the preparation of programs and the development of knowledge products and advocacy.

In general, UN Women has shown a capacity to introduce and consolidate new issues (unpaid care work, equal pay, etc.), influence the agendas of regional and national organizations, generate evidence, construct a narrative about the importance of the theme, articulate strategies and methodological routes; this is supported by its legitimacy and great communicational strength; it is the great awareness-raiser." (Partner interview)

UN Women has had an impact on the introduction of issues into public agendas, including by promoting statistics with a gender perspective to highlight the situation of women; promoting legislative and public policy frameworks for WEE; developing capacities of both state institutions and right holders; promoting linkages and alliances; developing knowledge to support the need for changes towards WEE; and involving the private sector by promoting changes also within companies. Considering the priorities of the Decade of Action, issues related to science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM) and innovation are considered strategic investments to increase capacities and opportunities of women in the future.

Further noteworthy results highlighted in the evaluation include: the approval of Convention 189 in several countries, as well as legal reforms and public policies in favor of domestic workers; the establishment of an unpaid care agenda in the region; and the strengthening of the entrepreneurial competencies of rural women and their access to productive resources. An important area for improvement refers to the explicit and systematic integration of cross-cutting issues and an intersectional approach, which would enhance attention to the most disadvantaged groups and strengthen capacity to provide differentiated responses.

"UN Women's interventions to promote the women's economic empowerment take special account of the specific demands and needs of indigenous women in the country." (Partner survey)

The Regional Office's technical support to Country Offices is valued, which translates into greater efficiency and strengthening of the strategic vision. Moreover, progress has been made through a regional mapping of knowledge products and the exchange and learning between the Regional Office and national focal points. However, the fact that most knowledge products are in Spanish limits their relevance and usefulness for Caribbean countries.

It is considered essential to strengthen an orientation towards impact generation. In relation to transformative strategies, a special focus on gender norms and the need to reinforce work on masculinities, as well as with the education sector, is required.

Partnerships with diverse actors constitute one of the most important value added of UN Women, including with women's movements, UN agencies, and other regional and global organizations.

The main added value of UN Women recognized by partners is its relationship with women's organizations in countries, which certainly relates to its actions conducting consultation processes with civil society." (Partner interview)

Increased attention to macroeconomics, as well as to thematic trends, should promote new regional and country partnerships, including among key actors within: ministries of finance, economy, entrepreneurship and rural development; the financial sector; women's economic networks; as well as academia, technology and innovation centers, and think tanks.

Recommendations

The following eight recommendations are made on the basis of the findings and in turn seek to respond to the conclusions, also considering the context of the pandemic. Accordingly, each recommendation

relates to the relevant findings, with the understanding that they are generally raised from a regional approach that in turn involves the Regional Office and Country Offices, as appropriate.

- 1. Review and adapt strategic priorities based on new needs resulting from the pandemic, strengthening regional learning, coordination, and collaboration between Country Offices, to enhance response to the crisis.**
- 2. Promote WEE themes and strategies linked to future trends in the fields of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and innovation (STEM+I) with a view to strengthen the capacities and competitiveness of women.**
- 3. Strengthen the orientation towards impact at regional and country office levels.**
- 4. Increase strategic focus on key macroeconomic issues, seeking to accelerate economic transformation with a gender perspective that benefit the most disadvantaged women "without leaving anyone behind."**
- 5. Strengthen a regional approach that combines the integration of all countries, with an emphasis on Caribbean countries and Haiti, so as to better manage contextual diversity across the region, improve orientation of scarce regular funds, and seek synergies with donor-funded programmes.**
- 6. Develop an innovative, integrated and ambitious financing strategy to optimize the use of limited regular resources and the joint mobilization of resources with donors, while considering alternative sources of financing from the private sector and impact investors.**
- 7. Strengthen the strategic nature of regional and national partnerships for WEE, and expand their scope to actors linked to macroeconomics, STEM, innovation, and academia, whilst bearing in mind that each partnership must be seen as an investment towards greater impact.**
- 8. Operationalize cross-cutting approaches and strengthen systematic implementation of an intersectional approach of interventions.**

I. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of this evaluation is to evaluate the contribution of the UN Women Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ACRO) to women's economic empowerment as a way of making progress towards gender equality in the region in the framework of sustainable development, Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals, and human rights principles. This regional evaluation has a formative character and seeks to improve UN Women's approach and reinforce its work in the area of economic empowerment.

In particular, the evaluation seeks to identify the UN Women contributions which have supported progress in the three priority areas: i) work with rural women, ii) unpaid domestic and care work, iii) income security for women and decent work during the period 2015 to 2019, which covers two strategic plans, both global and regional. The principal envisaged users of the evaluation are the UN Women Regional Office and country offices, as well as strategic partners and key stakeholders.

The execution of the evaluation was assigned to the consultancy firm, Nexus, which formed a multidisciplinary and multinational team of four consultants for the purpose: Silva Salinas, as Team Coordinator, Soraya Long as Evaluator 1 and specialist in economic empowerment, Christel Buch Kristensen, as Evaluator 2 and in charge of the survey, and Claudia Fernández as evaluation assistant.

This Evaluation Report applies practice from the *Evaluation Handbook: How to manage gender-responsive evaluation* (pages 86-89), and its preparation has been coordinated with the Evaluation Manager and Evaluation Management Group. It contains the principal findings and results of the evaluation and is organized into nine sections.

- ▶ **Chapter I:** addresses the **background and purpose** of the evaluation.
- ▶ **Chapter II:** summarizes the **evaluation methodology** with a summary of the approach adopted, the limitations and measures adopted, and the ethical aspects and conditions of evaluability, and includes the evaluation criteria and a description of the triple mandate of UN Women. It also includes the design of the evaluation and considerations concerning quality standards.
- ▶ **Chapter III:** presents the **regional context** of the women's economic empowerment programme.
- ▶ **Chapter IV:** contains a brief **general description of the programme** and includes an overview of the investments, the principal milestones of the work on economic empowerment identified along a **timeline**, the **change theory** developed in participatively with UN Women ACRO staff, and a **description of the work on the three priority themes** for the case studies.
- ▶ **Chapter V:** contains the objectives and scope of the evaluation.
- ▶ **Chapter VI:** contains the principal findings based on the evaluation criteria.
- ▶ **Chapter VII:** recalls the **lessons learned, good practices and innovations**.
- ▶ **Chapter VIII:** is devoted to conclusions and recommendations.
- ▶ **Annexes:** These include the Terms of Reference, the list of documents consulted, the lists of institutions and stakeholders consulted, the case reports, the reports on the survey (to the country offices and stakeholders), and a comparative analysis report (on key aspects), the evaluation matrix, the framework of results, a matrix with financial information on projects in the area of economic empowerment of the Regional Office, and the comment sheet on the final evaluation report.

II. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

III. APPROACH

This is a **formative evaluation**, aimed at organizational learning and whose purpose is to **improve or strengthen the programme**. It concentrates on identifying **strengths and weaknesses**, with the objective of proposing corrective measures and/or visualize under-exploited opportunities. In this context, it also identifies and analyses good practices and innovations, to assess their value and potential for replication and upscaling.

The evaluation also has as its reference points: **Evaluation centred on principles** (*Principle-Focused Evaluation – PFE*); **theory-based evaluation** (*Realist Evaluation - RE*); and **evaluation centred on utilization** (*Utilization-Focused Evaluation – UFE*).

Principle-Focused Evaluation¹ is especially suitable in helping innovative initiatives to navigate their way through the uncertainties and the turbulence of complex dynamic systems; it provides an approach sensitive to the context and environment, addressing principles such as the purpose of the evaluation. In the framework of a formative evaluation, it underpins greater adherence to the principles.

Theory-Driven Evaluation² starts from programme theory, which is the set of assumptions, often implicit, which guide the choice and design of an intervention. Thus, programme theory is a hypothesis which can be tested and refined. It is in this framework that Realist Evaluation comes in, developed by Pawson & Tilley (1997), which argues that for evaluations to be useful for decision-makers, they must indicate “what works, in which circumstances, and for whom?”, instead of merely answering the question “does it work?”. Realist Evaluation, therefore, has the objective of identifying the underlying generative mechanisms of the intervention and the influence of the context on the results’

Based on the construction of a **Theory of Change** proposal (constituted participatively with the UN Women regional team), the evaluation compared this with the processes and explicit and implicit rationale of interventions both at regional and country level, to understand what works/does not work, in which circumstances and for whom, based on the **findings and existing experience and evidence, feedback from the initial proposal** leading towards a regional knowledge theory for the work of women’s economic empowerment

Utilization-Focused Evaluation³, is an approach based on the principle that “evaluations should be judged on its usefulness to the intended users. Therefore, evaluations should be planned and conducted in ways that enhance the likely utilization of both the findings and the process itself to inform decisions and improve performance”.

Finally, it should also be highlighted that evaluation applies **approaches to gender and human rights**⁴. The consideration of these approaches in the evaluation concerns, firstly, analysis of the extent to which interventions have had a positive or negative effect on gender equality and women’s empowerment, and any group discriminated against in the enjoyment of their human rights, and, secondly, it assumes the incorporation of these aspects in the evaluation process itself, from the design of the research to

¹ <https://www.cehd.umn.edu/OLPD/MESI/spring/2017/Patton-Principles.pdf>

² Chen Huey T. *Theory-Driven Evaluation: Conceptual Framework, Methodology and Application*. new.ceval.de/modx/uploads/pdf/Chen_presentation.pdf

³ https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/utilization_focused_evaluation

⁴ See approach in Systematization of evaluations on human rights and gender equality and human rights in Latin America, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2011/12/systematization-of-evaluations-on-human-rights-and-gender-equality-in-latin-america>

the methods of collection and analysis of the information and the use and utilization of the results. In includes the following elements

- Specific attention to gender inequalities and intersectionality.
- Analysis of human rights standards in relation to women.
- Cross-cutting and respectful relations in the process.
- The political dimension of the evaluation is recognized, and power relations analysed.
- Women’s experience and forms of knowledge are evaluated and reflected.
- Disaggregation of information by sex to ensure adequate analysis.
- Mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative), participative and inclusive processes, capacity-building, drawing on experience.
- Utilizes knowledge generated to promote social justice.
- Puts people first, especially groups subject to discrimination.
- Identifies holders of rights and obligations
- Contemplates the normative framework and advances in international instruments
- Emphasizes common understanding of human rights.
- Promotes empowerment of the participants, both men and women.
- Analyses both the processes and the results.

Specifically, the evaluation considers the introductory process and attention to intersectionality, and the approach and subject of the evaluation, and looks at the transformational character of the interventions. In addition, human rights, as a subject of evaluation and focus, guided the ethical, procedural and relational aspects of the evaluation. The interviews took the form of dialogue, listening, respect and horizontality. In addition, special efforts were made, in the context, to obtain the voices of women rights holders in the selected countries, allowing greater flexibility and consideration of the difficult environment for all women (and men) involved in all aspects of their lives.

II.2. LIMITATIONS AND MEASURES ADOPTED

Given the special circumstances this year because of COVID-19 and some difficulties arising from the outset, the evaluation was adjusted in line with the possibilities and mitigation measures proposed in the initial report. The following table summarizes the principal restrictions and measures adopted to ensure the quality of the information collected and to have sufficient and necessary inputs to the Evaluation process.

TABLE 1 – SUMMARY OF LIMITATIONS AND MEASURES ADOPTED

| AREA | LIMITATION | MITIGATION MEASURE |
|--|--|---|
| Definition and scope of the evaluation | Initial difficulties regarding the thematic definition and geographical scope. | New agreements based on ToRs with the UN Women Evaluation Manager and Evaluation Management Group to focus the scope and subject of the case studies |
| | Impossibility of carrying out the evaluation in the Caribbean due to the start of another portfolio evaluation. | Communication and face-to-face meeting with the Evaluation Manager of the Caribbean portfolio to establish commitments and agree mechanisms to ensure having inputs from the Caribbean for the regional evaluation. |
| Selection of case studies | The lack of direct participation of the Caribbean in the evaluation called into question the value of continuing with the theme of social protection | With the Evaluation Management Group , another subject of interest was identified to replace that of social protection: work with rural women. |

| | | |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| | Limitation of the number and availability of countries for the selection of case studies | Agreements with the Evaluation Manager and the Evaluation Management Group to identify experiences relating to priority subjects for the analysis of the case studies. |
| | Limitations concerning the availability, quality and comparability of the existing information, and the absence of detailed definitions for the selection | Exchanges and discussions with the Evaluation Reference Group to agree the countries for the case studies (Guatemala and Paraguay), and also agreeing the distribution of themes by country. |
| Online questionnaire | Low level of response by persons contacted (the response rate was 26%). | It is considered complementary information to validate the findings |
| Information and documentation | Initial difficulties in obtaining some strategic documents on the region such as tables of results and absence of regionally integrated budgetary information (a major limitation in evaluating both efficiency and sustainability). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fluid communication and cooperation of the regional team and the Evaluation Management Group allowed dealing with these limitations in a timely manner. - Request to the Country Offices to identify investment in WEE. - Agreements with the Regional Office to include aggregated financial information - Request to the offices to obtain financial information broken down by themes and/or outputs. |
| | In the available strategic documents, no detailed definitions of the eight priority sub-strategies were found on the regional work or specific themes. | Communication with the Evaluation Management Group and interviews with focal points to resolve the situation |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The same information is not available in countries and the available documentation is not homogenous. - Denomination, categorization and disaggregation in the existing documentation is not consistent between countries, making comparative analysis difficult. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of specific measures according to country/need/problem, in turn interviews with focal points are used to validate and clarify the required and missing information. |
| Indicators | Limitations concerning the sufficiency and relevance of the available indicators to address the questions in the evaluation and the cross-cutting approaches. | The evaluation team has adjusted and supplemented some indicators and incorporated the proposals suggested by the Evaluation Management Group in their feedback to the initial report, and has developed other proposals. |
| Management of the evaluation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to elaborate a region Theory of Change. - Strategies to address the limitations on travel in the field work due to COVID-19. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Virtual workshop to construct the regional Theory of Change. - Meetings with the new Evaluation Manager and Evaluation Management Group to adapt the field work. - Permanent communication and coordination with the Evaluation Manager and Evaluation Management Group as needed. - Filed work conducted virtually or by telephone, with the support of the Country Offices, especially for the case studies. |

II.3. ETHICAL ASPECTS AND EVALUABILITY

The evaluation is in accordance with the Norms and Standards for Evaluation of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) which define evaluation as a process to **understand why and to what extent intended and unintended results are achieved**, as well as their impact on the stakeholders. It is the most systematic and impartial evaluation possible of a project, programme, strategy or policy or other type of initiative which feeds into management processes and decision-making, and makes a fundamental contribution to management by results.

Among its principal norms, it contemplates the **of organs of governance and representatives of the UN System** for the evaluation, the need for the organization to have an institutional policy on evaluation, that there exists the intention to utilize the findings of the evaluation, act with impartiality ensuring an absence of bias in the process and enjoys independence to facilitate the process free of undue influence which ensures impartial and transparent reports.

Other fundamental aspects for the evaluation processes related to the systematic monitoring of the **implementation of recommendations** and contribution to the building of knowledge and improvement in organizational performance.

In addition, this evaluation will take account of other principles, consistent with the ethical evaluation guidelines of UN Women:

Evaluability
 Related to the clarity of the intent of the evaluated intervention, and includes assessment of the quality of design, planning and execution, as well as the selection requirements and criteria, transparency and consultation with stakeholders and ethics. Ethics means, in turn, respect for confidentiality, discretion and sensitivity to different cultural environments.

TABLE 2 – ETHICAL CRITERIA

| ETHICAL GUIDELINES | RELATED TO: |
|---|---|
| Independence and impartiality | Clear reasons for evaluative judgments and acceptance or rejection justified on the basis of evidence of comments on results of the evaluation. All findings will be triangulated, considering all the voices and stakeholders interviewed, surveys and documentary sources. |
| Credibility and accountability | The initial report, and the draft and final report, will be submitted for review and comments by the Evaluation Evaluation Reference Group . A record of feedback received, and the responses of the evaluation team (audit trail) will be kept, which document will be included as an annex in the final report. |
| Confidentiality, integrity and transparency | The evaluation will respect the rights of the stakeholders to participate or not in the evaluation and provide information in confidentiality and only after the granting of free and informed consent (Annex 5). The evaluation will take special care to ensure free and voluntary participation, without exerting any pressure, as well as preservation of confidentiality, both in the management of the information (e.g., records of interviews), and anonymity. In this context, the evaluation will take account of all opinions and knowledge of the stakeholders, including the evaluation team, authorities and UN Women staff in the various Country Offices, and key informants) |
| Avoiding harm | The evaluation team will ensure that the participative processes and evaluation questions meet the needs and sensitivities of the participants. All meetings and interactions will be based on the creation of an atmosphere of trust, openness and empathy, always suited to the profile of the specific person or group, and paying special attention to specific situations and contexts. It must be borne in mind that the evaluation addresses initiatives which seek to challenge and transform existing relations of inequalities and power, which means, per se, a risk to those involved. |
| Precision, completeness and reliability | The questions will be answered, and the findings formulated based on the triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data from various sources, and rigorously linking the evaluation questions, indicators and assumptions to the related evidence. |

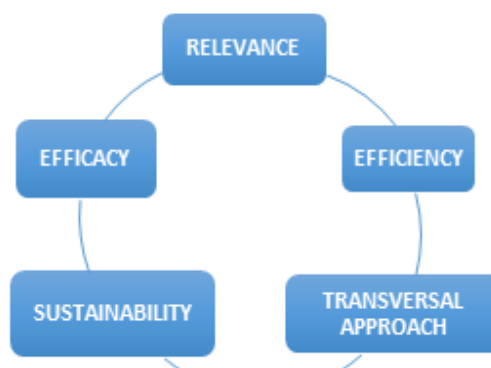
Finally, another important aspect which is left in the hands of both the Regional and Country Offices concerns the **distribution of the findings and recommendations** to the participants in the evaluation. The Regional Office, in coordination with the Country Office where the case studies are conducted must

provide for a strategy to distribution to the people and groups who will be contacted in the process. For that, they will have an executive summary and a brief.

II.4. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND TRIPLE MANDATE

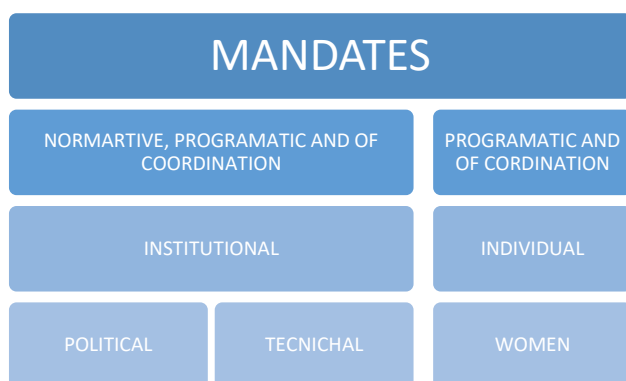
The evaluation criteria fall into five evaluation areas: **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and cross-cutting approaches**, the latter including **gender, human rights, intersectionality, cultural relevance, interculturality, and adaptation to and mitigation of climate change**. Based on this, the evaluation questions are taken from the Evaluation Terms of Reference, with some adjustments and suggestions for inclusion which derive from conversations with key stakeholders during the preparation of the initial report.

FIGURE 1 – EVALUATION CRITERIA



The Evaluation Matrix (Annex F) incorporates the evaluation questions organized with their respective assumptions and indicators; the indicators are partly indicators defined in the framework of the results of the Strategic Notes, including OEEF indicators. Some were adapted and others were designed by the evaluation team; their elaboration is based on a preliminary documentary review and interviews with key stakeholders in the Regional Office. A third group of indicators is in response to suggestions received by the Evaluation Evaluation Management Group in its feedback to the draft initial report. It should be noted that the matrix includes cross-cutting indicators as described in the following section.

FIGURE 2 – LEVELS OF ANALYSIS IN REACTION TO THE UN WOMEN TRIPLE MANDATE



the evaluation considers the UN Women triple mandate – normative, programmatic and coordination – related to the two levels of analysis approach: one *institutional* and the other *individual*.

The **institutional level**, linked to the **three mandates – normative, programmatic and coordination** – has, in turn, a political component and a technical component.

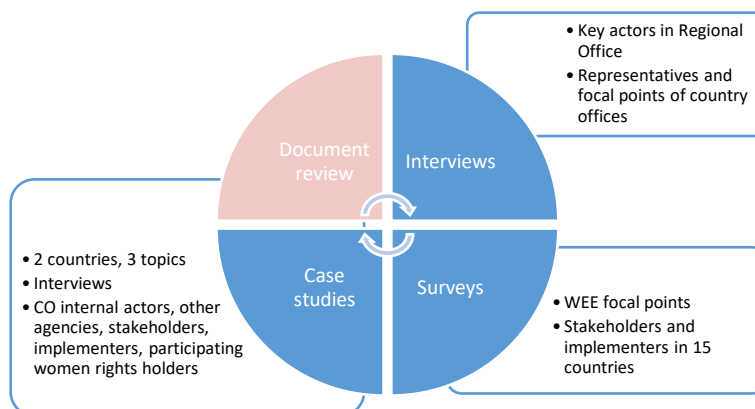
► The political component refers to the positioning of UN Women and its capacity to position the women’s economic empowerment agenda at regional level and in

each country and, in that connection, promote the articulation of stakeholders.

- ▶ The technical component, for its part, is associated with the **development of institutional capacities** – national and subnational – for the design and implementation of quality initiatives related to women’s economic empowerment, aligned with the international standards of the United Nations and priority cross-cutting approaches.

At this level, the principal units of analysis are the County Offices in the region and the Regional Office.

FIGURE 3 – SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGICAL TOOLS



On the other hand, the **individual level** essentially concerns the programmatic mandate, with the effects of economic empowerment programmes and initiatives for women rights holders. It refers, among other things, to knowledge of rights, technical skills, access to markets, strengthening of organizations and agendas and decision-making.

At this level, the units of analysis are the women rights holders in the countries, with emphasis on women in particular situations of disadvantage. Given the priority evaluation themes, the case studies address rural women (Guatemala) and women domestic workers (Guatemala and Paraguay).

II.5. DESIGN OF THE EVALUATION WITH QUALITY STANDARDS

II51. Analytical strategy and scope

To pursue the objectives and answer the questions, the research strategy considers three analytically differentiated areas of intervention. In addition, it will use various data collection tools for the triangulation of the evidence to strengthen the conclusions and validate the findings.

- ▶ The first area of intervention concerns the work of the Regional Office in the regional scenario, in the framework of specialist meetings, conferences and suchlike events.
- ▶ The second area refers to cooperation by the Regional Office with the Country Offices and its support for national initiatives and, at the same time, it will consider the construction of the regional agenda from the countries. It will also include the construction of the regional framework based on greater integration of the Caribbean.
- ▶ The third area of intervention is linked to the specific work of the Country Offices. IT will allow, in some cases, comparative analysis between countries.

II52. Design and data sources

The methodology proposed for this evaluation is participative and dynamic, and applies social research techniques using quantitative and qualitative methods. With respect to the former, objective and objectifiable data are collected for the quantitative analysis – albeit without necessarily being statistically representative – essentially from existing monitoring systems and two surveys to be

conducted. With the qualitative methods, data are collected through direct involvement of the evaluation team to identify particular characteristics and specificities of the intervention, seeking to build an in-depth picture of the reality, relationships and how they are linked and interpreted by the different stakeholders, internal and external impacts which have had an impact and the positioning of the strategies implemented, among other things.

The combined action of both methods allows, firstly, answering the evaluation questions, developing arguments and investigation of situations which affect the implementation of the intervention, and identifying related trends or behaviours. Secondly, it can identify lessons learned and good practices, recognize the added value of UN Women and its partners in the intervention, and design recommendations constructed collectively. All this ensures credible, reliable and evidence-based information, particularly the degree to which the intervention has led to progress (or otherwise) towards the expected results.

To enhance the **quality of the evidence and triangulate information sources**, the data collection tools include primary and secondary sources:

1. Review and analysis of documents. Documents generated in the framework of the intervention, and others of an external character which are referenced or identified as means of verification.
2. Semi-structured individual and group interviews. The emphasis of these activities is on answering questions related to the evaluation criteria as appropriate through interviews with key stakeholders in the Regional Office, country and multi-country representatives, and country focal points.
3. Working sessions with strategic technical teams. These are with the regional team to present the programme of the evaluation process in detail and for the participative construction of a Theory of Change framework, as well as permanent coordination and collaboration.
4. Semi-structured individual interviews with women's rights holders participating in UN Women activities. These interviews are with organizations and the target population to ascertain in depth the impact of the strategy or initiatives evaluated.
5. Surveys. The first survey targets key partners and stakeholders, and the second targets WEE focal points to complement the interviews.

Each method uses specific guides adapted according to the persons or groups, supported by the Evaluation Matrix and the specific cases selected, and include specific questions on COVID-19 and its economic impact on women. It also includes consultations on the Most Significant Change (MSC), which consists of sharing experiences lived and choosing the most representative type of change sought.

It should be explained that, to ensure the participative character of the evaluation, in the framework of the interviews with rights holders, women were contacted in Guatemala and Paraguay, basically for the case studies on rural women and decent work with emphasis on women domestic workers. Although initially it was proposed to form focal and discussion groups with them, COVID-19 and the health restrictions prevented travel for field work on the ground, which forced changes to the methodology. The principal change was that contact with the women's rights holders was virtual, using various technologies according to their possibilities, including telephone calls. This change did not prevent women expressing their evaluations, perceptions and opinions, which made a substantial contribution to the evaluation and allowed recognition of the positive changes that UN Women has generated in the lives of women and their families.

In addition to rigorous recording and triangulation, the process and preparation of the evaluation report took into account the criteria of the GERAAS *Evaluation Report Quality Evaluation Checklist*.

Likewise, the feedback of the results of the evaluation will be managed openly and transparently, and the response – evidence-based – of the evaluation team. These documents (evaluation comments sheet) will be part of the annexes to the final report.



II53. Case study

The case studies address three priority themes: **i) rural women, ii) care economy, and iii) decent work, with a focus on women domestic workers.** This selection responds to five key criteria (Table 6):

The case studies reflect the potential for extension, as well as the potential to generate knowledge and learning on the areas of intervention in WEE. In this way, the thematic priorities chosen are analysed in greater depth and detail, exploring the factors which have favoured and/or inhibited the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and cross-cutting applications.

The case studies were carried out in two countries, where there was in-depth work with guardians and holders of rights. In Guatemala, rural women and decent work, women domestic workers were prioritized, while in Paraguay, the priority themes were the care economy and decent work/women domestic workers. Both in Guatemala and Paraguay, different methods of collecting information from women’s groups, rights holders, participants in UN Women interventions in economic empowerment were applied. The exception was the care economy (Paraguay), which is essentially based on the experience of UN Women’s work with governments, networks and stakeholders in guaranteeing of rights, given that the degree of implementation precluded reaching rights holders.

While the empirical findings and conclusions of the case studies cannot be generalized, they shed light on processes and dynamics which cannot be captured in an aggregate analysis, thereby expanding the empirical base for the identification of good practices and lessons learned which contribute to UN Women and its partners.

The reference period for the case studies is 2015 to the first half of 2019, according to the temporal scope of the evaluation. However, they take into account wider backgrounds to contextualize factors which impact on the success or failure of the interventions. In this regard, the evaluation team views the case study as a learning methodology and thus perceived as a qualitative research methods.

Each case study has a separate report which contains as an annex a list of persons interviewed and bibliography. The case studies are included in the annexes (Annex D)

TABLE 3 – CASE STUDY SELECTION CRITERIA

- ▶ **Volume and substance:** The case study contains sufficient experience –years, geographical scope, number of participants – to be evaluated
- ▶ **Budget:** Investments have been substantial and potentially incremental.
- ▶ **Results:** The results achieved are significant.
- ▶ **Strategic relevance:** The case has the potential for replication and upscaling
- ▶ **Knowledge and innovation:** It is an innovative experiment and/or provides valuable knowledge and learning inputs
- ▶ **Themes not evaluated:** These are themes which have not been or will be analysed in specific evaluations of multi-country projects or programmes.

II54. Survey

To include in the investigation other strategic elements relevant to the evaluation, the survey of partners and key personal to evaluate the comparative advantage of UN Women in the work of women’s economic empowerment was applied in all the country offices of the Latin America and Caribbean Region through a survey differentiated for each of the following groups:

1. WEE focal points in the UN Women country offices in the Region.
2. Key partners and allies.

The *survey of UN Women WEE focal points* collects information on the strategic focussing of UN Women interventions based on the Progress Report, the added value and comparative advantages of UN Women in the area of WEE, validation of the assumptions of the regional Theory of Change, elements of effectiveness, coordination mechanisms, application of cross-cutting approaches, and sustainability... It also seeks to collect good practices and key lessons and compilation of recommendations in the following areas: increasing the efficiency or effectiveness of interventions, improving work or coordination with other UN agencies, funds and programmes (AFP), enhance the impact and added value and lastly strengthen the joint work of the Country Office and the Regional Office. At the request of the Regional Office, it includes a section on the impact of COVID-19.

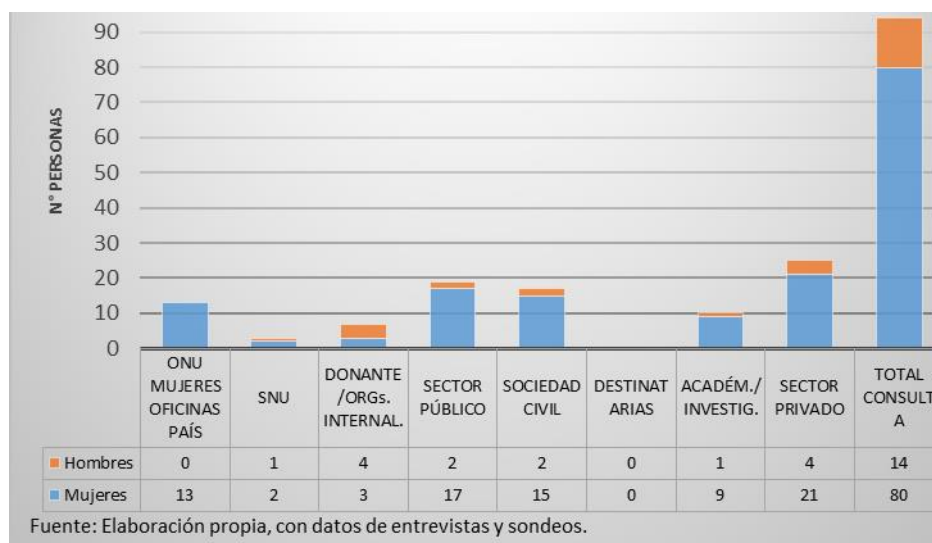
The survey was sent to 16 UN Women offices in the LAC Region. In total, 12 respondents from the country offices and one multi-country office replied to the on-line questionnaire⁵.

The survey of key partners and allies collects information on the added value and comparative advantages of UN Women in the area of women’s economic empowerment, elements of effectiveness and the most significant change from the interventions, the perception of efficiency and sustainability and the facilitating and inhibiting factors for each of these. It also seeks to gather recommendations to increase the impact and added value of UN Women in the area of women’s economic empowerment. At the request of the Regional Office, it includes a section on the impact of COVID-19.

⁵ Respondents from the following UN Women offices completed the survey: Argentina/Paraguay; Bolivia; Brazil; Chile; Colombia; Costa Rica; Ecuador; El Salvador; Guatemala; Honduras; Mexico; Uruguay; and Caribbean MCO. The UN Women offices in Haiti, Dominican Republic and Peru did not reply.

The survey was sent to all the partners and allies identified by the Country Offices and ACRO, collecting information from 14 of the 15 countries in which UN Women is present in the Latin America Region⁶, with a response rate of 26% (percentage within the estimated range). The information obtained is not analysed by country, but specific information is extracted on the two countries (Guatemala and Paraguay) in the case studies.

FIGURE 4 – SURVEYS: NUMBER OF REPLIES BY TYPE OF STAKEHOLDER



In total, 94 people replied to the surveys, 13 to the survey sent to the UN Women Country Offices and 81 to the survey sent to stakeholders. The reports of both surveys, together with a comparative analysis of them (relating to the contribution and added value to UN Women) can be found in Annex E.

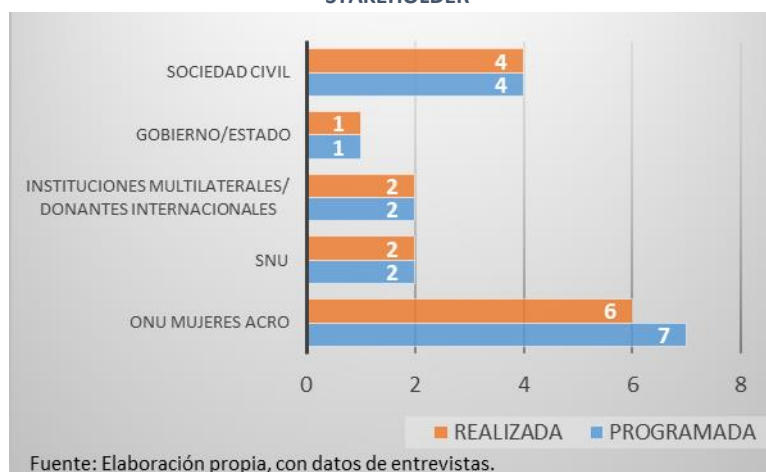
II55. Interviews

The semi-structured regional interviews were conducted both in the Regional Office and with stakeholders at this level (United Nations System, partner/donor international entities, State entities, civil society). Fifteen interviews were held at this level, 6 with UN Women ACRO staff and 9 with stakeholders (List in annexes).

TABLE 4 – BREAKDOWN OF INTERVIEWS AT REGIONAL LEVEL

| INTERVIEWS: NUMBER OF PERSONS REACHED AT REGIONAL LEVEL | |
|---|------------|
| SECTOR | N° PERSONS |
| ONU Women ACRO | 6 |
| UN System | 2 |
| Multilateral institutions/ international donors | 2 |
| Government/State | 1 |
| Civil Society | 4 |
| TOTAL | 15 |

FIGURE 5 – RATIO OF INTERVIEWS PLANNED AND CONDUCTED BY TYPE OF STAKEHOLDER



At national level, the key sectors contacted include staff of the Country Offices and related stakeholders, comprising representatives of the United Nations System, State entities, civil society and

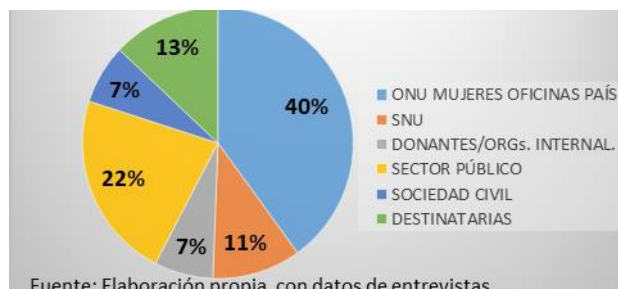
⁶ Replies were received from the stakeholders of the Country Offices Bolivia, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, Paraguay, Haiti, Honduras, Ecuador and from the Regional Office.

academia, private sector, rights holders and partner/donor entities. In total, 76 persons were reached, 34 from UN Women and 42 from stakeholders.

TABLE 5 – BREAKDOWN OF INTERVIEWS AT NATIONAL LEVEL

| SECTOR | TOTAL | Women | Men |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| UN WOMEN COUNTRY OFFICES | 34 | 33 | 1 |
| STAKEHOLDERS CASE STUDIES | 42 | 36 | 6 |
| TOTAL CONSULTED | 76 | 69 | 7 |

FIGURE 6 – BREAKDOWN OF INTERVIEWS BY STAKEHOLDER AT NATIONAL LEVEL



II56. Field work in countries

Based on the choice of priority themes and the possibilities of the country offices to service and support the evaluation team, it was decided that the field work would take place in two countries: Guatemala and Paraguay.

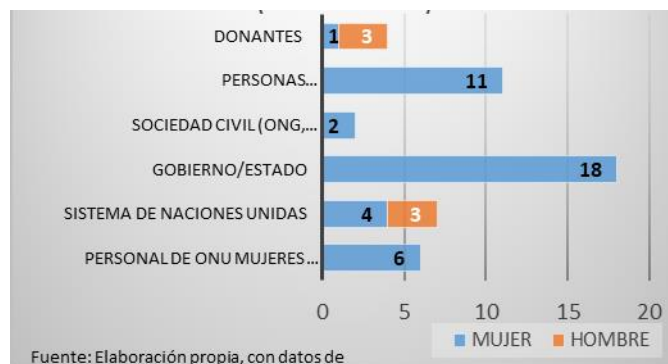
Because of the global crisis caused by COVID-19, in the end it was decided that the field work in those countries would be conducted only in virtual form. Thus, the evaluation team held virtual interviews with key stakeholders in those countries, and also the target population of UN Women interventions, chiefly women rights holders.

The number of persons consulted in the three cases studies was 48 persons from different sectors, 31 from Guatemala and 17 from Paraguay (see Table7 and Figure 7 below).

TABLE 6 - N° OF CASE STUDY INTERVIEWS (BY COUNTRY)

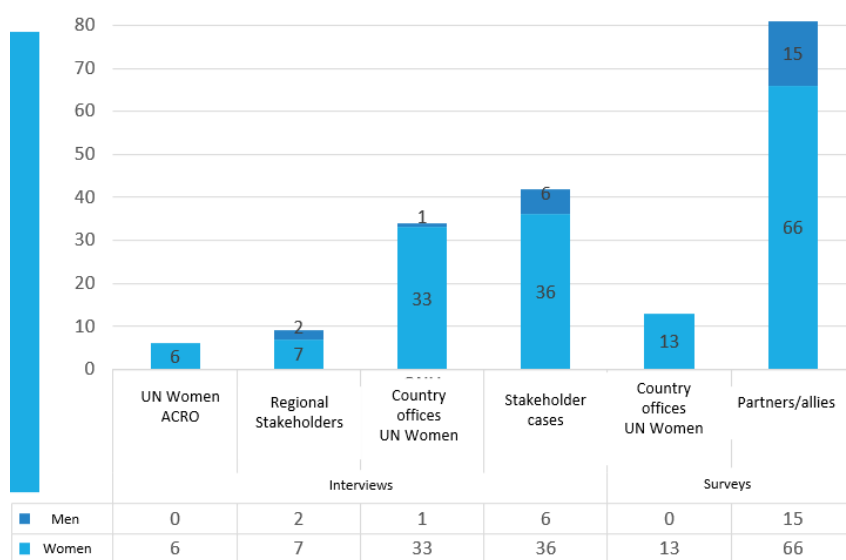
| | TOTAL COUNTRY | Women | Men |
|---------------------------|---------------|-----------|----------|
| Guatemala | 31 | 26 | 5 |
| Paraguay | 17 | 16 | 1 |
| TOTAL CASE STUDIES | 48 | 42 | 6 |

FIGURE 7 - N° OF CASE STUDY INTERVIEWS (BY SECTOR)



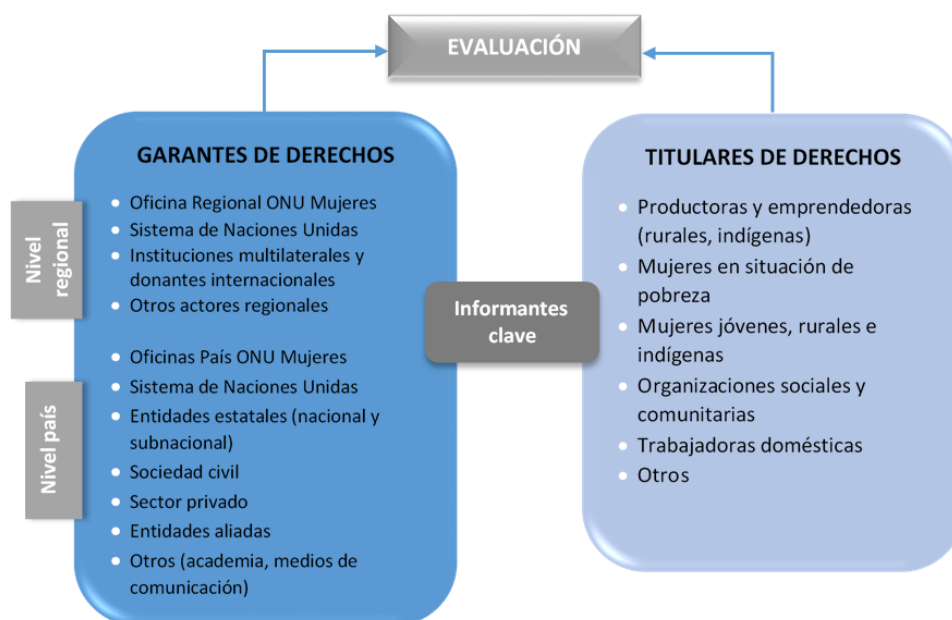
Overall, in the process of gathering information, information was collected from 185 persons (161 women and 24 men) both through the interviews and the survey. Figure 8 summarizes the information by type of stakeholder and activity, while Figure 9 shows the diversity of stakeholders consulted.

FIGURE 8 – NUMBER OF PERSONS CONSULTED BY SECTOR AND MODALITY



Source: own data from surveys and interviews.

FIGURE 9 – SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED



Source: Information from the Regional Strategy and Action Model of UN Women ACRO 2019-2021 for economic empowerment (PPT).

Note: The classification of stakeholders is in accordance with Tool 9, Stakeholder Analysis Matrix in the UN Women Evaluation Handbook: on How to manage gender-responsive evaluation.

III. CONTEXT OF THE REGIONAL STRATEGY IN THE AREA OF WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

The Global Strategy of UN Women in the area of women's economic empowerment is a response to the commitment of the United Nations Member States – assumed through the General Assembly and Executive Board of UN Women – to achieve gender equality and fight for women's rights, enshrined in global treaties. Thus, this strategy is part of its institutional mandate and is based on the corporate institutional framework.

Inequality is a cross-cutting theme of Agenda 2030, so it is no accident that in Latin America and the Caribbean, UN Women puts women's economic empowerment at the centre of the public agenda, especially when the objective in the region is to develop not only more prosperous and resilient economies, but also more egalitarian.

To overcome inequality, it is necessary to reaffirm that promotion of gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls is of fundamental importance and has a multiplier effect in achieving sustained and inclusive economic growth, eradication of poverty and sustainable development. In addition, it must be recognised that the persistence of the feminization of poverty and the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is essential for women's economic empowerment and sustainable development⁷.

It is estimated that in 2018, 182 million people in Latin America were living in poverty and 63 million in extreme poverty. Poverty and extreme poverty are highest among boys, girls, adolescents and young people, women, people living in rural areas, indigenous peoples and people of African descent. These expressions of poverty relate to structural dimensions of inequality. In 2014, the percentage of poor women was 18% higher than men in the same situation⁸.

Labour policies and labour market institutions were crucial in reducing poverty, with a fall in unemployment, greater formalization of work and an increase in income from employment and the minimum wage in many countries⁹. The minimum wage benefits the most disadvantaged groups, which are proportionately over-represented at the base of the wage pyramid¹⁰. Accordingly, the persistent gaps between women and men are undeniable, but also among women themselves, due to differences generated by socioeconomic situation, ethnic origin and location (rural or urban), among others.

Thus, for example, in socioeconomic terms, the differences are clear and expressed both in the labour market indicators and those of family dynamics. Women who live in lower income households or have lower levels of formal education are faced with systemic disadvantages with respect to participation in work, employment and access to their own income. Moreover, the flatlining of women's participation in lower incomes can be seen more acutely among those who have children under the age of five, which reflects the greater difficulties of these women in reconciling motherhood with paid work. The unequal participation of women in the labour market is also clearly reflected as a function of level of education.

⁷ In this regard, see United Nations (23 January 2018): General Assembly Resolution of 20 December 2017. A/RES/72/234.

⁸ ECLAC (2019). *Quadrennial report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean*, PP. 120 et seq.

⁹ ECLAC (2019), op.cit., p. 120

¹⁰ ECLAC (2019), op.cit., p.122

While over 70% of women with 13 years or more of education were employed in the labour market in 2014, the proportion among women with 0 to 5 years' education was less than 40%¹¹.

Consequently, the focus on intersectionality and interculturality, which guarantees human rights for all women in their diversity, are elements which must be considered in developing effective policies which can advance economic empowerment of all women.

The disadvantages that characterize the situation of women mean that the countries of the region have been assuming commitments relevant to women's rights. All the countries have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and some of them have ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention¹². For its part, the Inter-American Human Rights System combats violence against women through the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women. In addition, several countries have taken action to promote gender equality by amendment of constitution, creation of ministries of women's affairs, local institutions and gender mechanisms, reform of civil codes, punishment of gender violence and promulgation of quotas and parity in political office¹³.

All this has contributed to progress in the region in recent decades. Thus, in the majority of the countries, women have equalled or surpassed men in educational achievement, increased their participation in employment and political office and improved their access to social protection¹⁴. Between 2004 and 2014, women in Latin America and the Caribbean increased their participation in the labour market – although to a lesser extent than in the previous decade – and improved their access to incomes: in both indicators, the gap with men decreased. Currently, 56% of women in the region participate in the labour market, compared with 85% of men. In addition, the proportion of women without their own income fell from over 40% in 2002 to less than 30% in 2014, with a parallel reduction in the gap from 26 to 16 percentage points. Among women of reproductive age, a group which frequently reduces paid work to adjust to the responsibilities of childcare, the proportion of own income fell by almost 14 percentage points. This reduction is the result of a combination of factors such as greater labour participation and greater access to social protection, including money transfers which women receive as mothers or carers of small children. Women aged over 60 years have also recorded significant improvements in access to their own incomes, largely due to the expansion of non-contributory pensions¹⁵.

Despite women's greater contribution to family incomes, family dynamics and patriarchal and violent patterns continue to limit women's economic empowerment. Moreover, many women in the region who seek to enter the labour market fail to do so or are employed in low quality jobs. In recent years, the slower pace of job creation has led to an increase in women's unemployment which remains higher than that of men. In 2012, the average unemployment rate of women in Latin America and the Caribbean was 7.9% while that of men was around 5.4%. In 2017, these rates had risen to 10.4% and 7.6% respectively, and the gap between the two remained at over 2.8 percentage points¹⁶.

The foregoing brings us to the priority themes of the evaluation:

¹¹ See UN Women (2017): *Progress of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean 2017 "Transforming economies to realize rights*, pp. 42 and 43

¹² These are: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, Uruguay and Venezuela.

¹³ UN Women (2019). *Strategic Note of the Regional Office for the Americas and the Caribbean, 2019-2021*.

¹⁴ UN Women (2017). *op.cit.* p. 3

¹⁵ In this regard, see UN Women (2017), *op.cit.* p.4

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p.130 et seq.

► UNPAID DOMESTIC AND CARE WORK

Women in the region still spend much of their time on unpaid domestic and care work. Time use surveys in 18 countries of the region shows that women devote between one fifth and one third of their time to unpaid domestic chores and care, while for men, this proportion is around one tenth¹⁷. In low-income countries, the time devoted by women to this work is much higher due to lack of access to basic infrastructure (e.g., mains electricity, health system, drinking water supply) or technology (e.g., washing machine)¹⁸. Although gender gaps in the distribution of care time and domestic tasks are decreasing, in Latin America they are decreasing too slowly. Only 3.2% of men of working age say that they are out of paid work to carry out care and domestic tasks, while 50% of women are in that situation¹⁹

Consequently, recognizing, reducing and redistributing unpaid domestic and care work between the family, State and market, and between men and women, is an imperative task. In consideration of this scenario, Agenda 2030 proposes recognizing and valuing unpaid care and domestic work through public services, infrastructure and social protection policies, because promoting shared responsibility of men and women in the home is fundamental in a region where the gender divide is one of the structural nodes of gender inequality.

► INCOME SECURITY AND DECENT WORK

It is estimated that over 600 million new jobs must be created between now and 2030 merely to match the rate of growth of the global population of working age. This represents some 40 million jobs a year. It means improving the conditions of the 780 million men and women who work but do not earn enough to rise above the poverty threshold of two dollars a day²⁰.

In the case of Latin America, there are 239 million economically active persons (EAP

who work or who want to work, on which over 23 million are in open unemployment and some 103 million work in the informal sector, very often without labour rights or social protection. There is a deficit of formal employment in the region of 126 million workers, which represents 53% of the EAP. This deficit is accentuated in the case of women and young people)²¹.

PHOTO 1 – WOMAN ENTREPRENEUR IN COLOMBIA



Source: UN Women

¹⁷ ECLAC, op.cit. p 130

¹⁸ UN Women (2018). *Reconocer, Redistribuir y Reducir el Trabajo de Cuidados. Prácticas Inspiradoras en América Latina y el Caribe*, p. 11

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 39

²⁰ See International Labour Office – ILO: *Decent Work and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, available at <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/sdg-2030/lang--en/index.htm>

²¹ International Labour Office – ILO. *Decent work in the Americas; an Agenda for the Hemisphere, 2006-2015*

Despite this, thanks to globalization, millions of women have accessed paid work, especially in the services sector and manufacturing²², but at the same time gender inequalities have been reproduced thanks to the concentration of women workers in the lower part of the global value chain²³. Income from work of workers in intermediate and high productivity sectors duplicate those of workers in low productivity sectors. According to ECLAC, 49% of workers in the region are employed in low productivity sectors, and this figure rises to 53% in the case of employed women (against 46.6% in the case of men)²⁴. The category earning the lowest monthly remuneration is domestic service workers, mainly composed of women²⁵, since it concentrates 15.3% of the female labour force²⁶. Despite its importance for the lives of many families and society, paid domestic work is one the work activities where there is the greatest decent work deficit. In the majority of the countries, women domestic workers are subject to special laws which limit their labour rights compared to formal women wage workers; it is also characterized by the low level of formalization of the employment relationship and inadequate social security cover²⁷.

FIGURE 10 – LABOUR INSECURITY FOR HOME WORKERS BECAUSE OF COVID-19



Source: International Domestic Workers Federation (2020). Regional Survey of the Impacts of COVID-19 on domestic workers.

In other words, when women enter the labour market, they face occupational segregation on grounds of gender – with over-representation in systematically undervalued jobs and persistent wage gaps²⁸.

Furthermore, in the face of the crisis caused by the pandemic, domestic workers have major disadvantages²⁹, related to labour insecurity and accumulation of debts, as well as increasing precarity of working conditions, principally concerning changes in modes of work, increase in working hours, violence and ill treatment. All this bearing in mind that for 92% of domestic workers, their job is the sole or main source of income and that 68% of domestic workers are the main or sole source of income of their household. The data on the principal consequences

²²Economic and Social Council, Commission on the Status of Women. (December 2016). *Women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work*. 61st session. E/CN.6/2017/3, para. 6

²³ Idem.

²⁴ ECLAC (2019), op.cit. p. 142

²⁵ ECLAC (2019), op.cit. p. 142

²⁶ In Latin America, between 17 and 19 million workers were registered working in a private household, which represents some 7% of the regional urban occupation. See United Nations (2013). *Trabajo decente e igualdad de género. Políticas para mejorar el acceso y la calidad del empleo de las mujeres en América Latina y el Caribe*. Regional Report p. 82

²⁷ Ibid. p. 82

²⁸ UN Women (2017), op.cit., p. 17

²⁹ According to the Regional Survey of the Impacts of COVID-19 on domestic workers produced by the International Domestic Workers Federation.

of the pandemic shows that 49% of domestic workers have been dismissed or laid off and 13.8% are in paid quarantine (Figure 1).

► **WORK WITH RURAL WOMEN**

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the rural population is 121 million people, who represent – approximately – 20% of the total population. Of these, 58 million are women – i.e. 48% of the rural population – and their contribution is key to food production and the economic development of the region³⁰. However, rural women live in a situation of social, political and economic inequality, owning barely 30% of the land, 10% of credit and 5% of technical assistance³¹. In addition, women are considered as secondary workers whose function is, ultimately, to supplement household incomes or they are rendered invisible as unpaid family workers or producers for own consumption³².

PHOTO 2 – WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN GUATEMALA



Source: UN Women photo gallery.

Some 45% of women over the age of 15 years who live in areas considered as rural are employed although with substantial difference between countries. Of these, over half work – as their main occupation – in non-farm rural employment (RNFE). It is estimated that in 2013 in Latin America, almost 14 million women worked in RNFE³³.

³⁰ See ECLAC and FAO (2009): *Employment of rural women. What the figures say*.

³¹ FAO, Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, see <http://www.fao.org/americas/publicaciones-audio-video/politicas-mujeres-rurales/es/>

³² United Nations (2013), op. cit., p. 70

³³ See FAO: Policy Note on Rural Women 3, “Más del 50% de las mujeres rurales trabajan en ERNA, empleos rurales no agrícolas”. Available at <http://www.fao.org/3/a-as104s.pdf>

PHOTO 3 – RURAL WOMEN IN GUATEMALA



Source: UN Women photo gallery.

populations to marginal lands, which increases their economic isolation and distance³⁴.

The different opportunities for employment in rural areas can help to promote equality between men and women, increase economic development and contribute to the eradication of poverty.

UN Women, in its report *“Progress of women in Latin America 2018. Transforming economies in support of rights”* proposes six key strategies to prevent regression, surmount obstacles and move towards women’s economic empowerment in Latin America and the Caribbean³⁵: i) Recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid domestic and care work; ii) advance in the construction of universal social protection systems with a gender focus; iii) create more and better jobs and transform work in favour of women’s rights; iv) promote egalitarian family relations which recognize the diversity of households in the region and the rights and obligations of the parties; v) create the conditions for effective enjoyment of women’s sexual and reproductive rights, and vi) contain the adverse effects of the economic slowdown on gender equality.

The strategies seek to advance equality, minimize the devastating effects experienced by women in the region as a result of previous crises and prepare the way for a rapid recovery. Equally, they seek the implementation of active measures to take better advantage of existing opportunities to arrest the adverse economic cycle and make way for a future expansionary cycle with greater gender equality. The six economic empowerment strategies must be adapted to each national context, which requires, among other things, debate, participation and building partnerships. In this regard, strengthening the organization, voice and participation of women in the design, implementation and evaluation of public policies is an essential condition for promoting and advancing towards women’s economic empowerment.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ UN Women (2017), op.cit.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA OF RESULT EVALUATED, THE THEORY OF CHANGE AND INVESTMENTS

IV1. GLOBAL PROGRAMME

Under a mandate from the United Nations General Assembly³⁶, UN Women has a mission of stimulating and promoting equality between the genders, empowerment of women and defence of women's rights. Women's empowerment takes many forms, one of them being economic empowerment, which is based on the Beijing Platform of Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and various conventions on gender equality of the International Labour Organization.

The area of result of economic empowerment is, for UN Women, a priority path towards gender equality, eradication of poverty and inclusive economic growth. By prioritizing this area, UN Women recognizes the important contribution of women to the economy in their various roles (unpaid care work, business and commerce, productive enterprises). It also identifies that gender-based discrimination, in terms of poverty and exploitation, affects women disproportionately. In response, UN Women has programmes which address inequality and "promote women's ability to secure decent jobs, accumulate assets, and influence institutions and public policies determining growth and development. One critical area of focus involves advocacy to measure women's unpaid care work, and to take actions so that women and men can more readily combine it with paid employment"³⁷. The actions of UN Women place emphasis on the most needy and marginalized women, which includes rural women, women domestic workers, some migrants and poorly qualified women.

For its part, in line with its Strategy 2014-2017 "Making this the century for women and gender equality, "it sought "women's increased access to sustainable livelihoods, productive assets and decent work, increased resilience in disaster risk reduction and climate change mitigation, poverty reduction and women's participation and leadership in economic policy and decision-making (Impact 2). Anticipated results include (a) the adaptation and implementation of national plans, legislation, policies, strategies, budgets and justice mechanisms to strengthen women's economic empowerment; (b) the development and implementation of gender-responsive services, including transport, utilities, markets, water and energy and green technology, to enhance women's sustainable livelihoods; and (c) support to gender equality advocates to allow them to better influence economic policies and poverty eradication strategies"³⁸.

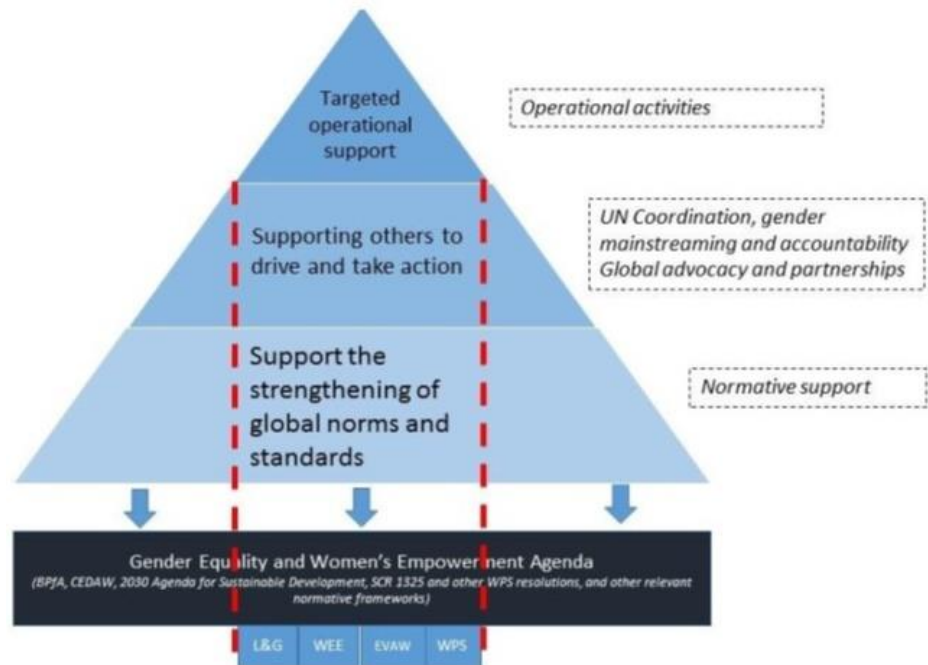
³⁶ See United Nations: Resolution approved by the General Assembly on 2 July 2010. A/RES/64/289.

³⁷ UN Women. *Economic Empowerment*, at <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/economic-empowerment>

³⁸ The evaluation seeks to identify ACRO's contribution to achieving these results. This theme is addressed in the section on findings (effectiveness), considering the limited information available (mid-term review 2-15 and annual ACRO reports available)).

In 2015, UN Women published its report “Progress of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean. Transforming economies, realizing rights” which proposes a comprehensive agenda for the principal stakeholders involved in the formulation of policies, with the aim of ensuring that human rights are a reality for all women and girls. This report focusses on the economic and social dimensions of gender equality, highlighting some of the challenges and contradictions faced by the world in these times, when equality of opportunity has virtually been achieved for women and girls in the educational sphere, yet women continue to earn much less than men and many, indeed, cannot exercise

FIGURE 11 – UN WOMEN: GLOBAL CHANGE THEORY



the right even to basic to healthcare, water and sanitation. The essence of this report is that UN Women shows that gender-based inequalities can be avoided. Economic and social policies can contribute to creating stronger economies and more sustainable and egalitarian societies in terms of gender. However, to achieve this, they must be designed and constructed putting women’s rights at the heart of their priorities³⁹.

In 2017, the UN Women Office for Latin America and the Caribbean published a regional version of this report “PROGRESS OF WOMEN IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN 2017” to contribute to putting women’s economic empowerment at the centre of the public agenda, considering, firstly, that there was in the regional environment a renewed importance of building not only more prosperous and resilient economies, but also more egalitarian and, secondly, that those responsible for the formulation of public policies face a dual challenge: protecting achievements in gender equality in the face of economic slowdown and continuing to surmount the persistent obstacles that stand in the way of women’s economic empowerment. To this end, the regional report proposed six key strategies to avoid regression, surmount obstacles and advance towards women’s economic empowerment in the region (see above, p. 30).

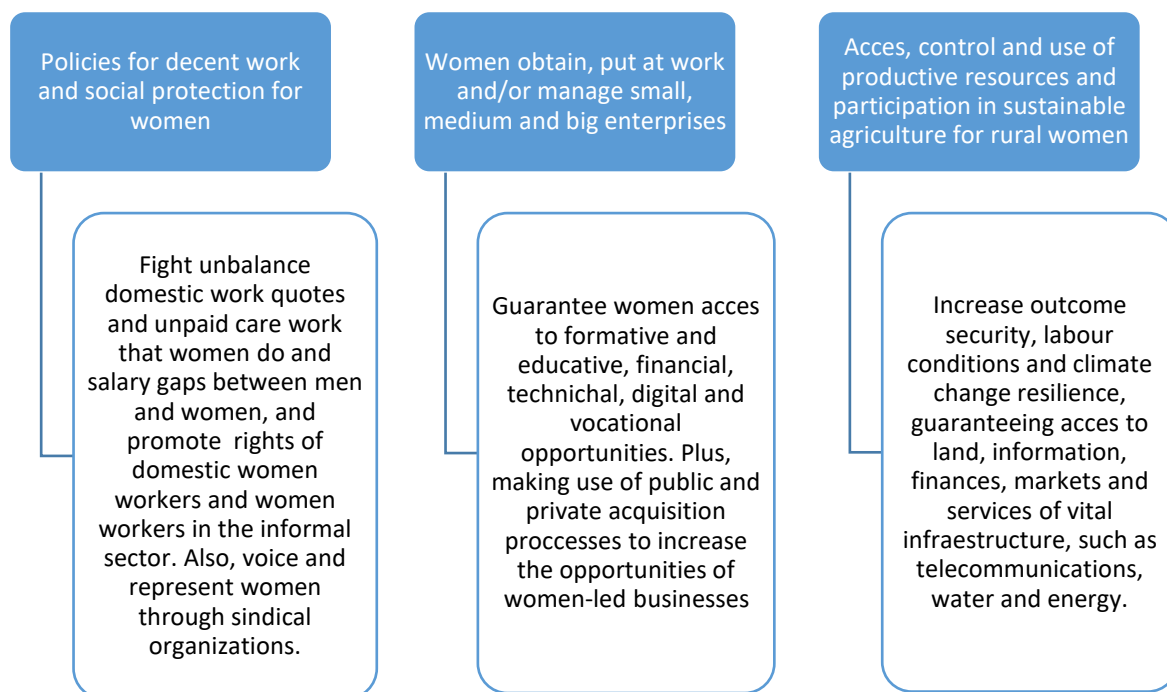
In 2014, the evaluation *The Contribution of UN Women to Women’s Economic Empowerment* was produced, which emphasized UN Women’s achievements in economic empowerment in the formative framework and policies, highlighting both the importance of developing a conceptual and strategic framework to articulate, enhance the importance of and maximize the advantages of the agency in the work of economic empowerment.

³⁹ See UN Women (2017), op. cit.

Transforming economies, realizing rights

For its part, the current UN Women Strategic Plan (2018-2021) emphasizes women having access to income security, decent work and economic autonomy (Outcome 3). Therefore, UN Women is focusing its contributions on three areas:

FIGURE 12 – CONTRIBUTION OF UN WOMEN TO ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT



Along these lines, with its new Strategic Plan, UN Women includes the knowledge and partnerships to strengthen the normative and legal frameworks, drive child and family polices which facilitate women's economic participation and promote the distribution of responsibilities between women and men relating to unpaid care work. It also calls on innovation and technology to support women's access to education and assets; lead promotion campaigns; and involve and support the private sector to commit to women's economic empowerment.

The Strategic Plan 2018-2021 focuses on the contribution of the Global Programme to the Sustainable Development Goals, while the former was centred in the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), which is explained by the transition process to address the profound causes of poverty and the need for sustainable development for all, enshrined in a new agenda 2030.

IV2. REGIONAL PROGRAMMATIC FRAMEWORK

A review of the programmatic framework of the UN Women Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean with respect to economic empowerment shows the correlation of the priorities and programmatic elements between the regional strategic notes 2014-2017 and 2019-2021. Thus, the note for the period 2014-2017 emphasized rights and access to equality while the current strategic note, as well as focusing on rights, places greater emphasis on women's economic autonomy through promotion of and support for economic enterprise, explicitly including rural women and women farmers. Likewise, in the gender equality framework of the region, central elements of the present note

are responsibility for and better distribution of domestic and care work between men and women, as well as unpaid work.

In addition, a significant advance in the present strategic note is the comparative advantage in the area of **women’s economic empowerment**, basing its strategies on the evidence obtained through the regional report, *Progress of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean 2017. Transforming economies, realizing rights*.

Another aspect which distinguishes the 2019-2021 Note from its predecessor is the development of an Action Model which responds to the challenges and opportunities of a heterogeneous region in the context of reform of the United Nations Organization (UN). This model is structured around the following characteristics; 1) adding value to women and girls in the region, especially the least protected, 2) it is based on an in-depth analysis of structural economic, cultural and sociodemographic factors, inspired by the analysis of the Progress of Women in the LAC, 3) management of knowledge of all the interventions in each of the four priority thematic areas: economic empowerment eradication of violence, political participation and governance, and women and the urban agenda, 4) programmatic provision in each of the priority areas aligned with the SDG 5) providing a more structured package of technical assistance to its partners.

TABLE 7 – COMPARATIVE OVERVIEW OF ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IN THE STRATEGIC NOTES

| WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT | |
|---|---|
| STRATEGIC NOTE 2014-2017 | STRATEGIC NOTE 2019-2021 |
| <p>PRIORITIES Understanding of economic empowerment as a central facilitator of women’s rights and access to equality through financing of gender equality.</p> | <p>PRIORITIES Economic empowerment centred on greater women’s economic autonomy and access to equality through greater attention to domestic and care work and unpaid work.</p> |
| <p>PROGRAMME Women, especially the poorest and most excluded, are economically empowered by development and benefit from it. For this, the programme focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social and economic protection policies - Technical assistance and generation of knowledge products for priority attention to gender. - Integration of the care economy in economic policies at national and regional level. - Development and promotion of effective tools and mechanisms to finance gender equality. - Support for development of regional knowledge products and facilitation of learning between countries. - Support for formal entrepreneurial development of women in countries for the full exercise of their economic rights. | <p>PROGRAMME To drive women’s economic empowerment, the plan is centred on protection of women’s rights and access to assets and productive and financial resources, for which it is proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To improve policies and legal frameworks to promote decent work, social protection and recognition, redistribution and reduction of unpaid work, which includes specific areas of work: care economy and unpaid work, decent work for women, domestic workers’ rights, equality of remuneration for work of equal value and gender-sensitive social protection systems. - Increase women’s access to assets, productive and financial assets in specific areas of work: women’s enterprises, women’s empowerment principles (WEPs) and gender equality in the private sector, innovative financing and impact investment with a gender perspective, and access to land and productive resources for rural women and women farmers. |

With regard to key stakeholders in the implementation of the regional strategy, ACRO is linked to relevant stakeholders in: civil society, governments and political systems, private sector, multilateral institutions and donors, as well as the communication media and academia. The following table shows the stakeholders by each group and the functions related to the work of UN Women.

TABLE 8 - ACRO STAKEHOLDERS

| STAKEHOLDER | PARTIES | FUNCTION |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| CIVIL SOCIETY | Women's organizations: feminist organizations, rural women's organizations, women entrepreneurs' organizations, women's economic cooperative, domestic service unions, women's organizations in the trade union movement, students' organizations... | Beneficiaries of/participants in the intervention |
| | Other civil society organizations: trade union organizations, environmental protection organizations... | Implementing partner |
| | Non-governmental organizations. | Implementing partner/ consultancy |
| GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL SYSTEM | National Women's Mechanisms. | Implementing partner |
| | Institutions related to economy policy: Ministries of Finance and Development, Rural Development, agencies for development and support of rural, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, subnational entities, data production entities... | |
| | Institutions related to social policy: Ministry of Health, Labour, Social Security, entities related to care and social action. | |
| | Congress and political parties. | Strategic partner |
| PRIVATE SECTOR | Companies, organizations of women entrepreneurs, Global Pact, networks linking private sector institutions. | Strategic partner / Implementing partner |
| MULTILATERAL AND INTERNATIONAL DONORS | United Nations System: UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, ILO, FAO, ECLAC. | Strategic partner |
| | Multilateral financial institutions: IMF, World Bank, IADB, CAF. | Financier |
| OTHER | Communication media and academia. | Strategic partner |

Source: "UN Women ACRO Regional Strategy and Action Model for Economic Empowerment 2019-2021" (PPT).

With regards to results, the Strategic Note 2019-2021 establishes a result related to women's economic empowerment⁴⁰, aimed at strengthening economic autonomy and ensuring income generation and own resources. The previous note 2014-2017 defined three results centred on legislation and regulation, services with a gender perspective and impact.

TABLE 9 – STRATEGIC NOTES: RESULTS FRAMEWORKS

| STRATEGIC NOTE 2014-2017 | STRATEGIC NOTE 2019-2021 |
|---|---|
| <p>EXPECTED RESULTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adaptation and application of national plans, laws, policies, strategies, budgets and judicial mechanisms to strengthen women's economic empowerment. - Establishment and start-up of services which take account of the gender perspective, including transport, public services, markets, water and energy supply services and ecological technology to foster sustainable lifestyles for women. - Support for promoters of gender equality to allow them to exercise greater influence on economic policies and poverty eradication strategies. | <p>RESULT 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women have access to income security, decent work and economic autonomy. |

⁴⁰ It should be recalled that ACRO Strategic Note 2019-2021 defines 7 priorities: governance and political participation, peace and security, eradication of violence, economic empowerment, cross-cutting approaches and normative and intergovernmental commitment.

OUTCOME 2.1⁴¹

Increase security of women's land tenure.

Indicator 2.1.1A: Number of road maps to promote governance of tenure with gender equity elaborated

Indicator 2.1.1B: Updated data on % of women landowners available in LAC

OUTCOME 2.2

A political consensus is created in macroeconomic policies which support opportunities for women's employment and create a fiscal space for public investment.

Indicator 2.2.1A: Number of governmental, intergovernmental or private sector entities which utilize/apply the recommendations of Women's Progress in the World.

OUTCOME 2.3

Decent work for women is promoted through collective action, revision of labour legislation and strengthening of government and company policies.

Indicator 2.3.1A: Number of LAC countries which have ratified ILO Convention 189.

Indicator 2.3.1B: Number of countries and private sector networks which adopt processes which promote WEE.

OUTCOME 2.4

Indicator 2.4.1A: Number of national debates on the care economy and gender equality held with the support of UN Women.

Indicator 2.4.1B: Number of countries which adopt and implement ILO Convention 156.

Indicator 2.4.1C: Number of countries which include care systems in their social protection policy.

OUTCOME 2.5

Women's economic empowerment is increased through promotion of decent work and equality in access to social protection systems.

Indicator 2.5.2A: Number of LAC countries which have ratified ILO Convention 189.

Indicator 2.5.2B: Number of countries and private sector networks that adopt processes which promote WEE.

OUTCOME 2.6

More women business and enterprise owners implement a gender equality agenda aligned with WEE.

Indicator 2.6.1A: Number of partnerships established in Argentina, Costa Rica and at regional level to improve products and services available for feminine entrepreneurship.

PHOTO 4 – WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN COLOMBIA

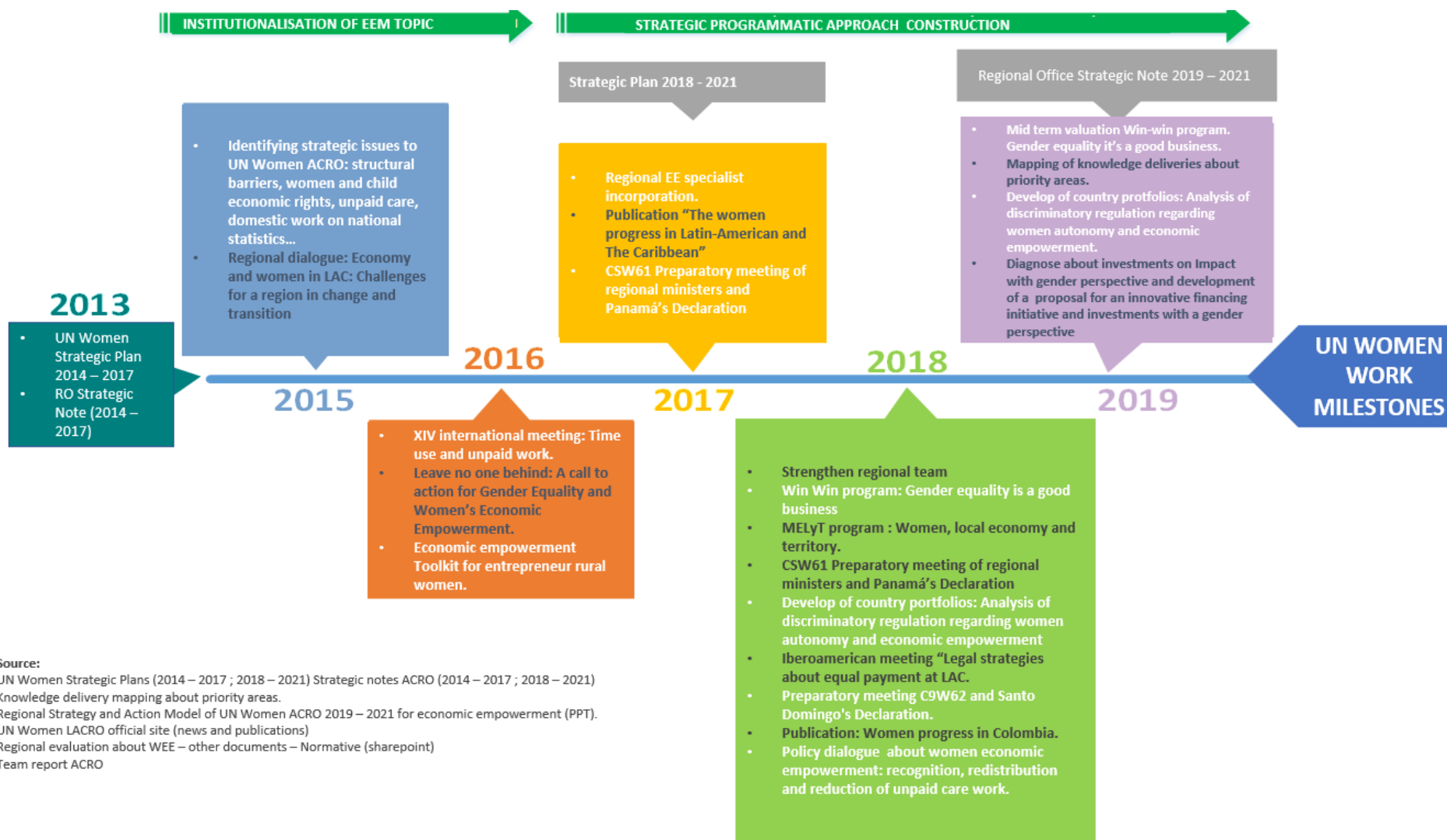


Source: UN Women Photo Gallery.

⁴¹ Outcomes 2.1 al 2.4 are extracted from UN Women Strategic Nita 2014-2018, Outcome 2.5 is taken from the ACRO Annual Report 2017.

IV.3. TIMELINE OF WORK OF ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IN THE REGION

The work implemented by the UN Women Regional Office throughout the period 2015-2019 had important milestones which mark the work done in the region in favour of women's economic empowerment. This can be represented in the following timeline:



Source:
 UN Women Strategic Plans (2014 – 2017 ; 2018 – 2021) Strategic notes ACRO (2014 – 2017 ; 2018 – 2021)
 Knowledge delivery mapping about priority areas.
 Regional Strategy and Action Model of UN Women ACRO 2019 – 2021 for economic empowerment (PPT).
 UN Women LACRO official site (news and publications)
 Regional evaluation about WEE – other documents – Normative (sharepoint)
 Team report ACRO

IV4. WORK OF THE REGIONAL OFFICE WITH COUNTRY OFFICES

The UN Women Regional Office, in carrying out its mandate, provides advice on policies, programmes and operational support to facilitate the effective implementation of the UN Women Strategic Plan 2018-2021 in the Latin America and Caribbean Region. At country level, its programmatic function is chiefly strategic guidance, quality assurance, supervision and technical support for the design and implementation of programmes at country level, as well as providing political support to country offices, programmatic offices and multi-country offices⁴².

Regarding UN Women’s work in the area of women’s economic empowerment in the countries of the region, all are operating in this area. Bolivia, Brazil, Guatemala, Mexico and Paraguay, as well as operating in this area, are also carrying out actions (initiatives/projects) related to the three priority areas: care, decent work and rural women. The work of the Country Offices in women’s economic empowerment, linked to the priority themes, shows the following relationship:

TABLE 11: ACTIONS LINKED TO PRIORITY THEMES (2015-2019)

| Country | CARE WORK | SECURITY OF INCOME AND DECENT WORK | RURAL WOMEN | RESULT LINKED TO WEE (Result 2.6) |
|--------------|-----------|------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| Argentina | - | 1 | - | Yes |
| Bolivia | 10 | 11 | 14 | Yes |
| Brazil | 2 | 8 | 1 | Yes |
| Chile | - | - | - | Yes |
| Guatemala | 6 | 18 | 18 | Yes |
| Haiti | - | - | 7 | Yes |
| Honduras | - | - | 7 | Yes |
| Mexico | 22 | 22 | 4 | Yes |
| Paraguay | 14 | 13 | 4 | Yes |
| TOTAL | 54 | 73 | 55 | |

Source: Budgetary information provided by UN Women country offices

IV5. THEORY OF CHANGE RELATING TO WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

The evaluation team concluded in a first analysis that while there were substantial and relevant substantive inputs defined in Strategic Note 2019-2021, as well as others incorporated in the Global Strategy and the Regional Report, as well as containing visions and assumptions collected during the interviews with key stakeholders of the Regional Office, it could not identify the existence of a Change Theory for the work of women’s economic empowerment in the region based on the foregoing.

Taking this as starting point, the evaluation team worked (in a virtual workshop) with the Regional Office team to develop a Theory of Change based on experience and work on the subject of economic empowerment in the region. This report compiles and organizes the inputs produced in a draft Theory of Change, to be validated in the evaluation process.

⁴² ACRO Strategic Note 2019-2021 establishes six key functions: Supervision and quality control; political and technical support for country offices programmatic offices and multi-country offices, development of partnerships and mobilization of resources; political impact based on production of knowledge; coordination of the United Nations System; and regulatory support.

The intention is that UN Women should have a Theory of Change which reflects a regional framework, appropriate to the countries, which guides and articulates the work of economic empowerment horizontally and vertically and allows, in turn, refining the monitoring and regional evaluation, as well as the orientation of the transformation into actions. It also contributes to the strategic management, decision-making and focus on results.

The **principal hypothesis** of the Theory of Change is premised on advocacy regarding policies and legal frameworks for economic empowerment, combined with work on facilitation of access to assets, productive and financial resources with special focus on women in particular situations of vulnerability, and also actions to modify social and cultural norms which can reduce gender

stereotypes, will generate the conditions for women's economic empowerment in terms of access to decent work, productive resources, income security and decision-making in the economic sphere. This set of work in turn will contribute to peace, non-violence, governance and political participation and leaving no one behind. All this in a context which requires multiple articulations, affirmative actions and integrated solutions which are evidence-based.

In practice, the Theory of Change proposes nine strategies and four cross-cutting approaches, which are aimed at improving conditions for women in four main areas: decent work, unpaid care work, social protection and access to assets and productive and financial resources. Figure 13 below summarizes the validated proposal:

Theory of change can be defined as the conceptual model, a logical sequence to achieve a collective vision. A theory of change typically addresses the links between the strategy, results and targets which support a mission or broader vision, together with the underlying assumptions related to these links. Theories of change can be expressed in many forms. In general, they consist of a graphical presentation of rationales and interrelations and a narrative, but in the last instance, they must explain how we get from "here" to "there"

FIGURE 13 – THEORY OF CHANGE FOR WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT



The Theory of Change explains how the activities produce a series of results which contribute to achieving the final expected or desired impacts. It can be elaborated for any level of intervention, whether an event, a project, a programme, a policy, a strategy or an organization. On occasions, the term generically describes a particular version of the process, for example, a chain of results with a series of tables of inputs linked to outcomes, results and impacts⁴³. To illustrate the process involved in Theory of Change in Figure 13 above, a simplified version has been produced.

The hypothesis proposed above is linked, in turn, to **assumptions**⁴⁴ and **stakeholders** identified by the Regional Office team:

Assumptions

- Access to decent work, productive resources, income security and decision-making in the economic sphere is a long-term process which only occurs through **processes of significant social change at all levels** – from individuals to communities and institutions.
- **Coordinated interventions** which operate at multiple levels and in all sectors, with a **multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral and multi-agency focus** have more likelihood of having an impact on women's lives.
- **Investing in policies and programmes** which promote women's economic empowerment contributes directly to **gender equality, economic growth and reduction of poverty and inequalities**.
- **Recognition, reduction and redistribution of unpaid care work** impacts on women's economic empowerment by providing **greater opportunities for participation in the labour market and income generation**.
- **Overcoming gender norms, stereotypes and roles** contributes to **women's economic autonomy**.
- The **invisibility of care work**, traditionally performed by women, generates an undervaluation of this work which is reflected in **worse remuneration and worse conditions of work** in the occupations concerned, and also leads to economic policy decisions which perpetuate **gender inequalities**.
- The **involvement of the private sector**, as the principal employer, is **fundamental in bringing about changes in existing inequalities in the labour market** and in achieving systems which allow greater compatibility between productive and reproductive work.

Stakeholders

- **CIVIL SOCIETY:** NGO, women's associations, organizations, trade unions.
- **GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL SYSTEM:** Governmental institutions for promotion of production and entrepreneurship, finance and planning; the scope of innovation; national

⁴³ Rogers, P. (2018). *Theory of Change* UNICEF: Methodological Brief – Impact Evaluation Nº 2.

⁴⁴ The assumptions are the hypotheses, ideas, perceptions which underlie the approach taken by a Theory of Change, its components and logical interrelations. The assumptions are behind the approaches to how we think something will happen, what we think will happen if Unlike the Logical Framework, they are not the conditions which must occur externally for something to happen, but these assumptions must be validated – or not – in the process of validation of a Theory of Change. These assumptions have been constructed by the Regional Office team.

women’s mechanisms; governmental entities linked to social protection, health, education, care systems; statistical institutions; parliamentarians.

- **PRIVATE SECTOR:** Financial institutions, business sector.
- **MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS:** United Nations Systems (UNDP, WFP, IFAD, ILO, ECLAC), international donors.
- **OTHER:** Communication media, academia, experts.

IV6. FUNDING OF ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AREA

The total budget of the UN Women Regional Office for LAC for the period 2015-2019 was USD 31,215,743.79, while the indicative budget for activities to promote women’s economic empowerment was USD 1,140,378.23, which was 3.7% of the total budget of the Regional Office. Table 11 below shows the amounts allocated, which related both to regular funds and mobilized funds/donations. As can be seen, the total UN Women ACRO budget increased slightly over the period, while the budget for women’s economic empowerment increased considerably (By 145% over 2015).

TABLE 10 – ACRO GENERAL BUDGET AND WEE BUDGET

| Year | Global ACRO budget | Difference as % since 2015 | ACRO WEE budget | Difference as % since 2015 |
|------|--------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| 2015 | 6,071,214 | | 125,000 | |
| 2016 | 6,196,704 | 2% | 132,635 | 6% |
| 2017 | 5,489,795 | -10% | 266,513 | 113% |
| 2018 | 6,375,661 | 5% | 184,476 | 48% |
| 2019 | 7,082,370 | 17% | 431,755 | 145% |

Source: Based on data from ACRO PDR 2015-2019

Regarding sources of financing of the Regional Office, and the area of women’s economic empowerment, the bulk of the budget comes from regular resources, however, this area of impact shows greater financing from mobilized resources (43%) compared with total ACRO financing (7%). In addition, the Regional Office allocates 2.24% (USD 650,647) of the total funds received to the work of women’s economic empowerment, while of the total resources mobilized, it allocates 22.43% (USD 489,731) to this area.

TABLE 11 – UN WOMEN ACRO FINANCING BY SOURCE (2015-2019)

| | PERIOD 2015-2019 (USD) | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| | Total ACRO budget | % of total budget | ACRO WEE budget | % of WEE budget |
| REGULAR RESOURCES (CORE) | 29,032,453 | 93% | 650,647 | 57% |
| MOBILIZED RESOURCES (Non-CORE) | 2,183,290 | 7% | 489,731 | 43% |
| TOTAL | 31,215,743 | 100% | 1,140,378 | 100% |

Source: Based on data from ACRO PDR 2015-2019

Analysis of the annual economic empowerment budget of the Regional Office shows a downward trend for core resources over the period, while non-core resources show a rise in percentage terms, with greater emphasis towards 2019, where 83% of the budget comes from resource mobilization.

TABLE 12 – ACRO WEE BUDGET (2015-2019)

| (USD) | | | | | |
|-------|---------|---------|-----|----------|----|
| AÑO | TOTAL | CORE | % | NON CORE | % |
| 2015 | 125.000 | 125.000 | 100 | - | |
| 2016 | 132.634 | 132.634 | 100 | - | |
| 2017 | 266.513 | 196.513 | 74 | 70.000 | 26 |
| 2018 | 184.476 | 121.500 | 66 | 62.976 | 34 |
| 2019 | 431.755 | 75.000 | 17 | 356.755 | 83 |

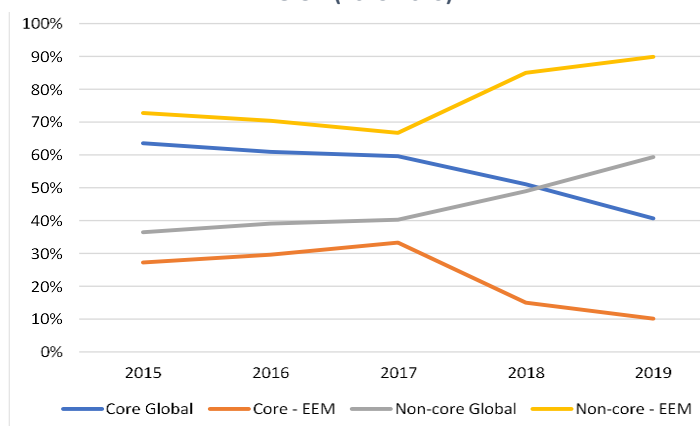
Fuente: Elaboración propia con datos de ACRO PDR 2015-2019 (archivo: Oficina Regional - sharepoint).

TABLE 13 – WEE BUDGET AS PROPORTION OF GENERAL LAC REGION BUDGET (2015-2019)

| OFICINA | TOTAL |
|-------------------------|------------|
| ACRO | 4% |
| Argentina | 34% |
| Bolivia | 16% |
| Brasil | 21% |
| Chile | 51% |
| Colombia | 0% |
| Ecuador | 19% |
| Guatemala | 29% |
| Haití | 11% |
| Honduras | 32% |
| MCO Caribbean | 9% |
| México | 15% |
| Paraguay | 18% |
| Perú | 1% |
| Uruguay | 18% |
| Región LAC total | 13% |

Fuente: Elaboración propia con datos de ACRO PDR 2015-2019 (archivo: Oficina Regional-sharepoint).

FIGURE 14 – RELATION OF THE GLOBAL BUDGET AND WEE IN THE REGION (2015-2019)



Fuente: Elaboración propia con datos de ACRO PDR 2015-2019 (archivo: Oficina Regional - sharepoint).

In relation to investment in economic empowerment in the region (ACRO-OP-MCO), the financial information for the period indicates a global amount of USD 22,838, 168 for the area of economic empowerment, which represents on average 13% of the total regional budget for the period. At country level, the countries with the highest average investment in economic empowerment for the period analysed are Chile (51%), Argentina (34%) Guatemala (29%) and Brazil *21%). Regarding the Regional Office, the average investment for the period is 4%.

An analysis by sources of financing in the LAC region shows opposing patterns in the general budget and the budget for the economic empowerment area. Table 16 shows that the total budget for the region comes mainly from regular resources (54%,

TABLE 14 - GENERAL BUDGET AND WEE BUDGET IN THE LAC REGION (2015-2019)

| | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | Total periodo | % del total |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Total | 32.093.713 | 33.025.279 | 30.880.398 | 39.095.383 | 47.458.774 | 182.553.547 | 100% |
| Core | 20.383.929 | 20.109.330 | 18.424.350 | 19.945.537 | 19.281.611 | 98.144.757 | 54% |
| Non Core | 11.709.784 | 12.915.949 | 12.456.048 | 19.149.846 | 28.177.163 | 84.408.790 | 46% |
| PRESUPUESTO REGIONAL EEM (ACRO-OP-MCO) (USD) | | | | | | | |
| | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | Total periodo | % del total |
| Total | 2.840.265 | 3.037.120 | 2.606.364 | 4.875.508 | 9.478.911 | 22.838.168 | 100% |
| Core | 772.824 | 898.829 | 866.668 | 733.179 | 961.514 | 4.233.014 | 19% |
| Non Core | 2.067.441 | 2.138.291 | 1.739.696 | 4.142.329 | 8.517.397 | 18.605.154 | 81% |

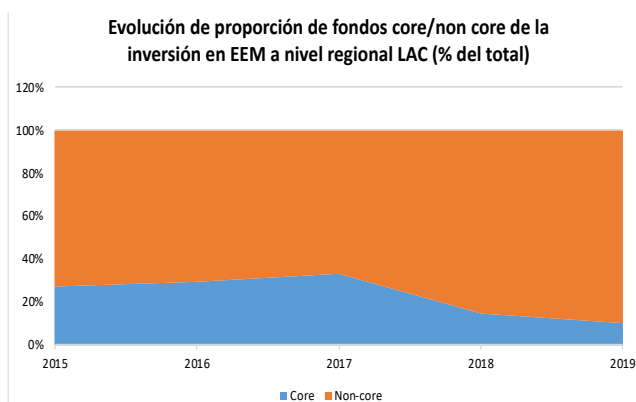
Fuente: Elaboración propia con datos de ACRO PDR 2015-2019 (archivo: Oficina Regional - sharepoint).

average for the period) while the budget for WEE is mainly mobilized resources (81% increase for the period). Throughout the period, it can be seen that there is a downward trend in regular funds (global and for WEE), more marked from 2017 onwards. Conversely, mobilized funds for WEE showed an upward trend over the period, with the greatest growth also since 2017.

The financial information for the period for the LAC region (analysed in Figure 15) shows a rising trend in investment in WEE of non-core funds, which increased considerably from 2017.

The total budget for economic empowerment at regional level (ACRO-MCO CARIBBEAN-COUNTRY OFFICES) from regular funds is USD 4,429,920, while mobilized funds total USD 18,408,248, i.e. regular funds represent 24% of the funds

FIGURE 15 – TRENDS IN INVESTMENT IN WEE IN THE LAC REGION BY TYPE OF FUND



Fuente: Elaboración propia con datos de ACRO PDR 2015-2019.

TABLE 12 – WEE BUDGET IN THE REGION BY SOURCE OF FINANCING (2015-2019)

| | FONDOS CORE | FONDOS NON CORE |
|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| ACRO | 650.647 | 489.731 |
| Argentina | - | 451.373 |
| Bolivia | 354.343 | 868.122 |
| Brasil | 186.655 | 3.348.417 |
| Chile | - | 2.461.944 |
| Colombia | 77.083 | - |
| Ecuador | 622.548 | 1.296.698 |
| Guatemala | 308.120 | 3.587.793 |
| Haití | 216.538 | 1.205.276 |
| Honduras | - | 1.409.073 |
| MCO Caribbean | 778.086 | 391.037 |
| México | 466.422 | 2.164.845 |
| Paraguay | 765.478 | 181.136 |
| Perú | 4.000 | - |
| Uruguay | - | 552.803 |
| TOTAL | 4.429.920 | 18.408.248 |

Fuente: Elaboración propia con datos de ACRO PDR 2015-2019 (archivo: Oficina Regional - sharepoint).

mobilized in the region during the period under reviewed. In total, for the region, there was a budget of USD 21,697,790.

As can be seen in Table 16, four countries did not have regular funds (Argentina, Chile, Honduras and Uruguay). Two countries were able to mobilize over 3 million dollars (Guatemala and Brazil), while Mexico and Chile succeeded in mobilizing resources of over 2 million dollars, and Ecuador, Haiti and Honduras mobilized resources over one million

dollars. An in-depth analysis of these funds is provided in the paragraph on efficiency in the section on findings.

V. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The regional evaluation has the general objective of **contributing to improving the focus and potential of UN Women to increase women’s economic empowerment in the Americas and Caribbean Region**. Under the ToR, the valuation addresses the following **specific objectives**:

- i. Evaluate the relevance of UN Women’s work on women’s economic empowerment at regional and national level during the selected period, and the added value of UN Women in this thematic area.
- ii. Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of progress in achieving results as set out in the Plan 2014-2017 and the Plan 2018-2021, in terms of women’s economic empowerment.
- iii. Identify lessons learned, good practices, key strategies, methodologies, financing mechanisms and resources which made UN Women’s contribution to women’s economic empowerment possible, and making recommendations for future interventions.

- iv. Identify which external factors (social, cultural and political) had a significant impact on the UN Women’s work on economic empowerment (both positive and negative).
- v. Evaluate how the report *Progress of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean* helped to improve the work on women’s economic empowerment.

In addition to these, also incorporated in the framework of objective ii were evaluation of the relevance, sustainability and cross-cutting approaches (mentioned below).

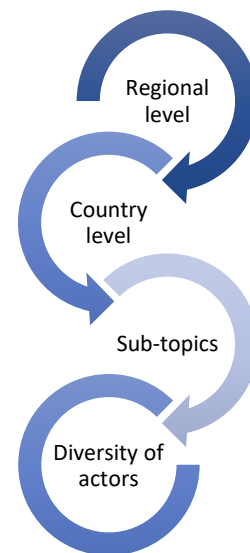
The evaluation is formative, with emphasis on its utility and consequent utilization; at the same time, it is focused on evaluating the successes and results obtained and the conditions for doing so, which means an evaluation process directed towards accountability and, at the same time, it proposes a regional Theory of Change for the work on economic empowerment.

The evaluation applies the following criteria: **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability**. To these, the team considered it appropriate to add an additional criterion, the cross-cutting approaches of gender, **human rights, intersectionality, cultural relevance, interculturality, and adaptation to and mitigation of climate change**. The collection of information is based on the questions contained in the Terms of Reference (Tor) and other supplementary questions...

At **thematic level**, the evaluation is focused on the following three themes: i) work with rural women; ii) the care economy; iii) decent work, with a focus on women domestic workers⁴⁵. However, over and beyond these thematic emphases, the evaluation takes a comprehensive and systemic look through: i) an approach interrelated with the priority sub-themes with respect to the other sub-themes of the *Women’s Economic Empowerment Programme*; ii) an approach of the links of women’s economic empowerment with other areas of UN Women’s work: violence against women, governance and political participation peace, security and humanitarian action; normative commitments and cross-cutting approaches; iii) a look at the three mandates of UN Women a) normative; b) operational; c) coordinating .

At **geographical level**, the evaluation has a regional focus, targeting the work directly on Latin America and indirectly on the Caribbean, given that a parallel portfolio evaluation is taking place with which levels of coordination have been maintained. The regional focus is assured by: i) a detailed review of all the work by the Regional Office, interviews with the Deputy Regional Director⁴⁶, the Regional Expert on women’s economic empowerment and other key persons with a regional view, and constant dialogue with the Evaluation Management Group ; ii) mapping and analysis of the portfolios of the Regional Office, the Country and Multi-Country Offices, interviews with representatives of the Country and Multi-Country Offices, and the focal points for women’s economic empowerment; iii) a review of the country evaluations carried out previously; iv) conduct of two regional surveys, one of all the country focal

FIGURE 16 – MULTIPLE OVERVIEW OF THE EVALUATION



⁴⁵ It should be mentioned that in conversations with the Regional Office and when it was decided that the Caribbean would not participate directly, the theme of social protection was replaced by work with rural women.

⁴⁶ Carried out in the initial phase of the evaluation process.

points and the second with stakeholders and partners in all the countries (16) with programmes and initiatives on women's economic empowerment, including the two countries selected for the case studies (Guatemala and Paraguay); v) agreements on exchange and close coordination with the evaluation in progress in the Caribbean with the focus on social protection⁴⁷; vi) the inclusion of a question on opportunities to strengthen the regional focus, with particular attention to the Caribbean, and vii) approaching the case studies both as a wealth of experiences for learning, replication and upscaling at regional level, the results of which are triangulated with information from the interviews and surveys.

In terms of **timeframe**, the evaluation covers the period from 2015 to 2019, i.e. it will partly include the Global Strategic Plan 2014-2017 and that of 2018-2021. At regional level, it contemplates the Strategic Note 2014-2018 from 2015, and the initial phase of the Strategic Note 2019-2021.

With regard to the contextual conditions in the face of the health emergency and others related to recent or parallel evaluation processes in the region which resulted in the unwillingness of the Caribbean and some countries to undertake the thematic case studies, the evaluation was subject to adjustments to the originally envisaged themes, replacing the theme of "social protection systems" with "rural women". In addition, the proposed inclusion of three countries was changed to two countries which expressed their availability – Guatemala and Paraguay – with an approach of two themes in each (domestic work in Paraguay and Guatemala); work with rural women in Guatemala, care economy in Paraguay).

Based on discussions with ACRO and the Management Committee, the geographical scope of the evaluation, or more specifically, regional, the three levels were defined: ACRO action, action of the various countries in the region, the "sum" of the foregoing as an overview. This multiple and combined view meant considerable challenges for the evaluation process and is expressed in the approach of this report.

All the field work was carried out virtually, due to the impossibility of travel by the consultant team; at the start of the pandemic, the possibility was considered of contracting local evaluators, which had to be rejected in the face of the quarantines established in each country and the corresponding, imitations on internal mobility.

In relation to the timeframe, in principle it was established that the evaluation would cover a period of four and a half years, then extend to five years (2015-2019).

⁴⁷ Based on agreements with the Evaluation Manager in the Caribbean because of the new situation unleashed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the related prohibitions.

VI. FINDINGS

This section is organized on the basis of the evaluation criteria – relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and cross-cutting aspects – under each of which, the evaluation questions are grouped corresponding to the various findings.

VI.1. RELEVANCE

Q1 To what extent is UN Women’s work on women’s economic empowerment in the region aligned with international/regional legislation, national policies and plans, with the UN WOMEN Strategic Plan and the SDGs?

Q2 To what extent does the triple mandate of UN Women (normative, coordination and programmatic) help to strengthen the work of economic empowerment in the region?

FINDING 1: UN Women's work on WEE is carried out within the framework of its Strategic Plan 2018-2021, international human rights treaties, as well as other international agreements and commitments. It equally supports the development and implementation of national norms and policies related to economic empowerment. Within this framework, UN Women’s ability to capitalize on its triple mandate has been a key asset.

At the level of international legislation, the work done by UN Women relating to the ratification of ILO Convention 189 stands out (Jamaica 2015, Paraguay 2015, Dominican Republic 2016, Mexico 2019, progress in Guatemala); there is also a favourable opinion on the degree of contribution to strengthening legislation and international commitments, there is an agreement on external sampling of some evaluations (2 of 13) which qualified the contribution as “low”. In the case of Ecuador, actions were also recorded to promote the ratification of ILO Convention 190 on eliminating violence and harassment in the world of work, approved in 2019.

Other international normative and institutional frameworks, such as CEDAW and the United Nations Committee on Migrant Workers have also served to guide and drive the work in care and with migrant workers (Mexico and Central America), The normative work is driving the programmatic work, and in turn the programmatic work feeds into the coordination of activities (Caribbean)).

The fundamental role of UN Women should be highlighted as promoter of the regional consultations and declarations, preparation and positioning of the region in relation to the themes addressed in the various sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women between 2017 and 2019. In 2017, the theme was “women’s economic empowerment in the changing world of work”, in 2018, “Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls”, and in 2019, “Social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and empowerment of women and girls”. The regional declarations and consultations involved the Ministers of Women and high-level authorities of the mechanisms for promotion of women in Latin America and the Caribbean, and activities were also supported by civil society organizations

Stakeholders and partners in the countries valued the contribution of UN Women and recognize it as one of the most significant changes the development and approval of specific legislation and policies which promote women’s economic empowerment, processes framed in international legislation and driven by women themselves in the countries, and strengthening of their capacities. At the same time, it is worthy of note that the results of the consultation do not include capacity-building of rights guardians among the most significant changes.

Based on the coordination mandate, interesting initiatives have been generated valued by other agencies at regional level and in the countries, where it is estimated that between 60 and 70% are joint. The leadership of the Interagency Gender Group is highlighted and the work with agencies with greater capacity and resources such as UNDP and ILO.

Q3 To what extent does the work of UN Women on WEE respond to the needs and priorities of marginalized women and groups, following the Agenda 2030 on the principle of leaving no one behind?

FINDING 2: UN Women interventions related to decent work and social protection linked to domestic workers, rural and indigenous women, and migrants, are highly relevant to the regional context and needs vulnerable women's groups. UN Women has responded to inequality gaps affecting women as well as the mandate of the SDGs to leave no one behind.

The Strategic Note 2019-2021 is aligned with the SDG, specifically addressing groups of women in situations of disadvantage and vulnerability in relation to their priorities and emphasizes as cross-cutting not leaving any woman or girl behind. It is important to emphasize that this focus goes hand in hand with a concept of women as agents of change, transcending traditional and paternalistic approaches to women as victims or beneficiaries.

The expansion of work on WEE, specifically decent work (women domestic workers), rural women and social protection is a strategic success and responds to blatant situations of inequality in the region, albeit with different matrices, degrees of relevance and incidence in the countries of the region. The pandemic is exacerbating inequalities and the relevance of work with the most disadvantaged groups

In addition, the territorial approach of various initiatives has led to reaching women in remote contexts and migrant women; such is the case of the MyDEL Programme: Women, Local Economy and Territories, launched in 2018 with the support of Italian Cooperation. It is implemented in municipalities of the border region between El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, in a context of feminization of the migration diaspora, which recognizes and reinforces territorial processes which nurture and strengthen the potentialities of the territory and the capacities of the women and local community. Mexico also is resuming the work with migrant women, given its importance.

The Originarias Programme, which seeks to contribute to the empowerment of indigenous women in the north of Chile addressing themes of training, markets, opportunities, ecosystem entrepreneur and associativity, is an interesting experiment which also reflects an inclusive and integrated intercultural approach, from the participatory research which began the project seeking an overall understanding of the reality, to the flexibility in timing and forms of implementation.

With regard to rural women, Ecuador's work in conjunction with FAO, the WFP and the Ministry of Agriculture should be highlighted, elaborating a Rural Women Strategy, which is pending approval in the Assembly after two years of hard work. In addition, mention should be made of the Joint Programme of Rural Women's Economic Empowerment in Guatemala, which comprehensively addresses the economic theme, prevention of violence and political participation of women, and further working with local governments to open up spaces for rural women. It also incorporates the basis conditions for rural women such as literacy and use of time to collect natural resources such as water and energy.

In Haiti, a country with a humanitarian situation, the work of UN Women is focused on empowerment and increasing women's agricultural productivity, better access to markets and resilience in the face of disasters.

It is noteworthy that explicit and systematic integration of an intersectional (cross-cutting) approach in the work is not observed or recognized. This refers, firstly, to certain weaknesses identified in the country offices in recognizing or defining what is meant by a cross-cutting approach, its operationalization and its systematic integration in planning, monitoring, evaluation and lessons learned. Secondly, the inclusion of certain views (and related populations) such as generations, women with different capacities, urban indigenous women and sexual diversity is still incipient. In this framework, the Boundary Report of the Caribbean MCO calls for the incorporation of an analysis of populations with “marginalized voices”, alluding, among other things to the population with disabilities, sexual diversity, young people and older adults, urban and rural poor.

An important point to consider is that the comparative analysis of the surveys relating to the added value of UN Women showed a notably more positive self-evaluation than the external evaluation, in the following statement: “the interventions of UN Women to promote women’s economic empowerment especially considering the demands and necessities of indigenous women in the country according to their own specific characteristics” (see below Figure 25 concerning information compared with the perception of partners and focal points concerning the added value of UN Women.

FIGURE 17 – ANNUAL DOCUMENT PRODUCTION (ON PRIORITY THEMES)

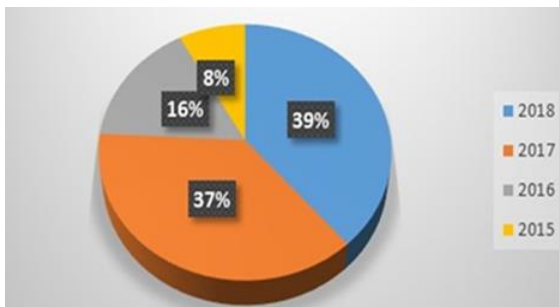
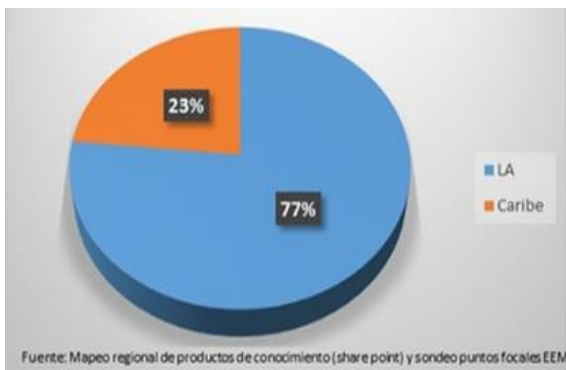


FIGURE 18 – DOCUMENT PRODUCTION IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN



UN Women has increasingly developed knowledge products which contribute to show important issues and support the relevance of the region’s priorities (e.g. recent study on women domestic workers and CO-VID-19). The external stakeholders particularly positively value the contributions to knowledge. It should be mentioned that the majority of knowledge products are in Spanish; of the 62 products mapped (SharePoint), only 5 are in English and one in Portuguese, and of the 5 in English, 3 are on the subject of social protection, which is one of the themes developed as a priority in the Caribbean.

Moreover, since the consultation held with the field offices, a total of 90 knowledge products have been identified, of which 23% are from the Caribbean. In addition, some countries, such as Guatemala, have developed knowledge products in indigenous languages. The close work coordinated with associations and communities which link the most vulnerable women, such as domestic workers and rural women, also strengthen the capacity for adequate understanding and response to necessities, and encouraging ownership and acting

as protagonists of the women themselves.

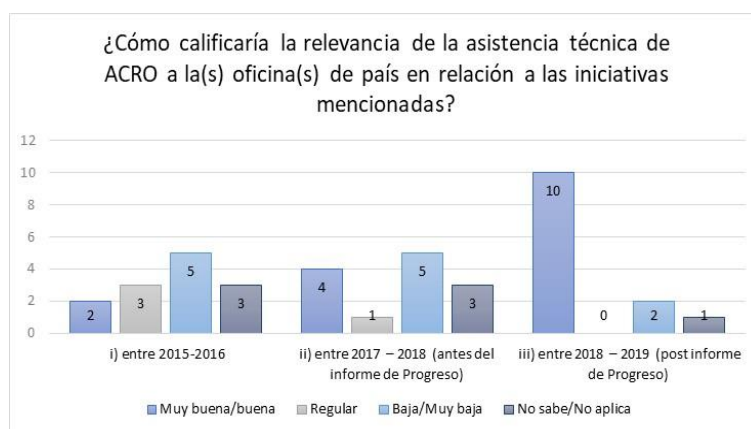
Q4 To what extent has UN Women become a relevant stakeholder in the area of WEE, in the region and at national level?

Q5 To what extent has the role of UN Women Regional Office and its various functions been relevant in advancing the WEE agenda at national level?

FINDING 3: National and regional partners value UN Women’s specialization and legitimacy to address WEE issues, and both Country Offices and partners recognize the substantive contribution that the Regional Office offers in this respect. This provides favourable conditions to further consolidate the relevance of UN Women at regional and national levels.

UN Women is recognized by national partners and regional allies as a stakeholder with a unique position and legitimacy in the region to promote women’s economic empowerment and establish strategic alliances: “it assumes that we have a very important institutional endorsement”; several =partners also underline the value of the team’s commitment. In this framework, UN Women has become a benchmark for economic empowerment strategies specifically aimed at vulnerable women’s groups and the state of precariousness in the region.

FIGURE 19 – RELEVANCE OF ACRO ASSISTANCE TO THE COUNTRY OFFICES



Source: Survey of UN Women WEE focal points

A theme where the visionary role and vanguard role of UN Women stands out is care. In 2017, UN Women, together with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the Government of Uruguay – which since 2015 has had a National Integrated Care System – held a regional consultation which placed the theme on the agenda, thereby strengthening the position and capacity of UN Women to generate and circulate knowledge, understand the realities of the different countries and stakeholders, generate appropriate scenarios and play a linking role bringing to the table primary-level stakeholders, governments, academia and society.

According to the survey, the partners in the countries supported the following statements on the added value of UN Women:

- UN Women has a longstanding relationship with women’s organizations in the country for the promotion of women’s economic empowerment.
- Un Women contributes substantially to women’s economic empowerment in the country by strengthening women’s capacities, their associations and networks.
- UN Women has the technical capacity and contributes substantially to women’s economic empowerment in the country by strengthening the capacities of government institutions, including development of national policies.
- Un Women has capacity to promote effective coordination, cohesion and integration of the gender perspective in the United Nations System in the country in support of the commitments on women’s economic empowerment.

In general, the capacity to link stakeholders, design and implementation of initiatives linked to high quality knowledge products and integrated and systemic analysis of the structural barriers to gender equality are recognized as strengths of UN Women which help to enhance its credibility, reputation and presence.... At the same time, there is a consistency with the results of the external and internal surveys and the interviews on the need to strengthen the technical capacities of the national teams, bearing in mind the importance of growing specialization, and the new necessities derived from a

growing rapprochement to the macro economy and the “hard” sectors (impact, production of technical documents, public policy, costs). The alliance with academia is also crucial.

Among the current projects of the *SDG Fund (2019)*, a total of seven have been planned on gender and social protection in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, MCO Barbados and Mexico, and five of them deal with themes of care, and in some cases, like Mexico, they include various research and cost studies.

FINDING 4: The Regional Office’s increased commitment, knowledge and technical contribution to the work of Country Offices work is recognized.

There is majority recognition of the effort and substantial improvements which have been made at ACRO Office level to support countries, especially from 2018, which is the year after the Progress Report and, also, strengthening of the team in the regional office. The technical support from the regional offices to the countries was particularly valued – at various levels and as required – based on knowledge and understanding of national realities and their capacity to build bridges. This is in contrast with a rather more negative perspective or indeed abandonment concerning the relationship at corporate level (HQ).

The work of building a digital repository of documents from different countries, and the progressive constitution of a community of WEE practice with the country offices is a valued achievement, which can be reinforced in the framework of a knowledge management strategy which allows evidence and knowledge to contribute more clearly to performance, mutual learning and results (see Finding 8).

Eleven of the thirteen offices identify initiatives of work and collaboration with ACRO on women’s economic empowerment which cover the elaboration of proposals, realization of studies, to the implementation of multi-country studies (such as the Win-Win project in the MyDEL programme). This is evidence of a smooth and collaborative relationship with the regional office. In the interviews with the country offices, some mention was made of exchanges between countries, but in the main this is an area for improvement.

From the perspective of allies, the contributions in knowledge and taking the lead in positioning of themes such as care stand out. In the UN System, the lead role of UN Women has been positively evaluated in the regional Interagency Gender Group. Also noteworthy is the role played by UN Women since 2017 in driving the processes of preparation and regional positioning in sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women, CSW61, CSW62 and CSW63.

The Regional Office, for its part, has made progress towards greater clarity of its role, providing a strategic vision of the work on WEE in the region, and knowledge about bottlenecks, challenges and opportunities for women’s economic empowerment in Latin America and the Caribbean. However, it also faces budgetary constraints which condition the scale and possibilities of the regional team, despite its outstanding commitment and dedication. It is considered that, bearing in mind the priorities of the Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs, there are opportunities to improve and strengthen the regional role in the areas of knowledge management, innovation and regional strategy as well as a focus on the impact: “they have a wide scope, but lack depth”. In addition, the necessity is identified for a greater linking role which links the regional with the national in both directions, but which in turn does the same at the global level, feeding into corporative decisions and bringing the global to the regional and national. This linked to the programmatic, knowledge management and innovations.

Q6 How have the document Progress of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean and other known products, contributed to building the work of UN Women in the region?

FINDING 5: The 2017 Report on the Progress of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean is widely known, although not to the same degree by all sectors. It is valued and is considered useful due to its significant conceptual, analytical and strategic contributions. Internally, it could be further utilized to articulate the regional Theory of Change (ToC).

The Report of the Progress of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean 2017 marks a success story in the region with respect to knowledge and valuation of women’s contribution to the economy, and in turn shows the conditions of inequality and injustice suffered by women in the region – certain socioeconomic, geographical, ethnic and racial groups in particular – and the way in which this perpetuates poverty; “it is one of the most global efforts made by UN Women to have a multi-dimensional and coherent interpretation of women’s economic empowerment in Latin America”. With regard to the themes prioritized for this evaluation, it puts on the agenda unpaid care work and the need for reduction and redistribution; in relation to decent work and women domestic workers, it addresses informality, inequalities in the legislature and the need to advance in the construction of gender-sensitive universal social protection systems.

Of the stakeholders surveyed, 47% said that they knew the report, and 92% said that they had used it. The majority for the preparation of programmes and projects (41%), and also highlighting its use for the elaboration of knowledge products and capacity-building (28%). And to a lesser degree (18%) for the elaboration of strategic plans, while only 5% used it for the elaboration of public policies or budgets. An interesting example of its use comes from Argentina, where an Observatory was established using the indicators in the report.

The stakeholder groups who have the most knowledge of the report (between 80-100% of respondents) are the UN agencies and academic institutions. On the other hand, only 50% of the civil society partners, networks and associations of women entrepreneurs and donors know the report. Among government/public sector respondents, entrepreneurs, the financial sector and business associations, knowledge is less (between 18 and 40%). So, although, on average, knowledge of the report is satisfactory, a more detailed look by sector shows the need and desirability of dissemination measures focused on certain stakeholders.

In various countries (Colombia, Paraguay, Brazil, Mexico and Guatemala – the latter in the final stages of the process) national versions and/or adaptations have been made, which is very positively assessed in that, as well as providing national information, they have promoted coordination and appropriation by some of the relevant national bodies.

Regarding the work of UN Women, the report – together with the Global Strategic Plan – framed the definition of the work in this area, provided a conceptual framework, drove a programmatic approach and set a model for the work of the offices; “it unified the discourse and supported the positioning on the UNCT”. With all the achievements, the evaluation identifies that there is still room for taking greater advantage of and strategic alignment of the report and the work of UN Women (a review of the Theory of Change and its assumptions “through the lens of the report” would be interesting), although in turn it agrees with various stakeholders of the need to “take one step more”: “not forgetting to ask ourselves every day if what we are doing makes sense”.

Apart from the report, the production of knowledge has been vast and is highly valued in general; mention should be made of the study on discriminatory laws in partnership with the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB), which reached a total of 27 countries of Ibero-America and the Caribbean.

In 2019, the report “Recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care work; Inspiring practices in Latin America and the Caribbean” was published. It served for the discussion of policies and has been key in repositioning UN Women on the theme of care. Likewise there stands out the implementation of the Time Use Survey which was pioneered in Mexico as a joint undertaking with UN Women, the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico (INEGI), the Division of General Affairs of ECLAC (DAG-CEPAL) and the National Institute of Women of Mexico (INMUJERES) in the framework of a working group on Gender Statistics of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, and which has now extended to 19 countries with the consolidation of a repository with information on Time Use (ECLAC).

Regarding work with the private sector, by way of example, mention can be made of the document “Roads to strengthen the commitment of the private sector to women and gender equality”, and in relation to the spheres of technology and innovation, the diagnostic on women in STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics commenced in 2019, financed by the Regional Office from its own funds and coordinated with the office in Uruguay which provides interesting inputs for the future.

VI2. EFFECTIVENESS

Q7 To what extent and in what way is UN Women contributing to the development of WEE in the LAC region, in particular with respect to work with rural women, recognition, reduction and redistribution of unpaid domestic and care work, and improving women’s income security and decent work?

Q10 What strategies, approaches or methodologies were most effective and why to promote work with rural women, recognition, reduction and redistribution of unpaid domestic and care work, and improving women’s income security and decent work?

FINDING 6: Important contributions to agenda-setting related to WEE were evidenced and recognized by partners, such as capacity strengthening, the development of strategies and drafting of norms and evidence-based public policies, as well as the empowerment of rights holders. Challenges persist in several countries in effectively implementing the legislation and norms developed.

In general, between 2015 and 2019, UN Women has contributed to positive changes with respect to WEE in the region, in the fields of advocacy, statistics, legislation, WEE capacity-building and knowledge management. In this context, as observed in the following summary of results reported in the ACRO annual reports⁴⁸, it has impacted on the introduction of themes on public agendas, it has promoted statistics with a gender perspective to show the situation of women, it has promoted legislative frameworks and public policies for WEE, it has developed capacities of both state institutions and rights holders,, it has developed knowledge to support the need for changes towards WEE and has involved the private sector by also promoting changes within companies.

TABLE 16 – SUMMARY OF RESULTS ACCORDING TO ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE WORK OF UN WOMEN ACRO

| AREAS OF RESULTS | YEARS | ACHIEVEMENTS |
|------------------|------------|--|
| ADVOCACY | 2015, 2017 | - Advocacy for the protection of women domestic workers’ rights as part of a regional movement to promote decent work. Advocacy for ratification of Convention 189 |
| | 2016 | - Regional technical dialogue to define a regional roadmap on women’s access to land, economic autonomy, equality of rights and food security. |

⁴⁸ The complete information on the results reported in the period is in the annexes section.

| | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|--|
| | | - Construction of a regional discourse on the importance of inserting women's economic empowerment at the centre of economic decisions. |
| | 2018 | - Promotion of national and regional debates on plans and budgets for gender-sensitive economic policies, decent work , social protection and care economy with a perspective of gender equality. |
| | 2019 | - Support for the realization of forums for dialogue for the promotion of women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and to end sexual division of labour and scientific knowledge. |
| STATISTICS | 2015 | - Exchange between producers and users of gender statistics in the LAC countries. |
| | 2016 | - Updated data on the percentage of women landowners in the region. |
| LEGISLATION AND POLICIES | 2015 | - Support for the adoption of resolutions in favour of women's economic empowerment (PARLACEN). |
| | 2017 | - Adoption of gender-sensitive policies (Costa Rica: Gender Financial Inclusion Strategy; Paraguay: Policy on equality and interculturality; Ecuador: Regulations on women domestic workers and paternity leave in the new Labour Code; Bolivia: Budget with gender perspective; Dominican Republic and Honduras: in their annual budgetary guidelines with a gender perspective). - Gender-sensitive policies to promote WEE in Paraguay, Ecuador, Dominican Republic, Bolivia, Honduras and Costa Rica. - Support for the development of a draft National Care System in Paraguay. |
| | 2018 | - Advice relating to action plans on gender equality in Argentina, Chile and Costa Rica. - Advice on policies for calculating the costs of a national social protection policy of the Government of the Dominican Republic. |
| CAPACITY-BUILDING | 2016 | - Training of public servants on gender equality and gender-sensitive policies. |
| | 2018 | - Training of technical teams of the Ministries of Finance and Women's Mechanisms in 7 countries of the SICA, on gender-sensitive budgets and the methodology for measuring the SDG. - Brazil: Training of rural women in principles of economic autonomy. |
| | 2019 | - Strengthening of women's networks and associations, training of companies on institutional racism. |
| WEE | 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 | - Alliances with the private sector to support women entrepreneurs and commitments to WEE (Chile, Argentina, Brazil and Ecuador). - 10 countries which adopt processes which drive WEE: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Guatemala, Jamaica, Panama, Uruguay. - Companies implement gender-sensitive acquisition policies (Brazil). |
| KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT | 2018 | - Elaboration of 5 knowledge products and policy documents (analysis of discriminatory legislation; care work , social protection systems, economic empowerment). |

Sources: UN Women ACRO: 2015 Annual Report, 2016 Annual Report, 2017 Annual Report, 2018 Annual Report, 2019 Annual Report.

Key: Achievements in the area of domestic work (in green); achievements in the area of rural women (in blue); achievements in the area of the care economy (in red).

With regard to decent work and women domestic workers, there is evidence of progress with differences between countries. Mention should be made of the ratification of ILO Convention 189 in several countries (Jamaica 2015, Paraguay 2015, Dominican Republic 2016, Mexico 2019, progress in Guatemala), and changes in national legislation and policies, albeit with weaknesses in implementation.

In Paraguay, UN Women in partnership with the Ministry of Labour embarked on a process of reform of article 10 of the Act on Domestic Work which would increase the right to the minimum wage from 60% to 100%. The reform was approved in 2019, but faces obstacles to its effective implementation, which requires constant publicizing, information on rights and strengthening of mechanisms to ensure that there is no discrimination. In the case of Guatemala, UN Women established an agenda to persuade Congress to ratify Convention 189, in association with the Ministry of Labour and the ILO. It sought to raise awareness of the situation of women domestic workers through a decent work approach, highlighting the gender gap. It designed and implemented a campaign to publicize the Convention which it launched in 2018 and which was massive, in partnership with trade unions, women's organizations and other stakeholders. Despite these efforts, employers did not support the measure, mainly because they refused to pay the minimum wage and social insurance. In the Congress, the draft Law 4981 relating to the Convention reached its second reading (leaving one more stage before it became law). It is important to note that both in Paraguay and Guatemala, the participation of trade unions representing women domestic workers contributed decisively to reaching rights holders to empower them and contribute to their consolidation as subjects of rights. Thus they succeeded in legitimizing their actions in government and other spaces, and position the subject in the

national political debate. Thus UN Women gave thought to the processes, gave a voice to women domestic workers and helped them to achieve their objectives.

On the theme of care, inter-institutional and intersectoral forums were generated on labour, national legislation and policies, as well as education and training programmes on care. In Paraguay, in 2011, the UN Women Office initiated its strategy to support the design of a national care policy, with a focus on social protection, gender equality and care. It succeeded in including the need for this policy in the national agenda. In 2012, it produced a diagnostic on the care situation in Paraguay and in 2016, a survey on time use. It continued to promote studies, technical advice, workshops and sharing of experiences of other countries, especially in Uruguay, to position public care policy as a priority of the country. As a result, the Technical Secretariat for Planning and the Ministry of Women, supported by UN Women, have linked with the Steering Group on Public Care Policies (GIPC), with the aim of progressing towards a social protection system. They have begun to talk about the design of a national care policy. In 2017 and 2018, the impact of UN Women was stronger in maintaining and strengthening the steering group, so that it was recognized as an institution. In the framework of its action, UN Women also succeeded in getting the Ministry of Social Development to introduce the theme of care in the National Poverty Reduction Plan, making it a priority and cross-cutting theme to be considered in relation to social protection. The results of the survey showed the importance of going more deeply into the theme of care and UN Women was able to reconcile inter-institutional interests in pursuit of the same objective.

In the case of rural women, who in many countries are also indigenous and migrant women, various initiatives have strengthened their entrepreneurial capacity, access to productive resources including technology and financial inclusion, and better conditions in the environment. In the case of the Caribbean, support to women small farmers has strengthened their capacity for post-hurricane recovery. On the theme of social protection, the achievements, especially in the Caribbean, are considered modest, linked to raising awareness of social protection systems with a gender focus, but it is not known whether these were transformed into actions.

In Guatemala, UN Women contributed to ensuring that women targeted by its projects go from being rural women to being women entrepreneurs. In addition, they have been trained on the various forms of violence which they suffer, and increasingly participate in political decision-making spaces. The women have also learned to work as a team, foster organizing for production, produce quality products and sell them, prepare budgets and promote partnerships with suppliers and customers. UN Women's principal success is having succeeded in women enhancing their self-esteem, increasing their knowledge and empowering themselves, to take their own decisions, have confidence to carry on a productive activity, decide on their assets and dispose of the income that they generate. The strategic decision of UN Women to integrate all its programmes in the framework of a common vision which permitted the development of a model of work on rural women's economic empowerment and this has been steadily expanded and consolidated. UN Women has stood out for its strong capacities to influence public institutions through direct dialogue with political leaders. Knowing the reality of women based on evidence and translating this reality to different sectors to take action is recognized as an added value of UN Women, together with possessing a vision of coordination and links, both with government and the private sector, which allows amplification of the interventions of its projects.

In short, the principal contributions of UN Women relate to visualizing and adding to the agenda key WEE themes based on evidence, the capacity to generate intersectoral and multi-stakeholder links with a common objective, involvement and empowerment of rights holders in the processes, combination of an orientation towards changes in legislation and policies with the generation of targeted strategies and models of work (rural women, in particular).

Regarding the survey results, in answer to questions on the “most significant change”, in line with what was indicated previously, the stakeholders prioritized; i) **capacity-building of rights holders**; ii) support for the elaboration of **laws, plans and policies**; iii) **generation and management of knowledge**. The case studies in Guatemala and Paraguay are presented in greater detail below, with the results achieved for particular contexts, themes and situations, while listing important good practices and lessons learned (see summary sheets below).

| CASE STUDY: CARE IN PARAGUAY | |
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| BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SITUATION | Care work is one of the less recognized aspects of women’s contribution to development and economic survival of households. As an activity, it does not count in the market economy and from a social perspective, it is undervalued and invisible. Gender stereotypes place women as solely responsible for care tasks, which take them an enormous amount of time, and at the same time generate an unequal distribution of care work between men and women. Progress on the theme of care requires cultural change in the long term. States and other development stakeholders must take specific measures to reduce and redistribute the burden of care work on women. |
| PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS OF CONTEXT | The Time Use Survey carried out in 2016 shows the disproportionate workload of women as a consequence of the sum of paid and unpaid work. 3.9% of women carried out unpaid activities compared with 85.1% of men. Of total weekly hours worked, men spend 75% on paid work and only 25% on unpaid work, In the case of women, they spend 61% of their total time to unpaid activities and only 39% to paid activities. In total, women spend 28.7 hours per week on this activity, while for men it is 12.9 hours per week. Although women spend less time on paid work, adding the time spent on unpaid work, their overall weekly workload is higher than that of men, |
| PRINCIPAL RESULTS ACHIEVED | In 2011, the UN Women Office initiated its strategy to support the design of a national care policy, with a focus on social protection, gender equality and care. It succeeded in including the need for this policy in the national agenda. In 2012, it produced a diagnostic on the care situation in Paraguay and in 2016, a time use survey. It continued to drive studies, technical advice, workshops and sharing of experiences of other countries, especially in Uruguay, to position public care policy as a priority of the country. As a result, the Technical Secretariat for Planning and the Ministry of Women, supported by UN Women, have linked with the Steering Group on Public Care Policies (GIPC), with the aim of progressing towards a social protection system. They have begun to talk about the design of a national care policy. In 2017 and 2018, the impact of UN Women was stronger in maintaining and strengthening the steering group, so that it was recognized as an institution. In the framework of its action, UN Women also succeeded in getting the Ministry of Social Development to introduce the theme of care in the National Poverty Reduction Plan, making it a priority and cross-cutting theme to be considered in relation to social protection. |
| INFLUENCING FACTORS | The results of the survey made clear the importance of looking more deeply into the theme of care and UN Women succeeded in reconciling inter-institutional interest in the same objective, Thus, the Government opted for institutionalizing and strengthening the GIPC. Its function is to head a process of participative construction of the care policy. The Group approved a conceptual technical framework, launched in 2019, which proposes the direction and strategic lines of the policy. In addition, it contains a roadmap to 2020, which includes activities to involve government departments. However, its implementation was suspended because of COVID-19. Parallel to this, UN Women is promoting, together with the Steering Group, a draft law on care which complements the policy. |
| LESSONS | |
| GOOD PRACTICES | LESSONS LEARNED |
| -Complementing the political support with knowledge products which provide evidence and provide inputs. -Using communication strategies to introduce new ideas and show the need for a public care policy. -Opting for an inter-institutional and intersectoral steering group to add sustainability to the process. -Focusing the work on changes in legislation and public policies. | -Uncertainty about the future of the Country Office will be an obstacle to consolidation of the work teams. -Keeping quiet about the future of the Country Office weakens political dialogue, generates instability in relations with public institutions and prevents the initiation of new processes or continuing existing ones. |
| CONCLUSIONS AND PROJECTIONS | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertainty concerning the closure of the Country Office, while generating situations which weakened the work of UN Women, did not prevent it continuing to promote themes of a national character, which says much about its vision and commitment. • The good work and performance of UN Women, its legitimacy and credibility, have allowed it, despite the uncertainty about its future, to continue to trust in its leadership and support its interventions. • Focusing on the construction of a national care policy allowed it to have greater influence on public intentionality, without prejudice to complementary initiatives, promoting a model of organization of social care with a gender focus which will contribute to women’s autonomy and economic empowerment. | |

- The departure of UN Women would put at grave risk the process of constructing the public care policy, and even worse, the initiative for a draft law on the subject.
- UN Women Paraguay still has ample room for work on the design of the national care policy, especially when the steps to be followed have already been defined in the conceptual framework designed by the GIPC.

CASE STUDY: DOMESTIC WORKING WOMEN IN GUATEMALA AND PARAGUAY

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| BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SITUATION | The category of lower monthly pay is that of domestic service, which is made up mostly of women and concentrates 15.3% of the female workforce and is also where there is a greater deficit of decent work. In most countries domestic workers are subject to special laws limiting their labour rights with respect to formal employees; it is also characterized by low level of formalization of the employment relationship and by poor social security coverage. UN Women's work in this area covers equal pay for jobs of equal value and gender-sensitive social protection systems. In this line it promotes the ratification and implementation of ILO Convention 189 through legal and policy-making initiatives. |
| PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS OF CONTEXT | In Paraguay, of 7.1% of the country's working population is engaged in domestic work, with a more urban than rural presence, with 93.6% being women compared to 7.7% men. Men engaged in domestic work earn much more than domestic working women, with the wage gap in this sector being the largest in the country. On the other hand, 9 out of 10 domestic workers are not enrolled in the pension and retirement system, working informally. Paraguay ratified ILO Convention 189 and in 2015 adopted the Domestic Labour Act, which equated the rights of domestic workers to the general regime, with the exception of wage provisions, which went from 40% from the minimum to 60% (from the statutory minimum wage). In Guatemala, domestic workers are a vulnerable group, with job precariousness, with most of them indigenous women and girls. The regulatory framework does not recognize greater rights for domestic workingwomen. The CEDAW Committee recommended Guatemala, among others, to gild the ratification of ILO Convention 189. |
| PRINCIPAL RESULTS ACHIEVED | UN Women Paraguay articulated a process of reform of article 10 of the Law on Domestic Work, which would move from 60% to 100% of the general regime for workers throughout the country. That is, the right to the legal minimum wage of 100%. This reform was an issue of national debate, mainly because of its possible socio-labor impact. If the reform was approved, a wave of mass dismissals of domestic workers was expected, so UN Women forged a needed partnership with the Ministry of Labour. Reform was approved in 2019. On a practical level, however, there is a gap between the norm and reality; the proper dissemination of what change entails is needed to combat disenfranchisement of rights and discrimination. In the case of Guatemala, UN Women established an agenda to influence Congress for ratification of Convention 189, in partnership with the Ministry of Labour and ILO. It sought to raise awareness of the situation of domestic workers with a decent working approach, highlighting the gender gap. Also, it designed and implemented a campaign to spread the agreement and launched in 2018 in partnership with trade unions, women's organizations and other actors. Despite efforts, employers did not support management, mainly because they refused to pay the minimum wage and social security. At the Congressional level, Bill 4981 linked to the Convention came to second reading (one was missing to become law). |
| INFLUENCING FACTORS | The country offices of UN Women of Guatemala and Paraguay succeeded in promoting and promoting their respective strategies around women domestic workers because they had the vision of allying themselves with the Ministry of Labour, the governing body on the rights of the sector, and with the ILO, particularly because of the confluence of approaches on decent work. In both countries, UN Women took advantage of its comparative advantages to link directly with civil society, women's organizations, feminists, trade unions and public institutions. It is important to note that in both Paraguay and Guatemala the participation of trade union representatives of domestic workers contributed decisively to reaching the right holders to empower them and contribute them to their consolidation as subjects of rights. In this way they managed to legitimize their actions in front of the government and other spaces, and to position the issue in the political and national debate. The sum of various efforts allowed UN Women to support articulation in order to achieve complementarities and not to duplicate. Innovation in strategies was part of a broader agenda, such as public policies on decent work, social security, and care. UN Women Guatemala failed to get Congress to approve Convention 189, but it made the situation of discrimination against domestic working women visible and generated knowledge about the instrument. In Paraguay, national legislation was not consistent with the Convention, with legal reforms being necessary. UN Women thought about the processes, gave the domestic workers a voice and made it easier for them to scale towards their goals. |

LESSONS

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| Lessons Learned: -In Paraguay, uncertainty about the future of the Country Office hindered the consolidation of work teams, which negatively impacted the processes initiated. | Good Practices: -Focusing on changes in legislation and public policies allows progress towards UN Women's objectives. |
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| -Regulatory changes in the case of gender-based discrimination require cultural changes, so the former without the latter is not enough. And it is also difficult to achieve regulatory changes when cultural conceptions of discrimination are maintained. | -Turning women domestic workers into their own spokesperson legitimized the actions and empowered the sector's capabilities. -Product generation helps to inform and empower UN Women's position. -Focusing action from work on economic empowerment contributed to overcoming cultural resistances. |
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CONCLUSIONS AND PROJECTIONS

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertainty regarding the closure of the Paraguay Country Office, while creating situations that weakened UN Women's management, did not prevent it from continuing to push national issues, which says much about its vision and commitment. In addition, the good work and performance of the agency, its legitimacy and credibility, have allowed, despite the uncertainty of its future, institutions to continue to rely on its leadership and support its interventions. • The thematic link between women domestic workers and women victims of human trafficking is crucial, as many victims of trafficking are caught for work purposes, and then end up being exploited work or sexually. As domestic workers become more empowered, they will be less vulnerable to human trafficking. • UN Women must continue to support and accompany trade unions and domestic workers' organizations, because they form the bridge with rights holders; in addition, because they have ties within countries, where much of the female domestic workers come from, facilitating UN Women's access to work on their empowerment. • The importance of articulating in both countries a working table specifically addressing the issue of women domestic workers, involving the Ministry of Women, the Ministry of Labour, trade unions and committed organizations, has been suggested so that, with the accompaniment and advice of UN Women, a post-COVID 19 strategic plan is developed and the steps taken to protect the sector are defined. • Sharing and exchanging other countries' experiences with policy and social progress on the rights of domestic workers would contribute to enhancing actions in Guatemala and Paraguay to guide national work, thanks to synergies and similar interventions on which to rely. |
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CASE STUDY: RURAL WOMEN IN GUATEMALA

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| BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SITUATION | In general, rural women and girls have limited access to productive resources such as land, agricultural inputs, financing and credit, outreach services and technology, which in turn limits their efficiency in the agricultural sector, access to public services, social protection, employment opportunities and local and national markets and institutions. These situations show structural gender violence which impacts on their rights. |
| PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS OF CONTEXT | Guatemala is the Latin American country with the highest percentage of women without their own income (51% of women), where the gender gap is widest. 54% of the Guatemalan population is urban and 46% live in rural areas. The majority of the land for production is in the hands of men. Although rural women participate and/or are in charge of agricultural production, they are not owners and do not benefit from productive programmes. Official programmes are confined to traditional sectors and they remain invisible in value chains. Women's work in agricultural fields is seen as a family matter, and they are not perceived as farmers, nor is the time and effort that they invest valued. |
| PRINCIPAL RESULTS ACHIEVED | In Guatemala, UN Women contributed to ensuring that women targeted by its projects go from being rural women to being women entrepreneurs. They are aware of the value and quality of their products and marketing. In addition, they have been trained on the various forms of violence which they suffer, and increasingly participate in political decision-making spaces, and their self-esteem has improved, which allows them to participate in community meetings. The women have also learned to work as a team, foster organizing for production, produce quality products and sell them, prepare budgets and promote partnerships with suppliers and customers. UN Women's principal success is having succeeded in women enhancing their self-esteem, increasing their knowledge and strengthening their capacities, to take their own decisions, have confidence to carry on a productive activity, decide on their assets and dispose of the income that they generate. |
| INFLUENCING FACTORS | The strategic decision of UN Women to integrate all its programmes in the framework of a common vision has permitted the development of a model of work on rural women's economic empowerment which has been steadily expanded and consolidated. UN Women has stood out for its strong capacities to influence public institutions through direct dialogue with political leaders, which has led to their involvement in the theme of gender. Knowing the reality of women based on evidence and translating this reality to different sectors to take action is recognized as an added value of UN Women, together with possessing a vision of coordination and links, both with government and the private sector, which allows amplification of the interventions of its projects. UN Women has ample capacity to respond rapidly to emerging situations in favour of rural women. |

LESSONS

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| GOOD PRACTICES | LESSONS LEARNED |
|-----------------------|------------------------|

| | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Generation of knowledge on economic empowerment - Personalized advice for each group of women. - Joint work between the Regional Office and Country Office. - Involvement of companies and local government in fair and sustainable commerce. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literacy of rural women is essential to progress toward economic empowerment and defense of their rights. - Necessity of working in an approach based on market demand. - Involvement of public institutions from the start of the intervention. |
|--|--|

CONCLUSIONS AND PROJECTIONS

- Integrated management of the portfolio has been key in the face of limitations in mobilization of resources and generating real changes in the lives of women and families.
- In the face of COVID-19, Un Women is having an influence on State programmes reaching territories and women.
- UN Women should concentrate on the legislative sphere and public policy, both because of its experience of influencing policy and its facilities for political dialogue at the highest level.
- UN Women should reinforce the effective participation of women in community decision-making spaces and their link with anchor companies which bring sustainability to their production.
- More effective strategies are required for transfer of knowledge and technologies to public institutions.
- It is important for the knowledge instruments of UN Women in terms of rural women’s economic empowerment to be institutionalized.

A look at the chain of results of the proposed regional Theory of Change shows that the greatest successes in terms of results have been in Guatemala with rural women, and also significant results on the theme of care in Paraguay, where the opportunity was created with the introduction of the theme in the National Poverty Reduction Plan. The greatest difficulties and limited progress appear in the theme of women domestic workers, where the problem of compliance with the law is evident. In contexts where there is powerful internal colonialism, aggravated by other fundamentalist currents, this theme is difficult to address, especially as it directly touches power relations, puts stress on privileges – which are reflected in the studies – and even gives rise to conflicts of interest for women who hire the services of other women. Even though all the themes and situations which it is sought to transform relate to social structures and norms, this in particular challenges the racism rooted in societies which runs through its institutions.

In general, the partners value positively the contributions of UN Women, and further highlight that in the case of **national and/or regional debates on plans, strategies and/or policies related to rural women** conducted from a perspective of gender equality and with the support of UN Women, the **elaboration of laws, policies and/or plans** related to women’s economic empowerment, the **adoption of gender-sensitive tools** which respond to States’ international commitments regarding women’s economic empowerment, the perception of focal points and partners is fairly similar.

Only in three cases is the *perception of focal points of the added value of UN Women more positive than that of the partners*, such as the case of the contribution related to **promotion of women’s economic rights based on the SDG** and national and international human rights instruments, the **elaboration of knowledge products** related to women’s economic empowerment, and – to a lesser degree – **signing up to WEE measures including the development and implementation** of action plans for organizations and companies.

On the other hand, there are three cases where the *perception of the partners is significantly more favourable than the perception of the focal points*, such as the **ratification of and support for the implementation of international women’s human rights instruments**. Specifically on economic empowerment, including ILO Convention 189, national and/or debates on **plans, strategies and/or policies related to decent work and women domestic workers and the care economy** conducted from a gender equality perspective and with the support of UN Women.

FIGURE 20– PERCEPTION OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF UN WOMEN (COMPARATIVE VIEW)



Source: Surveys of partners and WEE focal points

An approach to the strategies and actions in the region to address inequalities and discrimination allows identification of a wide range of alternatives which have also had varying degrees of effectiveness, depending on external and internal factors.

Key to the achievement of the results has been the support of international instruments on protection of rights, giving force to the triple mandate, and linking stakeholders and sectors, working in coordination with civil society and rights holders and taking advantage of regional intergovernmental spaces.

In addition, evidence-based work is widely recognized as a necessity and good practice, but to move from conviction of the necessity and importance to State action requires technical assistance for the elaboration of policies, which means, for example, carrying out costings and analysis which show the impact of a public gender policy/WEE on society in general, public spending, poverty reduction, etc.

However, it is also important to emphasize that is not always possible, in a strict sense, to validate the degree of effectiveness of a strategy or action, because the setting of baselines is not frequent, the processes are in many cases of limited scope and depend on external financing, and because environments can be highly adverse in many ways. Added to this is the limited frequency of processes of systematic organization and the weakness of orientation and monitoring the focus on impact, which stems from the lack of available information on effective transformational changes.

In more general terms, and based on a more or less general opinion, as well as successful experiences, there is the need for regional strategic decisions aimed at better focusing, which allows concentrating resources and efforts on actions, perhaps less extensive, but more intensive and with a transforming impact, which can then be expanded through replication and upscaling of validated models. In this respect, it should be mentioned that the Integrated Model of Rural Women’s Economic Empowerment was a model evaluated in 2016 in the framework of the Programme on Broadening Economic Opportunities for Rural Women Entrepreneurs in Latin America (BEO), which began in 2013 with an initiative of UN Women and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (FIDA).

FINDING 8: Quality evidence has been relevant in guiding working strategies. Henceforth, the promotion of knowledge management and the strategic use of information, should be enhanced.

The generation of knowledge, one of UN Women's great contributions in the region, has fed strategic decisions and strengthened regional actions and actions in countries; in addition, the mapping of documents and initial progress in the generation of a community of practice has contributed to the sharing of knowledge and to some extent to performance. At the same time, basic weaknesses persist in the communication and exchange of information.

A clear knowledge management strategy has not been identified, an assertion which to some extent concerns the entire Regional Office, although AWP 2018 shows the development and launch of a GCO strategy in the region. The effort to create a knowledge management portal on SharePoint is recognized and it was highlighted that, in the area of WEE, it was the first to complete it. In this framework, the (corporative) Knowledge Management Strategy 2018-2021, which includes adopting a cross-cutting approach to knowledge management in annual work plans and the incorporation of indicators of management performance, offers an initial application framework. However, from the perspective of the evaluation team, knowledge management must go further than relating to the impact and focus on the use of knowledge –major partners recognize the values of supporting abstract discussions with evidence – the development, validation, replication and upscaling of models, and the promotion of social innovations to maximize the impact. This should be a priority role of the Regional Office in the future,

At monitoring level, there are no dedicated resources, unlike planning and evaluation which receive more attention. In general, there are weaknesses concerning availability of and access to information, both in ACRO and field offices, as well as limitations concerning quality and/or clarity of the available information. For example, at budgetary level “there is a problem with tracking of investments”. This affects the development of evidence-based strategic management – and thus putting to good effect – the results and changes in the medium and long term to which Un Women is contributing, which, as can be expected, will increasingly influence financing which increasingly looks for impacts.

Q8 Is there an implicit theory of change which guides what it is wanted to do, for whom it is wanted and how it is going to be done?

FINDING 9: Having a regional Theory of Change will serve as the basis for a regional strategy to guide decisions related to priorities and orientation towards impact.

The Strategic Note 2018-2021 (like any planning document) contains elements of a Theory of Change. The Caribbean MCO has recovered and reconstructed the Theory of Change, seeking to clarify the implicit causal relations (draft Boundary Report), identifying the following results in the medium/long term: i) women farmers in the Caribbean are empowered and resilient to climate change; ii) women have greater opportunities and economic influence.

However, there was an agreement by consensus during the evaluation process to develop with the ACRO team a draft Theory of Change for the work on WEE in the region which translates into an opportunity to explicitly guide the logic of national and regional actions and focus better on the impact, harmonizing and aligning a strategic (and political) view which integrates the various areas, themes and strategies. Thus, the evaluation allowed a participative process of construction of a Theory of Change for this area, and validation and enrichment of its assumptions by the country offices.

The assumptions of the proposed Theory of Change (pp. 23 and 24) were validated by the offices as highly relevant or irrelevant except the following, which was qualified as partially relevant by two offices (perhaps focused on the Win-Win project): “Access to decent work, productive resources, income security and decision-making in the economic sphere is a long-term process which only occurs through significant social changes at all levels – from individuals to communities and institutions”. The

survey also allowed identification of other assumptions considered relevant in terms of their potential inclusion:

OTHER ASSUMPTIONS CONSIDERED RELEVANT:

- **Appropriation** of these themes by governments, at any level, is fundamental to achieving the desired changes and necessary investment; working with different levels of government.
- Having **incentives** to break down the sexual division of knowledge and occupations (STEM); recognition of women
- New **positive perceptions of masculinity** (working with the whole community, not just women)
- **Intersectionality**- consideration of **specific groups**: indigenous women, migrants)
- Generation and management of **knowledge and evidence**, better **data, systematic information – monitoring, oversight and measurement** of progress, **international data**
- **Social protection – WEE link**
- **Education** of women and girls for the labour market (link with intersectionality)

It is noteworthy that some proposed assumptions, such as intersectionality, have not appeared noticeably at any other times in the evaluation, or, for example, in the question on cross-cutting approaches. In this case it is specific and also a focus of special relevance with respect to the priority themes of this evaluation.

The evaluation has also made it possible to map the existing ToCs in the various countries. No office indicated that it did not have a ToC (for the office in general, WEE and/or a project) which shows a related culture and skills. In turn, it offers an opportunity for analysis of their approaches and quality. At the same time, it allows the possibility of integration of elements of existing ToC in the regional, which also applies to harmonizing a ToC with the Caribbean (including Haiti), and this allows a shared strategic vision in a context of diversity. It also means the need to establish agreements on the use of the ToC, adaptations and adaptive management.

It should be emphasized that, while having a ToC generates possibilities, the development of a ToC, to be useful, requires: i) the existence of a system for monitoring assumptions; ii) the use of the ToC as a management and decision-making tool; iii) mapping the contribution of each office/country to the ToC; iv) shared management and decision-making spaces, based on a common vision or framework. In this regard, the work guided by annual work plans (AWP), the type of information available for decision-making, the persistent weaknesses in the M&E system regarding reporting of the effect (and impact) limit the possibilities of visualizing showing and valuing changes at transformational level.

FIGURE 21 – THEORY OF CHANGE: LOGIC OF THINKING AND ACTION



Q9 What is the added value of UN Women and its comparative advantages in achieving results in the WEE area in the Latin American and Caribbean Region?

Q16 How effective has UN Women been in influencing other agencies, governments and partners to incorporate the gender perspective in general, and particularly the focus on WEE?

FINDING 10: The legitimacy of UN Women reinforces its advocacy capacity.

UN Women is recognized as a unique and privileged body to address the subject of WEE in the region, as well as being a young organization which has come to break with paradigms and explore new themes and possibilities, such as working with the private sector. Its presence in the countries added to the regional programmatic presence was highlighted as a unique combination which must be strengthened.

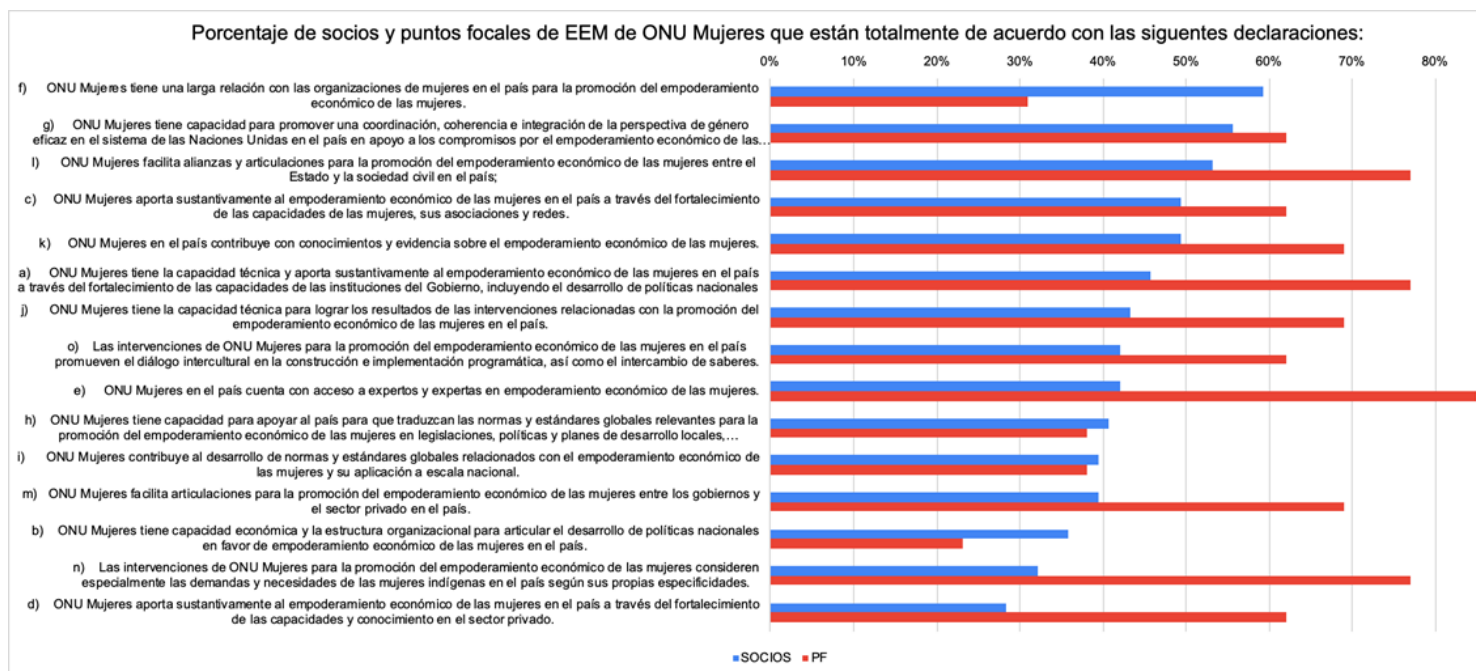
The principal added value recognized by partners related to the relationship with women's organizations in the countries, which certainly has something to do with the relationship and consultation processes with civil society which characterize the action of UN Women. However, it is also cautioned that "over the course of the last few years, UN Women lost a little of the link with the social, feminist organizations", attributed in part to the emphasis on working with the private sector. In addition, the functioning of the Civil Society Advisory Group was weakened in the last period (2019). As this is the principal added value for which it is recognized, it is something that UN Women must maintain and strengthen, and also incorporate a greater perspective of diversity, promoting links with young women and other key groups with a focus of diversity and intersectionality.

Added to the foregoing is recognition of the coordinating role and capacity of UN Women, within the UN System, and also the generation of partnerships between the State and civil society on WEE. They also highlight the valuing of partners, capacity-building of women, their associations and networks, and generation of knowledge. All of this assumes a capacity to impact the importance of introducing the gender perspective in addressing WEE.

The statements on added value where there is the greatest convergence between the external and the internal related to the promotion of integration of the gender perspective in the UN System, and the capacity to translate international standards into national laws and policies.

There are two statements in which the results of the survey of partners are more positive: the relationship with women's organizations and the capacity of UN Women to articulate the development of national policies on WEE. The self-evaluation is generally significantly more positive than the external evaluation concerning added value. The statements on added value in which there is more divergence between the external and internal perceptions are related to strengthening of capacities and knowledge in the private sector, access to experts on WEE and consideration of the demands and needs of indigenous women.

FIGURE 22 – PERCEPTION OF THE ADDED VALUE OF UN WOMEN (COMPARATIVE VIEW)



The case of SEGIB and the line of collaboration which in 2018 crystallized in a joint initiative which seeks to promote the abolition or reform of discriminatory laws which hinder or negatively affect WEEE iOs a positive case which shows the impact of other stakeholders in incorporating the gender perspective.

In addition, as described in relation to Finding 5, the use of the report on the Progress of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean 2017 has resulted in actions by different stakeholders in several countries.

In general, there is recognition of the capacity of UN Women to open and introduce new themes (care, equal pay, etc.) and impact on the agendas of regional bodies and those in the countries, based on its legitimacy, generation of evidence, construction of a narrative on the importance of the theme, strategies and methodological paths, and its great communicational strength: “it is the great awareness raiser”.

With regard to the work and interagency coordination, in the period 2015-2019, in total, UN Women participated or is participating in the implementation of 14 joint programmes relevant to women’s economic empowerment. The strategic interagency partnership with UNDP and ILO stands out on the themes of care and social protection, and the partnership with ECLAC for the information repository on time use. Interagency partnerships have also been developed in the countries, seeking complementarity of actions and response capacity.

Other partnerships with regional and global stakeholders such as SEGIB and OECD have been pioneering and have resulted in concrete initiatives with a gender perspective, and specifically in favour of WEE. In countries, there are various active partnerships with government bodies, civil society, private sector and academia, according to current priorities and projects. The work on inter-institutional and multi-stakeholder platforms, which generally characterizes the work of UN Women, has allowed strengthened coordinated action in pursuit of shared objectives.

FINDING 11: Partnerships and interactions with other stakeholders inside and outside the UN system have resulted in concrete initiatives for the integration and strengthening of gender-focused interventions aimed at enhancing WEE.

In general, it should be noted that in the period, there has been a transition from a practice focused on signing numerous memorandums of understanding without any monitoring and often without results, to a more strategic approach, in which agreements involve a structure, results to be achieved and a monitoring plan, and also concentrating and operating from a platform. Following the Corporative Evaluation of Strategic Alliances of UN Women (2017), some countries, such as Bolivia (2018) carried out an evaluation of their strategic alliances, showing the value of having a conceptual and operational framework (methodology) for the construction and management of strategic alliances, something which could enhance the progress already made at regional level. A greater “structure” in the establishment of collaboration agreements is positively assessed by the partners, as are perspectives of greater scope aimed at generating change.

The majority of UN Women offices, between 2015 and 2019, promoted South-South exchange initiatives between countries of the region to promote women’s economic empowerment, The Caribbean MCO highlighted its participation in the WEP Forum in Brazil in 2018. Like Brazil, it developed exchanges with another region (Africa), which means a significant potential area of expansion, which would benefit mutual learning and innovation. All the offices participated in the WEP Forum in 2019 and took advantage to hold a meeting of all WEP focal points.

It is also interesting to highlight the work under the MyDEL programme to encourage rural women’s access to resources in the framework of public policies in the Central American Integration System (SICA), which includes a bank.

Q11 What are the principal innovations, drivers and barriers to change in this sphere of UN Women’s work?

Q14 What new approaches are necessary to respond effectively to the needs of marginalized groups where UN Women can make a difference, considering the intersectional approach?

FINDING 12: UN Women has introduced issues, approached new actors, and implemented innovative strategies, approaches and methodologies at different scales within countries in the region. The replication and/or scaling of innovations requires further analysis.

In general terms, working with the private sector can be considered a strategic innovation, together with the introduction of the theme of care to the regional agenda. In both cases, these are innovations which clearly mark the strategic direction of UN Women going forward. In the case of care, its relevance and cross-cutting approach is already envisaged, so it will be a critical theme in terms of impact.

In this framework, the diagnostic and elaboration of a proposal to promote innovative financing and investment initiatives with a gender focus should be highlighted, headed up to April 2020 by the WEE area. In countries, innovations have been generated and are in progress to address the interrelation between gender equality, indigenous populations and climate change. Work with women in Amazonia is being carried out by both Ecuador and Bolivia. The connections and opportunities which derive from renewable energies for rural women is a theme which has also been explored by Paraguay.

The project financed by the SDG Fund in Costa Rica also contemplates the development of participative laboratories of innovation in communities, an inclusive approach to innovation which could be replicated in the future. In the field of “thematic combinations”, Colombia is working with a Territorial

Intervention Model in the context of building peace for the women's economic empowerment within their rights as a whole, which can be replicated by other stakeholders and/or upscaled in the country context.

In Mexico, the project *Avancemos por la igualdad* (Let's advance towards equality), which is being implemented in Mexico City and Oaxaca stands out. It consists of a programmatic, political and communication focus which is based on three action pillars: 1) economic recovery including the areas affected by the earthquakes of 2017 in Mexico through women's economic empowerment; 2) promotion of gender equality in Danone (Mexico), guaranteeing that all women have the same conditions and opportunities in work as men, and 3) raising awareness of the importance of equality of opportunities for women and men in Mexico.

Other countries, like Bolivia and Columbia, are promoting and supporting the work with women in areas such as coffee growing and construction. Some progress has been made – including a diagnostic financed from its own resources by the Regional Office and implemented jointly with the Uruguay Office – in the visualization and launch of initiatives on the theme of women and STEM, where the best-paid jobs will be in the future. In addition, they can be steadily integrated in enterprises linked to territorial intervention models (Colombia). Mexico has also developed a proposal for geospatial analysis on the theme of care and incorporation of women in the labour market, in conjunction with a global innovation hub.

These are just a few of the innovations generated in the countries which primarily concern the programmatic. Two elements are also somewhat novel in the WEE strategy, highlighted by Mexico, concerning working with masculinities and growing attention to the theme of changes in social norms and behaviour.

The position achieved by UN Women means that it is now better placed to “spread the news of the innovative things which are happening in countries”, including promoting their upscaling at regional level, for which, however, a stricter approach to experiences, generation of evidence, systematization is needed. In addition, it is essential to support innovation with a culture of openness to failure, which motivates innovation “as a practice which does not necessarily deliver positive results” which also means monitoring and flexibility to identify “quick failures”.

The most important things to highlight is that in future innovation must be scaled up at strategic level, in combination with specific targeting, to generate validated models which can be replicated and upscaled and which contribute to more effective, efficient and sustainable solutions than the existing ones. Throughout this process, partnerships with different stakeholders and sectors are crucial, not only on a basis of affinity, but increasingly seeking complementarities and opening up spaces for co-creation.

With regard to approaches and their capacity to respond to the needs of the most marginalized groups, the report on Progress of Women contributes by identifying an innovative framework of three scenarios: sticky floors, broken ladders and glass ceilings. It explains that the women with the greatest disadvantages and obstacles to economic empowerment are found on the “sticky floors”. The six strategies that stem from the report visualize for each the differentiated effects that might be expected for each of the three scenarios. In the Methodological Note annexed to the report, it states that the three scenarios “are based on analysis of the selected indicators for the patterns of participation in work, intra-household economic empowerment and family dynamics by socioeconomic group”, However, it is important to emphasize that, in general, the indicators do not provide breakdowns by

ethnic group, race, age, region, etc., which means that countries must undertake a more specific and detailed analysis of the characteristics and location of women on the “sticky floors” in order to develop specific measures and affirmative actions to effectively address intrageneric diversity and inequalities.

However, neither the interviews nor the surveys provide very clear or convincing evidence concerning the intersectional approach, for example, in the work with women entrepreneurs, there is no evidence that consideration is given to generational differences (and inequalities). As pointed out in an AWID document on intersectionality which could serve as a reference for the future⁴⁹, “although it is customary to say that women are not a homogeneous sector, the implications of this tend to be lost when it comes to application. As a result, certain subjects and experiences remain in the shade or invisible. Problems which affect only, or mainly, certain women can remain without an appropriate or adequate response”. This reproduces and sometimes tends to expand intergenerational gaps. As shown by various studies in the region⁵⁰.

Q12 How strategic have the partnerships established by UN Women been, at regional and national level, for progress in terms of WEE?

FINDING 13: Working with macroeconomic sectors is fundamental and requires further strengthening, which in turn entails strengthening of internal capacities in this area.

According to the survey, the national stakeholders with which there was the most coordination (5-7 offices) are Ministries of Women/National Institutes of Women, women’s organizations and enterprises; Ministries of Rural Development/Agriculture; local governments. Likewise, a great many initiatives are coordinated with UN programmes and funds (UNDP, ILO, ECLAC, IOM, FAO, IFAD, WFP, UNFPA/UNHCR/United Nations Global Pact).

A progressive expansion or shift can be seen to partnerships with Ministries of Planning, Finance, Productive Development, etc., advancing in the integration of “women’s” or social themes (e.g. care) in the central macroeconomic decision-making sectors and themes, financial inclusion of women and use of public resources to support public policies beyond the theme of microenterprises: “making gender more than a matter for women, an economic matter, for a healthy and inclusive economy”. The key lies in promoting dialogue between Ministries of Women and Ministries of Finance. It also addresses the multilateral bank. This means, at the same time, strengthening capacity at the level of the offices themselves for technical dialogue on a larger scale.

As an example of good practice, Guatemala consolidated its multisectoral approach on 5 March 2020 with the launch of the National Coalition for the Women’s Economic Empowerment in conjunction with the Ministry of Economy. It allows a multisectoral alliance between the government, private sector, civil society, academia and the diplomatic corps to put women at the centre of the national agenda and advance together based on three pillars: 1) income generation through business and entrepreneurship opportunities; 2) technical training for work; 3) National Care System

In relation to the partnerships with institutes of statistics – and although the survey is not very explicit concerning the relevance and work in different countries – mention should be made of the work of some countries like Colombia which form part of the global strategy *Women Count*, aimed at the creation, promotion and use of gender statistics, inclusion of the gender perspective in censuses and

⁴⁹ https://www.awid.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/nterseccionalidad_-_una_herramienta_para_la_justicia_de_genero_y_la_justicia_economica.pdf

⁵⁰ See for example: <https://www.mujeresdelsur-afm.org/mortalidad-materna-y-desigualdades-encubiertas/>

other consultations incorporating the use of Big Data, and improving access to and use of these data⁵¹. Mexico also has done well consolidated work on the theme of statistics. It has established an important partnership with the Mechanism for the Advance of Women (INMUJERES) and the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) to incorporate the gender perspective in the production and analysis of national statistics. This partnership began formally some fifteen years ago. From 2006, the Division of Gender Affairs (DAG) of ECLAC was added to this joint effort at a key moment for the institutionalization of the work: the creation of the Working Group in Gender Statistics (GTEG) at the Conference of Statistics of the Americas (CEA) of ECLAC. Since then, the four partner institutions have redoubled their efforts in the framework of a joint programme to drive the generation, analysis and dissemination of statistics for planning and evaluation of public policies on equality between men and women, thus responding to the international commitments assumed, such as CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action⁵².

In the case of academia, there are valuable experiences in countries such as Mexico, Colombia, Uruguay and Ecuador, but it is important to continue consolidating these strategic alliances and expand the role of UN Women in the generation and management of knowledge, validation of models, upscaling and innovation. In addition, it is clearly important for UN Women to have an increasing impact on the curriculums of professions involving WEE, planning, budgetary management, entrepreneurship, etc.

Furthermore, in the survey of countries, only one case of coordination with an indigenous organization is reported, although there is likely to be coordination with other organizations, e.g. women domestic workers who, in several countries, are mostly indigenous. It is not clear from the survey that there is any coordination with the education sector, which is key to generating transformations at different levels, from the impact on social norms and gender stereotypes which negatively affect the exercise of women's economic rights and opportunities, to sexual bias and limitations on women's access to technical and occupational training.

Q13 How can the synergies between the strategic priorities of UN Women be improved and, also, between the various projects and initiatives in the area of WEE?

Q21 What has been the interrelation and integration of the work of UN Women with respect to the different thematic pillars within Economic Empowerment and their various subthemes, between Economic Empowerment and the other thematic areas of UN Women and between different country offices?

FINDING 14: Progress has been made at the country level and, to a lesser extent, at the regional level towards a WEE programmatic approach, integrating the area of work with interventions in other areas addressed by UN Women.

Several countries – although not all – recognize substantial progress towards an approach that is programmatic and integrated with the other areas, which also enhance efficiency, generates countless possible combinations and greater prospects of sustainability.

Seen from a country perspective, it is recognized that the field offices should be much more interrelated and that their working strategies should be more integrated. In addition, at regional level, although there is clear clarity in the discourse on strategic links between different areas, in practice, due to the institutional dynamics and culture, the work is concentrated in each area, with little room for interaction, exchange and co-creation. This compartmentalized vision centred on affinity is also reflected in external links and the relationship with civil society. For example, although there is work

⁵¹ <https://data.unwomen.org/where-we-work/colombia>

⁵² <https://mexico.unwomen.org/es/nuestro-trabajo/estadisticas-de-genero>

with young people promoted in the normative area with full agendas, there is no promotion of a relationship with young women’s movements which prioritize the fight for sexual and reproductive rights, which are, of course, intrinsically linked to WEE, as also shown in one of the six strategies of the report on the Progress of Women. Although sexual and reproductive rights are an UNFPA mandate, it would be interesting to explore and possibly join forces to generate evidence and an agenda on its impact on WEE.

Furthermore, taking a wider view, it is considered that the provision of a territorial network or presence in the countries is one of the strengths and advantages of UN Women, yet this is not being exploited to the maximum> *“Impressive things are started, with an enormous head and heart, but they do not strengthen the muscles of the arms and legs. This means that their possibilities of generating a profound impact are limited”*.

The development and appropriation of a regional ToC opens the possibility of greater strategic and programmatic synergies at regional level from an approach involving contribution and complementarity, to generate effects and impacts.

Q15 What opportunities exist to enhance a regional approach?

FINDING 15: Despite valuing the technical assistance of the UN Women Regional Office to both the Caribbean Multi-Country Office and Haiti Country Office, there is a general perception of the need to promote and strengthen a broader regional approach. However, the challenges that this entails, such as language barriers and diverse socio-cultural contexts, are equally recognized.

The countries corresponding to the Caribbean MCO and Haiti perceive that the language barrier has a negative impact on the possibilities of a more regional approach, participation, exchange and mutual learning. In addition, it is considered that understanding of the specific realities and sociocultural context is limited, which distinguishes them from the “rest of the region” (LA) and in turn generates greater links through affinity with other regions and small island developing states (SIDS). The Caribbean has not identified proposals which have been developed jointly with ACRO and Haiti did not reply to the survey.

The perception of the existence of separate and unconnected micro-regions, with behaviours “like in their own world” and different priorities goes further; it identifies, for example, that the Southern Cone and Central America have particular, more inward-looking ways of thinking and behaviour which make strengthened and systematic South-South exchange and cooperation

FIGURE 23 – KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS BY LANGUAGE ON PRIORITY THEMES (LATIN AMERICA)

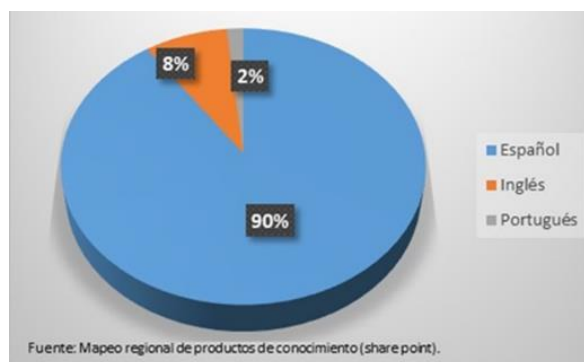


TABLE 13 – REGIONAL MAPPING OF KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS BY PRIORITY THEMES

| CRITERIA | | CARE | OUTCOME EQUALITY | SOCIAL PROTECTION | DOMESTIC WORK | TOTAL |
|----------------------|------------|------|------------------|-------------------|---------------|-------|
| Total quantity | | 24 | 9 | 6 | 23 | 62 |
| Quantity by language | Spanish | 22 | 8 | 3 | 23 | 56 |
| | English | 1 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 5 |
| | Portuguese | 1 | - | - | - | 1 |
| | French | - | - | - | - | - |

Source: Data from the regional mapping of knowledge products (SharePoint).

beyond its limits and affinities. The assumption of affinity prevails over complementarity, thus limiting possibilities of dialogue, enrichment, reflection and innovation, and a holistic vision framed in the Theory of Change and impact-oriented. A

well-defined knowledge management strategy complemented by one of strategic alliances would contribute to addressing these paradigms and limitations.

What stand out are the work and contributions of the Caribbean MCO, with the potential lessons for the rest of the region, e.g. in terms of social protection. In the period covered by the evaluation, the initiatives developed include the establishment of the foundations of social protection, strengthening of normative and governmental capacities in non-conditional protection and transfers, and capacities for data collection, monitoring and evaluation. Between 2015 and 2019, social protection was anchored in the normative work, synergies were strengthened, and the legislative framework was made more effective. The concept of “adaptive social protection” was introduced, especially at the time of the hurricane: “it is a question of ‘when’ not ‘if’”. Haiti also worked on a gender-sensitive social protection policy. The need also arises to construct an expanded concept and ownership of the region: “the Regional Office is not the people who are in Panama, the Regional Office is all of us...it is very important to think of ourselves as a region, and thus very importantly, with a greater focus on prioritization”.

VII. EFFICIENCY

Q17 To what extent have organizational structure and procedures contributed to improving UN Women's work in economic empowerment, both at the regional and national levels?

Q18 Where are the main gaps in human and financial resources to implement UN Women's mandate on economic empowerment?

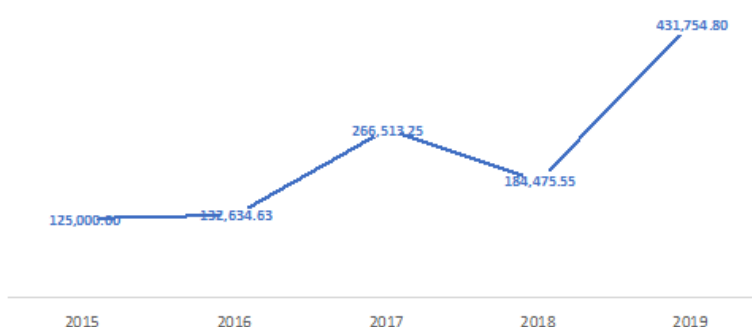
Q19 Where has UN Women been getting its financial resources and how sufficient and efficient have, they been to advance the economic empowerment agenda?

FINDING 16: With a limited budget of regular funds, the Regional Office increased and diversified its sources of WEE funding and maintained efficiency in budget execution, while delivering quality technical support. At the regional level, there has also been a budget increase based on non-regular funds.

The total budget of the UN Women Regional Office for LAC (UN Women ACRO) for the period 2015-2019 was USD 31,215,743.79, while the indicative budget for activities to promote the Economic Empowerment of Women (WEE) was of US \$ 1,140,378.23, which constitutes 3.7% of the total budget of the ACRO Regional Office. During the period, and specifically since 2018, the ACRO Regional Office has maximized the use of funds and the cost-benefit ratio based on a small,

but highly committed and capable team, which, however, has been frequently overwhelmed. It is worth mentioning that in 2017 a regional specialist was only incorporated after the position remained vacant since 2015; from then on, the team is basically made up of the specialist, a second stable person now

FIGURE 24 - BUDGET FOR WEE OF THE REGIONAL OFFICE (2015-2019)



Source: Data from ACRO PDR 2015-2019

dedicated to M&E and GCO (initially MELyT), and two people with temporary contracts. The results in the mobilization of resources, the achievements in effectiveness, the regional initiatives and the coordination of the gender group, the launch of the Win Win program and the improvements in the countries based on the technical assistance of ACRO, show a hard and efficient work from the WEE team in the Regional Office.

Regarding the sources of funding for the general budget of UN Women ACRO, 93% comes from regular funds (core funds), while only 7% comes from mobilized resources (non-core funds). However, in relation to the sources of financing for actions to promote WEE, the situation is different. As can be seen in the following table, only 57% of the budget for WEE interventions comes from regular UN Women funds, while the remaining 43% comes from resource mobilization activities with donors - non-core funds.

TABLE 18 - BUDGET FOR WEE REGIONAL OFFICE (ACRO), 2015-2019

| | ACRO total budget | % of total budget | Budget WEE ACRO | % of WEE budget |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| REGULAR RESOURCES ("CORE") | 29,032,453 | 93% | 650,647 | 57% |
| MOBILIZED RESOURCES (NON-CORE) | 2,183,290 | 7% | 489,731 | 43% |
| TOTAL | 31,215,743 | 100% | 1,140,378 | 100% |

Source: Based on data from ACRO PDR 2015-2019

Furthermore, as can be seen in the table below, an important evolution in this sense has been identified throughout the evaluation period. While 100% of the funds came from UN Women regular funds in 2015 and 2016, in 2019, only 17% came from UN Women core funds and the remaining 83% were mobilized.

TABLE 19 - BUDGET BY SOURCES OF FINANCING OF ACRO, 2015-2019

| Type | USD /% | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | Total |
|----------------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| CORE FUNDS | USD | 125,000 | 132,634 | 196,513 | 121,500 | 75,000 | 650,647 |
| | % | 100% | 100% | 74% | 66% | 17% | 57% |
| NON-CORE FUNDS | USD | | | 70,000 | 62,976 | 356,755 | 489,730 |
| | % | | | 26% | 3.4% | 83% | 43% |

Source: Based on data from ACRO PDR 2015-2019

On the other hand, it is important to note that while the global budget of UN Women ACRO increased only 7% from 2015 to 2019, the budget of the regional office for WEE interventions increased by 145%, however, the level of budget spending on EMM (82.6%) is below overall budget spending (91%). It is noteworthy that in 2017 the budget for the WEE actions of UN Women ACRO increased (113%), while the general budget of UN Women ACRO decreased by 10%. In 2019, the budget for WEE actions corresponded to 6%, a still very low percentage, but double the average for the evaluation period. The most significant change in the budget takes place precisely in 2019, a management in which the budget of the previous year is doubled.

In the graph (and table) below you can see the trend of investment in WEE shares during the evaluation period in relation to the general budget, including the countries and the MCO⁵³. During the period, the

² The countries considered in the analysis (cited in Finding 20), the Caribbean MCO and the Regional Office are included.

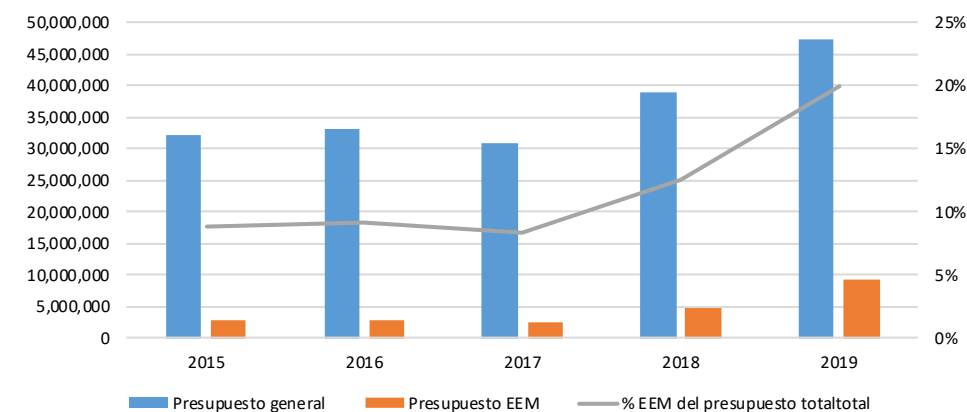
weight of investment in WEE has risen from 9% in 2015 to 20% in 2019. It gained importance from 2018 onwards. The average budget for WEE actions in the period was 13% of the general budget.

TABLE 14 – FUNDING OF WEE WORK IN THE LAC REGION

| Proportion of the WEE budget of the general regional budget (ACRO + countries + MCO) | | | | | | |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | TOTAL |
| General budget | 32,093,713 | 33,025,279 | 30,880,397 | 39,095,383 | 47,458,774 | 182,553,547 |
| WEE budget | 2,840,265 | 3,037,120 | 2,606,364 | 4,875,508 | 9,478,911 | 22,838,168 |
| % WEE of total budget | 9% | 9% | 8% | 12% | 20% | 13% |

Source: Based on data from ACRO PDR 2015-2019

FIGURE 25- BUDGET IN WEE COMPARED TO THE TOTAL REGIONAL BUDGET

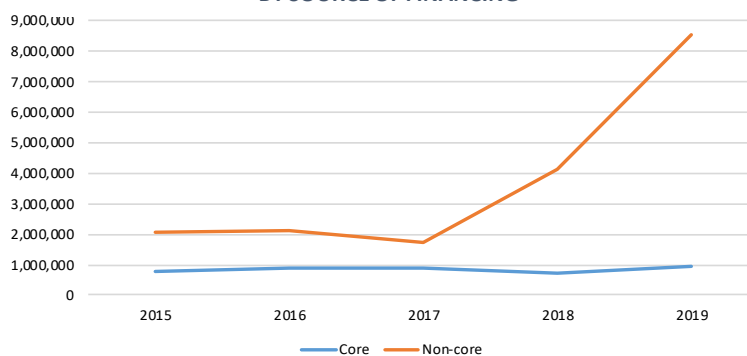


Source: Based on data from ACRO PDR 2015-2019

The figure shows the evolution of investment in WEE at the LAC regional level from 2015-2019, disaggregated by core and non-core funds. It can be seen that while the amount of core funds remained at a stable level over the course of 5 years, non-core funds increased considerably as of 2018.

The Regional Office has 19 different donors to fund its overall budget for all intervention areas, although most of the resources come from Sweden, UNAIDS, the Department for International Development, the European Commission and the Spotlight initiative, in total 81.6%. In the case of resources for intervention in the WEE area, there are three donors that add up to non-core resources: DFID (14%), European Commission (74%) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy (11%).

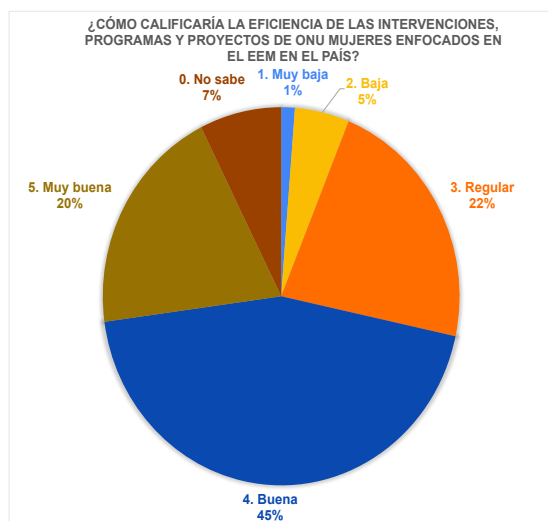
FIGURE 26 - EVOLUTION OF INVESTMENT IN WEE IN THE LAC REGION, BY SOURCE OF FINANCING



Source: Data from ACRO PDR 2015-2019

Regarding the level of execution of funds in WEE, this was 82.6% of the total budget for the period, which is considered the level of acceptable budget execution, and is below the execution of the overall budget, which it was 91% for the period. Execution of regular funds was slightly higher (84.5%) than execution of mobilized funds (80.0%). However, there are differences in the level of execution of donor funds, since while the Italian funds were executed at 100% of the funds allocated for the period, the European Commission funds were only executed at 75%. % of funds allocated for the period. It should

FIGURE 27- PERCEPTION ON EFFICIENCY OF UN WOMEN IN WEE



Source: Partners and Allies Survey.

be noted that these projects are still in execution.

When asked about administrative procedures, most informants recognized improvements, but argued that it is still a problematic area, largely related to the overload of work in the UN Women ACRO office. It should also be noted that, according to UN Women partners, administrative procedures are one of the main factors that negatively impact efficiency.

Regarding the external evaluation of the partners on efficiency, which affects credibility and trust, it is evident in the graph above that almost 70% rated it between good and very good, which is highly positive.

FINDING 17: The regional WEE teams' efforts to strengthen capacities in field offices stand out, although financial and administrative aspects had a negative impact on the scope in some cases.

Both UN Women country offices and partners identified recognition, expertise, as well as alliances and networks, as facilitating factors for efficiency. Regarding the recognition and expertise of UN Women and the capacity of the team, the power of articulation, positioning, leadership, credibility and impartiality of UN Women, in combination with the high level of technical capacity and sensitivity of the team, is considered substantial. On the other hand, the capacity of UN Women to establish alliances and spaces for articulation; specifically, the coordination and strategic alliances with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), with the Government and with private companies, guaranteeing their support and collaboration and creating synergies between the actors,

The focus of the work of UN Women is also considered a facilitating factor, in the sense of work at the local level, training, work with state entities and the creation of norms, and in the approach of sensitizing the actors. The generation and management of knowledge, such as the preparation and dissemination of studies, research to generate evidence and knowledge through direct and concrete messages, has facilitated the efficiency of interventions according to partners and allies. Furthermore, working with women as rights holders, responding to their needs and promoting their participation, is another important facilitating factor.

On the other hands, they mention as inhibiting factors for efficiency, the execution of small projects, the uncertainty about the continuity of the work of UN Women in some countries, the lack of indicators, only working with the base of the social pyramid and weaknesses in technical assistance, among others.

It is also worth mentioning that in the beginning, until the hiring of the regional coordination team and the countries, Win-Win required up to 70% of the time of the regional advisor for the implementation

of the project in Argentina and Costa Rica (where UN Women did not have an office). The implementation and supervision of result 3 of the program, also under the responsibility of the regional office, involved a significant investment of time by the regional advisor even after the team was hired; There were non-delegable tasks and responsibilities that remained with the advisor as program manager. Direct program execution is a function that distracts, distorts and weakens the strategic functions of the regional team, also creating gaps between countries.

Thus, despite its technical and financial strength, the UN Women ACRO team in charge of MS-related interventions does not have the human and financial resources necessary to meet demand and take advantage of opportunities. In this context, the advance hiring of a team of consultants and specialist thematic consultants (purchase of days - retainer modality) is recognized –also by partners– as a good practice to expand capacity and has also allowed to respond quickly and in time. In the future, however, there is a need to strategically redefine the roles and priorities of the regional team, aspiring of course that it can also strengthen its human and financial resources.

Q20 What institutional mechanisms or changes are necessary for UN Women to be more efficient in terms of economic empowerment?

FINDING 18: The significant differences in Country Office budgets point to unequal opportunities and capacities, as well as the need to identify and clarify, in a more explicit way, the criteria for budget allocation both at the regional and country office levels, as well as the promotion of joint and innovative financing strategies.

The evaluation examined fourteen countries that provided budget information related to WEE: Uruguay, Peru, Paraguay, Mexico, Honduras, Haiti, Guatemala, Ecuador, Colombia, Chile, Brazil, Bolivia, Argentina and the Caribbean⁵⁴. Altogether 50 projects were executed between 2015-2019. Of the 83% of the non-core budget, the country with the most non-core projects was Ecuador, followed by Mexico. However, Guatemala is the country with the largest budget with non-core funds (USD. 3,587,797), followed by Brazil (USD. 3,348,417). Argentina, Honduras, Uruguay and Chile only present non-core funds. In contrast, Peru and Colombia present only core funds. The Caribbean was the one that received the most core funds (USD. 778,086), followed by Paraguay (USD. 765,478) and Ecuador (USD. 622,547).

TABLE 21 - COUNTRY OFFICE BUDGET BY SOURCE OF FINANCING (2015-2019)

| Financing | Budget | Number of projects |
|--------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Core | 3,779,273 | 50 |
| Non-core | 17,918,516 | |
| Total | 21,697,789 | 50 |

Source: Data from ACRO PDR 2015-2019

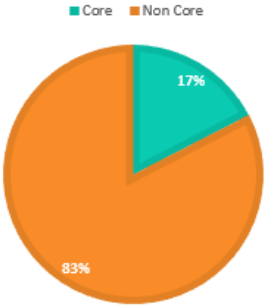
TABLE 22 – WEE BUDGET OF OFFICES BY SOURCE OF FINANCING (2015-2019)

| | CORE | NON-CORE |
|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Argentina | - | 451.373 |
| Bolivia | 354.343 | 868.122 |
| Brasil | 186.655 | 3.348.417,11 |
| Chile | - | 2.461.944 |
| Colombia | 77.083 | - |
| Ecuador | 622.548 | 1.296.698 |
| Guatemala | 308.120 | 3.587.793 |
| Haiti | 216.538 | 1.205.276 |
| Honduras | - | 1.409.073 |
| MCO Caribbean | 778.086 | 391.037 |
| México | 466.422 | 2.164.845 |
| Paraguay | 765.478 | 181.136 |
| Perú | 4.000 | - |
| Uruguay | - | 552.803 |
| TOTAL | 3.779.273 | 17.918.517 |

Source: Based on data from ACRO PDR 2015-2019

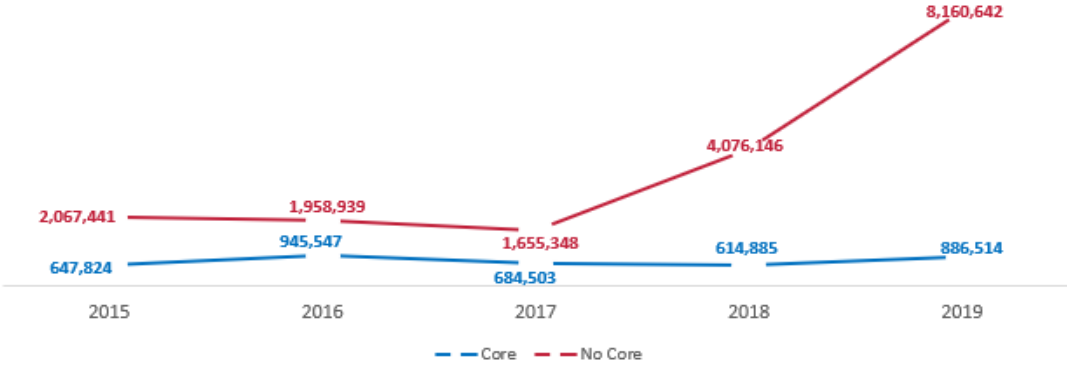
Additionally, the budget analysis shows that while the core budget remained practically without growth between 2015 and 2019, the non-core budget in general terms has maintained a fairly significant upward trend. In fact, the year 2019 meant an increase practically double in relation to 2018.

FIGURE 28- FINANCING BY SOURCE



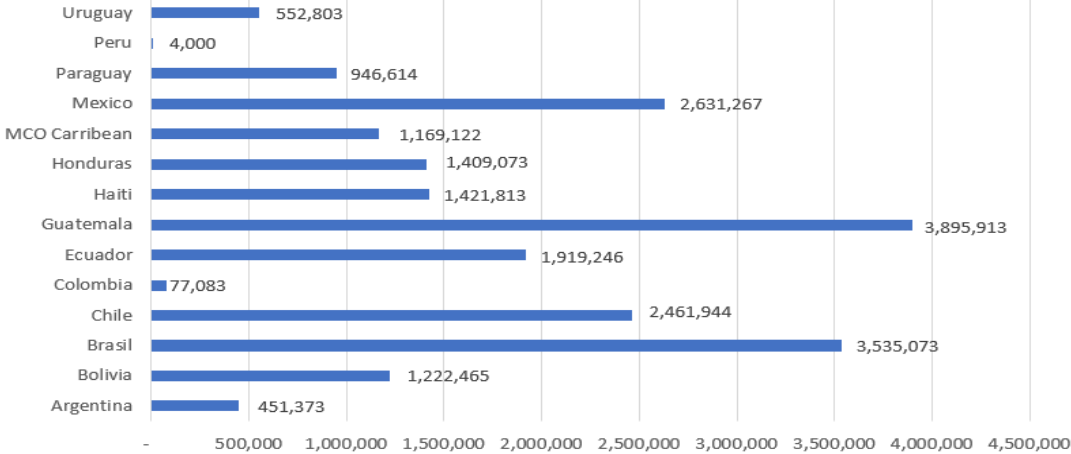
Source: Data from ACRO PDR 2015-2019

FIGURE 29- WEE BUDGET TRENDS IN LAC BY SOURCE OF FINANCING (2015-2019)



Source: Data from ACRO PDR 2015-2019

FIGURE 30 - GLOBAL BUDGET IN WEE BY COUNTRY (2015-2019)

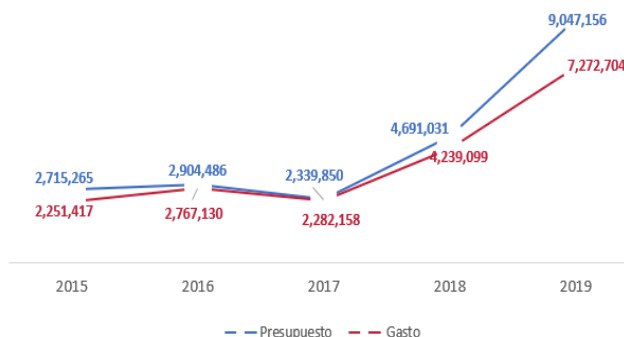


Source: ACRO PDR 2015-2019

Regarding the issues of economic empowerment prioritized for the evaluation: care, decent work and rural women, it has been with respect to the second where more interventions have been made by UN Women offices in the region, as well as the Caribbean, although the data do not allow for breaking down how much of the budget was allocated for each issue.

Over the period, the country with the largest budget earmarked for the economic empowerment of women was Guatemala, followed by Brazil and then Mexico. The year with the highest budget in economic empowerment, considering the total budget of the countries, was 2019. The year with the lowest cumulative budget was 2017. Overall, offices across the region show an upward trend with respect to the budget allocated in WEE, a similar trend occurs in relation to spending, which makes it possible to affirm the existence of a balance between budget and spending. Seen by country, this balance is reflected in all countries, except Haiti, which executed around 50% of its budget.

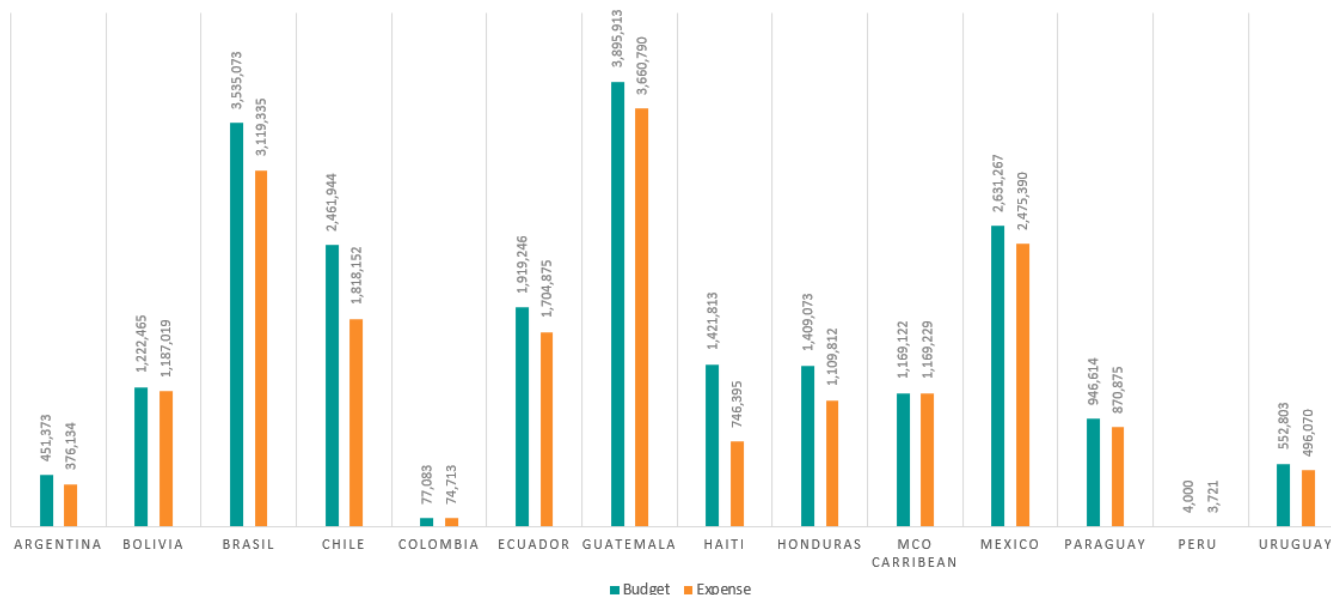
FIGURE 31- ANNUAL TREND OF THE BUDGET COMPARED TO EXPENDITURE (2015-2019)



Source: Based on data from ACRO PDR 2015-2019

At the country level and per year, Argentina opened its office in 2018 with a small budget (non-core), which doubled by 2019. Peru only had one project in 2016 (with core funds). Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Haiti, Honduras and Mexico have significantly increased their budgets year after year (between core and non-core). Uruguay presents a very similar budget between 2018 and 2019; Paraguay did the same between 2015 and 2019. In the case of Guatemala, in 2017 and 2018 its budget decreased significantly, compared to previous years, however, in 2019 it again showed a significant budget increase (with non-core funds).

FIGURE 32 - BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE IN WEE BY OFFICE (2015-2019)



Source: Based on data from ACRO PDR 2015-2019

In relation to budget execution, the map presents data from the different countries, showing Mexico, Guatemala, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia and Paraguay as countries with the highest percentage of execution, while Chile and Haiti have the lowest level of execution in the region.

FIGURE 33 - BUDGET EXECUTION IN WEE BY COUNTRY (2015-2019)



Source: ACRO PDR 2015-2019

In light of the issues and cases in this evaluation, which also focus on the most disadvantaged populations, the strategic and programmatic background behind decisions on core funds is not entirely clear. Although in cases such as Paraguay its weak capacity to mobilize resources is evident, the need for continuity of support for advanced processes is also evident. On the other hand, and as already mentioned, there is an urgent call for targeting. It is important to think about the multiplier of each dollar that is put in, and to tie financing decisions with the assumptions, priorities and routes of change of the Theory of Change and the Strategic Note, also betting on a regional logic that is more than the sum of countries. It is not necessarily about being everywhere.

VI2. SUSTAINABILITY

Q22 To what extent has UN Women strengthened the capacities of its partners (governments and representatives of civil society) to contribute to WEE in the region and at national level?

FINDING 19: Using its high-quality research-based knowledge products and technical assistance, UN Women is contributing to the action of partners towards WEE.

UN Women has made a substantial contribution in the generation of legal frameworks and policies on WEE in various countries of the region. During the period 2015-2019, the 13 offices which participated in the survey of WEE focal points supported the elaboration of a total of 34 documents of laws, policies, plans, etc. on women's economic empowerment. The countries which stand out in terms of numbers are México (5) followed by Ecuador, Colombia, Bolivia (4).

As a complement to this, the results on the most significant change highlighted the importance of capacity-building of rights holders. As shown by various experiences and the case studies in Guatemala and Paraguay, the work by rights holders is necessary and contributes – through demands, dialogue and proposal – to strengthening the capacities of rights guardians.

In addition, a compilation of knowledge/substantive evidence has been generated as the basis for influencing and guiding partners and allies; the range of knowledge products is very broad in terms of theme and type of knowledge, not to mention its strategic potential to guide decision-making and effective action in the sphere of WEE. According to the information provided by the countries, a total of 90 knowledge products were created, highlighting Mexico with the highest production (18), followed by Brazil (12) and MCO-Caribbean, with 11, and likewise Honduras. Among the countries with the smallest output were Argentina and Paraguay (2, jointly), El Salvador (2) and Colombia (1).

The repository of knowledge products, broken down by thematic sub-areas, is considered a very valuable measure which adds value and possibilities for mutual learning and knowledge management. It does not replace activities of dissemination, promotion and practical use of the products, but it does facilitate its accessibility and use over time. Regarding its use, this must be the strategic priority in the matter of knowledge management, collecting the experiences derived from the Progress Report 2017 which show a positive result concerning knowledge and the use of information. From an inclusion perspective, the publications in indigenous languages – as in the case of Guatemala and Mexico – are a good practice which contributes to access to and use of information by rights holders.

From a future and coherent perspective with the shift towards the “hard sectors” of the economy, it is important to take a step further in the generation of knowledge and discussion “not only based on the notion of rights but also economic impact in contexts of economic transition, and the fight for better levels of socioeconomic, and not only gender, equality”. Technical knowledge and capacities to influence public policies will allow UN Women to make a strategic leap forward. The work that is being done in this direction with the costing of a care system is an example of good practice.

Q23 What initiatives can be replicated and upscaled to effectively support the work on WEE in the region?

Q26 With what partners does UN Women need to involve itself at global, regional and/or national level to make a significant contribution to WEE?

FINDING 20. UN Women has implemented and validated relevant intervention models, replicable in other countries, and scalable to public policy. Further strengthening of the Regional Office's strategic role and the capacities of WEE focal points in knowledge management and innovation is needed.

During the period of the evaluation, UN Women has implemented innovations at various levels, from opening up work with the private sector with particular focuses in some countries (e.g. Mexico with the partnership with Danone), the positioning of the theme of care on the public agenda, the development of regional and national strategies to address complex problems such as paid domestic work, the development of integral models of work in territories such as the MyDEL programme, the development of tools such as the Diagnostic of Equality of Remuneration to support companies and organizations in assessing whether they are applying the principle of “equal pay for work of equal value” (ILO Convention No. 100), to emerging initiatives on STEM.

At an embryonic stage, but so far insufficient, the value is recognized of generating models and innovations which can be replicated in different contexts and countries, and scaled up at public policy level. This means, however, developing “end-to-end strategies”, something which, against a background of limited financing and time, is frequently not possible, but which nevertheless deserves more attention. “We must stop doing trivial things, without a sequence of change. It is a poor message to say, ‘we women can do a lot with nothing’. We must go on to bigger things”.

The generation of replicable and scalable models is associated with strict systematization of experiences, a practice which should be strengthened and even institutionalized regionally. The systematization of MyDEL, as the basis for its construction is a good practice in this direction. The foregoing is linked to the need to strengthen ACRO’s strategic work and the network of WEE focal points in knowledge management, including the systematic identification of experiences. Models and interesting innovations to validate, replicate and upscale, ideally using standardized methodologies and tools which enhance the rigour, credibility and comparability of the exercises, also considering potential financiers/investors. This will require a more structured work plan of the WEE community of practice, and the development of methodologies and tools, or even pooling and adoption of those which have worked in a particular country.

FINDING 21: UN Women has been able to engage a strong and diverse group of partners, laying the foundations for more structured and medium-term agreements, as well as validating its credibility and legitimacy with potential new strategic allies and partners.

In the survey of focal points, partnerships and networks feature as the second factor which impacts positively on sustainability. This is an important item of data which shows the achievements, but also alerts to the factors to be taken into account to maintain this “capital” going forward. On the one hand, and recognizing the progress in this direction, there is a need to transition from partnerships heavily based on persons to partnerships which are seen to be more institutional. Another of the themes addressed from various angles by the partners concerns the equanimity factor. Although the added value, specialization and legitimacy of UN Women is recognized, it mentions a lack of clarity on the real capacity and available financial resources. It should be emphasized that in a strategic partnership, the perception of justice and fairness is crucial to the sustainability and wellbeing of the partnership. In addition, investing in a partnership is associated with the possibility of channelling impacts beyond specific activities or results, which means the elaboration of plans with targets, monitoring, etc.

In the sphere of interagency partnerships, important progress has been made in the framework of the regional Interagency Gender Group, with the participation of several agencies and the development of joint work in social protection focused on care. Highlighted is the relationship with UNDP and ILO, which formed the steering group. The regional coordination has been reflected and reinforced by coordination actions in the countries (e.g. campaign in Guatemala on decent work for women domestic workers).

It is important that considerations on the role of coordination are not only focused on joint programmes or partnerships, but also ensuring that agencies at the centre of driving economic development (UNDP, ILO, WFP, FAO, and also ECLAC) incorporate gender equality and women's human rights in their DNA as well as specific projects or actions, systematically applying the gender focus as mandatory and not merely accessory or decorative. This means, among other things, not regarding agencies themselves in terms of competence but specifically their work on gender and the conditions under which they operate. "UNDP is huge, but not in the area of gender, where it is small and tries to mobilize a great deal in the region". There is also important work to achieve coordination with other agencies to incorporate the gender perspective structurally and systemically in their way of thinking and contributing to economic development. From some perspectives, the challenge should be to shift towards development of a regional interagency strategy on WEE.

In a context of growing competition for resources, it is also important to consider some guidelines and principles to guide decisions and actions concerning strategic partnerships within the UN System. For example, it has been mentioned that UN Women must take into account the "historic memory and speciality of an agency", on which to build partnerships which strengthen actions from a gender perspective. "and everyone wins". That is the case, for example, of FAO as leader on the theme of rural women. In addition, the growing practice of addressing issues to Ministries of Finance involves the need to reinforce coordination with UNDP in the countries, and also- with ECLAC.

Also worth of mention is the renewed partnership with ECLAC, which in January 2020 resulted in the joint organization for the first time of the Regional Women's Conference. In the framework of follow-up to that Conference, last April an information meeting was held with Ministers and high-level officials of the Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women of Latin America and the Caribbean in which they discussed the response to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis from the gender perspective. Recognizing that this is a very powerful partnership, it is essential not to overlook the relationship with other agencies and avoid an increase in certain susceptibilities.

It also highlights the partnership with the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB), an international organization serving the 22 Ibero-American countries. This partnership is based on the mapping and reform of discriminatory laws which stand in the way of WEE, which was presented the same year at the Summit of Heads and State and Government coordinated by SEGIB. It is a partnership with great potential for the future.

UN Women certainly seeks to strengthen its partnership with regional stakeholders – both within the system and external – for more continuous work and results, especially on the themes of care, women domestic workers and discriminatory legislation. Aspects to be improved include definition of plans with results and monitoring systems, clarification of roles and an approach centrally based on complementarity, flow of information and construction of greater trust (in particular with some agencies).

At the level of subregional initiatives, the link between the MyDEL programme and the Regional Policy on General Equality and Equity (PRIEG) of the SICA (Central American Integration System) stands out. One of its greatest challenges is the creation of territorial platforms for the implementation of the pillar of economy autonomy to promote a context of multi-level articulation.

At country level, special mention should be made of the work of the Guatemala Office since 2019 with the Ministry of Economy for the formation of a multi-stakeholder coalition (which was formalized last March), involving government, private sector, civil society, academia and the diplomatic corps to put women at the core of the national WEE agenda.

As mentioned previously in the report, it is essential that the various levels link together multi-stakeholder constellations, according to- their relevance and viability, at the same time as certain alliances with stakeholders in government, academia and the education sector in general, women’s organizations and grass-roots women’s organization are reinforced. Partnerships with stakeholders not traditionally considered as centres of innovation, women’s STEM training projects (e.g., Laboratory⁵⁵), among others, will be increasingly valuable, and no doubt the evaluation criteria applied to this process (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability).

Q24 What measures can UN Women take at regional and national level to mitigate risks and increase the sustainability of its results and processes?

FINDING 22: UN Women’s commitment to sustainability is positively valued. Financial issues are presented as the largest future threat.

More than 60% of the partners identified as good or very good the orientation to sustainability in the interventions, while around 20% qualified it as average or low.

FIGURE 34 – PERCEPTION OF THE SUSTAINABILITY OF WEE INITIATIVES



Source: Partner survey

According to the survey of focal points, the principal factors which positively impact sustainability concern strategies and the focus of the work, as well as networks and partnerships.

TABLE 23 - FACTORS POSITIVELY IMPACTING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF WEE INITIATIVES

| Strategies and work approach | Partnerships and networks | Sustained presence and reputation | Approach on vulnerable groups and participation | Knowledge management | Capacity strengthening | Stakeholders and government programmes complementarity |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|----------------------|------------------------|--|
| 30 | 22 | 14 | 8 | 6 | 6 | 5 |

Source: Survey of WEE focal points

⁵⁵ <https://www.laboratoria.la/>

Regarding the factors which impact negatively on sustainability, the replies mostly mention the political context and lack of political will.

TABLE 24 - FACTORS NEGATIVELY IMPACTING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF WEE INITIATIVES

| Political context/lack of political will | Economic context/lack of economic resources | Lack of capacities and awareness | Limited coverage or effort | Lack of advocacy on public policies | Lack of complementarity | Staff turnover |
|--|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| 12 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 2 |

Source: Survey of WEE focal points.

All offices that replied to the survey indicated the main risk as financial sustainability, followed by changes in the public institutional framework and, thirdly, social and political changes and conflicts. Although with smaller percentages, other factors of an internal nature may be mentioned which deserve consideration, such as internal efficiency, limited capacity, relevance and lack of interagency coordination.

TABLE 25 – RISKS TO SUSTAINABILITY OF WEE INITIATIVES

| Risk to sustainability | No. | % |
|--|-----|-----|
| Financial resources | 13 | 100 |
| Institutional, personal or public workers changes | 10 | 77 |
| Context changes (social or political conflicts) | 5 | 38 |
| UN Women management efficiency | 4 | 31 |
| UN Women limited capacity | 3 | 23 |
| Actions relevance for targeted population or government institutions | 2 | 15 |
| Lack of interagency coordination | 2 | 15 |
| Legal limitations or obstacles | 0 | 0 |

Source: Survey of WEE focal points

There is no regional risk management system, an aspect which must be rectified as soon as possible, considering the particular manner that an intensification of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity is anticipated. It should be noted that the officers have no doubt implemented various tools and analyses with differing results – to identify and address risks. The (potential) closure of the offices in the Dominican Republic and Paraguay are examples which could reflect inadequate and ineffective risk management.

FINDING 23: Sustainability will depend on the ability to design and implement innovative financing models.

It is important to move onto innovative and more sustainable models of financing, and in this framework, the positive work already done in this respect may be highlighted. It is also important to enhance the contributions of governments, currently not accustomed to “paying” UN Women, even less when the national counterparts are weak institutions, like many of the mechanisms for the progress of women.

This situation could change now that the regulation is moving to the most valuable sectors and Ministries, for which, however, it will also be important to strengthen the evidence and argumentation

from a concept of “investment”, also applicable to the private sector. This means, for example, the capacity to show that supporting women’s economic empowerment brings with it more general results for society in poverty reduction, boosting the economy, among other things. The recognition, added value and legitimacy granted by partners to UN Women is a starting point that can be exploited in this direction. This is also indicated by the view from the Mexico office which is relying on more financing from governments on the theme of care: “The more we work to show the importance of the theme, the impact on women, and also the need to impact on structural, legislative and policy architecture aspects.

In the Win-Win framework, a Diagnostic of Financing Innovation, and recently a proposed Innovative Financing and Investment Initiative with a Gender Focus have been produced. In short, it is a time to comprehensively and strategically rethink the theme of financing linked with a greater focus on impact investment. The Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs and the need to find new solutions and accelerate changes, as well as the effects of the pandemic, will have an impact on the perspectives of sustainability in the future, with a combination of opportunities and threats.

VII. CROSS-CUTTING APPROACHES

Q26 To what extent do the interventions of UN Women in women’s economic empowerment incorporate cross-cutting approaches to gender, human rights, intersectionality, cultural belonging, interculturality and adaptation to and mitigation of climate change?

FINDING 24: There is inadequate clarity regarding cross-cutting approaches, which reduces relevance of interventions, as well as limits effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

The analysis of cross-cutting approaches concludes that, except in the case of rural women, indigenous women and interculturality, the replies and approaches of the field offices are very diverse, and that although it is partially recognized that the approach of “not leaving any woman or girl behind” in the Strategic Note is partially established in the indigenous and rural, there is no broader approach in terms of intersectionality, which is not identified by any office as a cross-cutting approach, even when it is validated as part of the assumptions of the proposed Theory of Change..

Mention should be made of the special emphasis by Brazil during the interview in relation to the growing expansion of the cross-cutting approach from women of African descent to other dimensions such as age, ethnicity and disability. Elsewhere, the Caribbean also highlights its work on masculinities from an approach of changes in social norms and behaviour change.

A total of 8 offices mentioned the incorporation of the intercultural approach or indigenous women, 4 offices mentioned sustainability (environmental or other), 4 offices incorporated a human rights focus and 2 offices mentioned care. It is noteworthy that only 5 offices mentioned a Human Rights based approach (HRBAP) as a cross-cutting approach, and only one office considers the gender focus as a cross-cutting approach in the interventions.

TABLE 26– INCORPORATION OF CROSS-CUTTING APPROACHES IN COUNTRY OFFICES

| Cross-cutting approach | No of WEE focal points |
|---|------------------------|
| Rural and indigenous women/Rights of indigenous peoples//interculturality/ethnicity | 8 |
| Human rights approach/LNOB | 5 |
| Environmental sustainability/renewable energies/integral sustainability | 4 |
| Care/Unpaid Care Work | 2 |

| | |
|--|---|
| Gender | 1 |
| Masculinities | 1 |
| Gender violence at work | 1 |
| Human rights and companies | 1 |
| Articulation and complementarity, innovation | 1 |
| Youth | 1 |
| Human mobility | 1 |
| Inclusion | 1 |
| Social impact | 1 |
| Agenda 2030 SDG | 1 |
| Life cycle | 1 |
| Knowledge and research | 1 |
| N/A | 1 |

Source: Survey of WEE focal points

Turning to the themes added by the offices as cross-cutting approaches, these are not those traditionally considered as cross-cutting approaches, but rather they are themes/pillars of work (care, gender violence at work, human mobility, etc.) strategies or lines of action (knowledge and research, innovation, articulation, etc.).

TABLE 27 – MONITORING OF CROSS-CUTTING APPROACHES

| Frequency | No. Offices |
|-----------|-------------|
| Always | 5 |
| Often | 5 |
| sometimes | 2 |
| NA | 1 |

Asked about the frequency of the monitoring of cross-cutting approaches, the replies vary between “always” and “often”. In terms of incorporation and operationalization of cross-cutting approaches, the most common reply refers to indicators of sex and race, and to a lesser extent monitoring and evaluation tools and programme reports and RMS.

Source: Survey of WEE focal points.

TABLE 28 – INCORPORATION OF CROSS-CUTTING APPROACHES IN COUNTRY OFFICES

| Incorporation of cross-cutting approaches | No. WEE focal points |
|---|----------------------|
| Inclusion, measurement of indicators broken down by sex and race | 7 |
| With monitoring and evaluation tools of the office. | 2 |
| Programme reports and RMS | 2 |
| Participative with population groups | 1 |
| Training of execution team | 1 |
| Incorporation of the requirements in the ToR and verification of the content and product delivery of consultants, e.g. evaluation | 1 |
| Incorporation in work plans | 1 |
| Advice to partners | 1 |
| Generation of evidence and breakdown of information into knowledge products and impact actions | 1 |
| N/A | 1 |

Source: Survey OF WEE focal points.

In general, in the opinion of the evaluation team, there is a lack of clarity on the definition of what is meant by cross-cutting approach, the current approaches, their value, utility, implications and form of implementation, although the lists obtained provided some clues as to how to strengthen regionally

not only the incorporation and effective operationalization of the cross-cutting approaches, as key elements of quality, effectiveness and efficiency in the implementation of actions.

VI2. COVID-19

Given the pandemic situation caused by COVID-19, three questions were introduced into the surveys to assess the possible consequences for the progress achieved in terms of economic empowerment in the region⁵⁶.

-
- In the context of the health emergency caused by COVID-19, what will be the three main effects for women's economic empowerment in the country or region where you work?
 - What will be the challenges that must be faced by UN Women to prevent regression of progress achieved in terms of economic empowerment in the country due to COVID-19?
 - What should be the changes that UN Women should make to its strategies and priorities in the country or region in relation to women's empowerment in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic?
-

The principal **effects** for women's economic empowerment in the country or region as a result of the health emergency caused by COVID-19 are concentrated in unemployment and precarity of employment and an increase in women's poverty. Also highlighted is an increase/overload of care work, and a limited capacity of social protection systems to respond. Also identified as a negative situation is the lack of involvement of women in socioeconomic reactivation and, at educational level, school abandonment by adolescents. They add concerns about difficulties in access to finance, digital media and ICT for telework and marketing. In general, a regression in women's rights is anticipated.

In this framework, the principal **challenges** that must be faced by UN Women to avoid regression in the progress achieved in terms of economic empowerment because of COVID-19 are mainly related to actions and political dialogue to prioritize measures, policies and resources with a gender focus, as well as innovation and use of technology. To a lesser extent, consideration is given to resource mobilization for policies and projects to respond to women's specific needs.

The principal changes in terms of **strategies** are seen as avoiding regression in progress and ensuring continuity of the work on WEE, further strengthening of impact and support actions, incorporation of the perspective of innovation in women's capacity-building, strengthening and activating strategic partnerships (within the UN System and with governments, partners and allies) with gender-sensitive responses. To a lesser extent, it is considered that UN Women should strengthen the intersectional approach and develop an aggressive resource mobilization strategy.

Although the need to focus is not attributable to the pandemic, it does constitute a strategic springboard to prioritize the points of attention, strategies and actions of UN Women in the future. At thematic level, social protection, decent work, the theme of care, entrepreneurship and financial inclusion acquire particular relevance. In strategic terms, what stands out is the importance of adaptation – technological, strategic and thematic – of programmes/projects/actions. In addition, it will be important to strengthen the work with women in innovation and technology, and in turn develop actions to enhance the gender focus in STEM. In the field of evidence and knowledge, it will be fundamental to evaluate the economic impacts of COVID-19 for women, show and analyse the various

⁵⁶This section and its questions are outside the scope of the evaluation but were included in the surveys and interviews because of the pandemic emergency. The detailed replies can be found in the survey reports in the annexes.

phenomena associated with the pandemic and its impact on WEE, and provide evidence of the incidence and political dialogue to recovery response and strategies with a gender focus. It will also be crucial to expand and strengthen strategic partnerships at all levels, and prioritize actions for women in a situation of vulnerability taking a cross-cutting approach.

VII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

CONCLUSION 1: ROLE AND RELEVANCE

The Regional Office has moved towards **greater clarity of its role and greater relevance of its contribution** in the area of women's economic empowerment. Its contribution to a strategic vision of WEE work in the region will be further reinforced by the Theory of Change outlined in the framework of this evaluation. Its contribution to knowledge on priority issues and bottlenecks, challenges, and opportunities for women's economic empowerment in Latin America and the Caribbean is substantive and highly valued, and there is evidence of the relevance and consequent use of knowledge products as inputs for the effective advocacy and design of plans and policies, among others.

Close and coordinated work with associations and groups that work with the most vulnerable women, such as domestic workers and rural women, also strengthens the capacity for adequate response to needs, further promoting the appropriation and prominence of women themselves. In addition, the triple mandate has allowed UN Women to enhance its role, as well as through the commitment of the regional team. With all that has been achieved, UN Women is in a moment where should make a **strategic and programmatic leap into the future**. This situation is confirmed by the challenges that have arisen in the **pandemic context**, give the clear need for strategic prioritization to avoid setbacks in human rights and gender equality, while also facing **significant financial challenges** given the limited availability of core resources.

CONCLUSION 2: POSITIONING, LEGITIMACY AND VISION

UN Women is recognized by national partners and regional allies as an **actor with a unique position and legitimacy in the region**, to promote WEE and establish strategic alliances. This legitimacy has been strengthened with initiatives such as: The 2017 Progress Report; regional initiatives such as time use surveys, mapping of discriminatory legislation and regional consultations on care, which contribute to an integrated and systemic analysis structural barriers to gender equality. It highlights the **visionary and pioneering role** of UN Women in issues such as care.

However, the growing work on gender from different UN agencies indicates a need to continue to hone the unique value and specialized contribution of UN Women. Considering the priorities of the Decade of Action towards the fulfilment of the SDGs, there are opportunities for improvement and empowerment in the areas of knowledge management, innovation and regional strategies, as well as a focus on impact. In this framework, **innovation and STEM issues** are considered strategic investments to increase the capacities and opportunities of women in the future, which if not addressed could translate into even greater gaps in the labour market, wages, access to resources and economic opportunities.

CONCLUSION 3: PROGRAMATIC APPROACH

The 2017 Progress Report, together with the global Strategic Plan, framed the definition of work in the area, provided a **conceptual framework**, promoted a **programmatic approach** and provided guidance for the work of UN Women's offices. The issue of care illustrates a good practice of collective construction of a regional strategic consensus on the need and importance of addressing the issue. Despite the achievements, the evaluation identified that there is still room for greater strategic alignment, for which it will also be key to promote the use of the Theory of Change as a regional umbrella.

CONCLUSION 4: REGIONAL SUPPORT

Technical contribution of the Regional Office to field offices is valued - in different degrees and according to demand - based on the knowledge and understanding of national realities as well as capacity to build bridges and a regional vision, which translate into greater efficiency and strengthening of the strategic vision across countries. At the same time, a greater role was identified **linking the regional with the national in both directions**, which in turn does the same with the global level, feeding corporate decisions, and bringing the global to the regional and national. This is associated with programmatic, knowledge management and innovations. In this vein, progress has been made in the regional mapping of **knowledge products and the exchange and learning** between ACRO and the focal points in the countries. However, the fact that the majority of such knowledge products are in Spanish limits their **relevance and utility for the Caribbean** region, inhibiting ongoing and fluid exchange across the region.

CONCLUSION 5: MAIN CONTRIBUTIONS

Throughout the evaluated period, UN Women has influenced the installation of issues on **public agendas**, has promoted **statistics with a gender perspective** to highlight the situation of women, has promoted **legislative and public policy frameworks** for WEE, has **developed capacities** both state institutions and rights holders, has promoted **linkages**, has developed **knowledge** to support the need for changes towards the WEE, and has involved the **private sector** promoting changes also within companies.

It has also carried out important interagency work, drawing feedback from the experience of other agencies and influencing their agenda to introduce the topic of WEE. Specifically, in the prioritized topics evaluated, noteworthy achievements included: the ratification of Convention 189 in several countries, legal reforms and public policies in favor of domestic workers, and establishment of the **care agenda** in the region with advances at different levels for policies and institutional frameworks; and strengthening the entrepreneurial spirit of rural women and their access to productive resources.

The work was closely coordinated with trade union organizations and groups of women rights holders, which contributed to enhancing their empowerment, appropriation, relevance and enforceability. However, it is not possible to show conclusively results in the medium and long-term, nor to anticipate the achievement of impact. In the case of changes in regulations and policies – recognized among the most significant changes – even in contexts in which there are “model” regulations and policies for WEE, their weak degree of implementation and compliance constitutes one of the widespread problems in the region. Institutional, budgetary and cultural factors affect this situation, which must be addressed to move towards the realization of rights and WEE beyond “formal” policy level change.

CONCLUSION 6: ORIENTATION TOWARDS IMPACT

In the future, it is considered essential to reinforce an **orientation towards generating impact**, which enhances the role and added value of UN Women, increasing its specific weight and possibilities of

obtaining financing. Having a Theory of Change may provide a framework to strengthen an orientation towards impacts. The above is directly linked to the need to promote M&E and based on this, strategic communication to show results of change. It will also be important to maximize the use of evidence in such strategies, seeking to demonstrate not only the need, but the potential impact of a change in WEE. In relation to transformative strategies, gender norms are one of the determining factors and most difficult to change, and that decisively inhibit the realization of women's economic rights and their empowerment. Work on **masculinities**, in which some progress has been made, is a key strategy to address behavioural changes, as well as work with the educational sector.

CONCLUSION 7: CAPACITIES AND EFFICIENCY

As of 2018, the regional team in ACRO has been **technically strengthened**, which has meant substantial improvements in the WEE work of the Regional Office, as well as in the work of the offices that received technical assistance and support in establishing links with key stakeholders. Added to technical improvements is the invaluable **commitment** of the team, which is recognized by internal and external stakeholders, even more so given the weak support and dialogue with headquarters. However, there are serious budgetary limitations that condition the size and possibilities of the regional team, despite its remarkable commitment and dedication.

In relation to the above, the ACRO economic empowerment team has made enormous efforts that have allowed increased and diversified sources of financing for this area, which has made possible the significant strengthening of work in the region, as evidenced in this report. A look towards **future trends** should **shape capacities that require strengthening** across field office teams, and eventually in the ACRO team, including regarding: an increased focus on “hard” sectors of the economy; the need to furnish technical publications, show costs, as well as the impact of economic empowerment policies; a greater dedication to issues such as financial inclusion, STEM, innovation; as well as the importance of greater regional interconnection with the Caribbean countries.

CONCLUSION 8: PARTNERS AND STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

Alliances in its broadest sense – with diverse actors, women's movements, UN agencies, and other regional and global organizations – constitute **one of the most important values** of and for UN Women. Although important bridges have been built during the past five years and alliances have supported the implementation of significant activities, in this new phase there is a need and opportunity to deepen the scope and purpose of collaborative work, with a more strategic and ambitious vision on the role and potential of strategic alliances to create value. Increasing attention to macroeconomics, as well as specific thematic trends, should influence the strengthening or development of new regional and country alliances, including between key actors in: ministries of **finance, economy, entrepreneurship and rural development**; the **financial sector**; as well as women's economic networks; **academia**, technology and innovation centers, think tanks, among others. In the case of the coordination role within the UNS. There is still important work to be done to incorporate the gender perspective in a structural and systemic way in their way of thinking and contribute to economic development.

CONCLUSION 9: CROSS-CUTTING APPROACHES

The explicit and systematic integration of cross-cutting approaches and an intersectional approach was not observed. On the one hand, certain weaknesses were identified in the field offices in the recognition or definition of what is understood by a cross-cutting approach, its form of operationalization and its systematic integration in planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning. On the other hand, the inclusion of some perspectives and related populations is still incipient, such as related to women's groups distinguished by different ages, disabilities, urban or indigenous

characteristics, and sexual diversity. This is an aspect to consider in the future in the perspective of not neglecting the specific needs of some groups of women in vulnerable situations, nor expanding – by omission – gaps between women’s groups in their access to WEE resources and in the exercise of their economic rights, with the aim of “leaving no one behind”.

CONCLUSION 10: SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATIVE FINANCING WITH A GENDER APPROACH

Although the increased **capacity** of the regional team and the countries to **mobilize non-core resources** in recent years was evident, which are those sustaining the action of UN Women in the region, all office WEE focal points identified in the survey the issue of **financing** as a risk factor towards **sustainability**. This refers to the financing of UN Women, but it also more generally to financing for equality issues. Some countries and issues are at greater risk, and may not be as attractive to donors, but require financing to address the needs of women including in the post-pandemic context. On the other hand, financial inclusion and the generation of financing alternatives for women is a challenge and one of the priorities that several offices already envision going forward and that will determine important changes in the priorities and capacities required in the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following eight recommendations are formulated on the basis of the findings and in turn seek to respond to the conclusions, also considering the context of the pandemic. Accordingly, each recommendation relates to the relevant findings with the understanding that they are generally raised from a regional perspective that involves the Regional Office and Country Offices, as appropriate. For each recommendation, potential strategies and action points for implementation are provided.

RECOMMENDATION 1

Review and adapt strategic priorities based on new needs resulting from the pandemic, strengthening regional learning, coordination, and collaboration between Country Offices, to enhance response to the crisis.

Priority: High

Term: Short to medium

Linked findings: 2, 7, 12, 14

- Systematize and disseminate pandemic **response strategies** developed in countries by Socio-Economic Response Plans (SERPs).
- Generate regional and country **evidence on impact of the pandemic on WEE**, taking into account an intersectional approach that addresses diversity and inequalities among women in detail.
- Based on evidence on the effects of the pandemic on WEE, UN Women's expert knowledge and previous country experiences, develop **scalable proposals and models** as inputs to government public policy decisions in a participatory manner.
- **Monitor post-COVID-19 public policies** on WEE.
- Select between ACRO and COs a specific topic or line of work in WEE to conduct **pilot/experimental monitoring** of the effects of COVID-19 on public policies.
- Develop **regional dialogues** on post-pandemic effects on WEE.
- **Advocate at the regional level** for policies favourable to the most impoverished women and at greater risk of regressing from progress made in the WEE area.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Promote WEE themes and strategies linked to future trends in the fields of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and innovation (STEM+I) with a view to strengthen the capacities and competitiveness of women.

Priority: High

Term: Short to medium

Linked findings: 12 and 20

- Expand/strengthen **strategic partnerships** with academia, innovation and technology centers, and think tanks at the regional/national levels to strengthen ACRO capabilities and in countries for the design and implementation of **STEM+I programmes**.
- **Map and systematize STEM+I initiatives** for women in countries.
- **Participatorily develop a STEM+I regional strategy** for women in the region, seeking to "leave no one behind".
- Adapt programmes and interventions to help **reduce the gender gap in access and use of technology**, considering the conditions and realities of women rights holders, especially the most vulnerable, so as not to leave anyone behind.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Strengthen the orientation towards impact at regional and country office levels.

Priority: High

Term: Medium

Linked findings: 8 and 9

- Promote the conduct of baselines that allow rigorous evidence of the changes generated from UN Women's actions.
- Strengthen monitoring, the quality of information being recorded, and the generation of complementary information logging tools to account for transformational change beyond activities.
- Involve all offices in the discussion of review/consolidation/appropriation of the Theory of Change developed in the evaluation.
- Strengthen regional dialogue between COs for the definition of common strategic lines towards the post-COVID-19 future and by 2030.
- Enhance coordination, exchange and learning work between WEE focal points in countries through a more strategic and programmatic vision and based on a more structured agenda/plan within the framework of a Regional Knowledge Management and Innovation Strategy.
- Promote partnerships between COs, and between thematic areas, that allow qualitative leaps from the use of experiences, complementarity, political dialogue and the national/regional vision.
- Prioritize strategies to bridge the gap between the existence and implementation of WEE rules and policies in countries, including the budgetary issue.
- Strengthen strategies to transform gender norms, including work in masculinities and greater linkage with the education sector.
- Clarify the role and relationship with the private sector and its potential to generate transformative dynamics; prioritize comprehensive and multi-channel interventions.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Increase strategic focus on key macroeconomic issues, seeking to accelerate economic transformation with a gender perspective that benefit the most disadvantaged women "without leaving anyone behind."

Priority: High

Term: Medium

Linked findings: 12 and 13

- Strengthen **CO capacities on macroeconomic issues**, in the realization of costs, analysis and projections.
- From the establishment of common guidelines, promote the **systematization** of experiences as a starting point for the identification of potential **models for replication and escalation** at the public policy level.
- Continue to enhance the **relationship with macroeconomics sectors**, including bilateral and multilateral banking.
- Demonstrate **benefits of WEE through cost and analysis** to highlight the impact of a gender/WEE public policy on society at large, public spending, poverty reduction, etc.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Strengthen a regional approach that combines the integration of all countries, with an emphasis on Caribbean countries and Haiti, so as to better manage contextual diversity across the region, improve orientation of scarce regular funds, and seek synergies with donor-funded programmes

Priority: Medium-high

Term: Medium

Linked findings: 14 and 15

- Consider the **role of ACRO** and consequential needs from a **regional perspective** that includes and connects Caribbean countries and Haiti with the rest of the countries in the region, but in turn between countries with similar sociocultural characteristics, from perspectives of complementarity, learning and innovation.
- Map what skills and capabilities in the ACRO team are needed for **greater relevance** in all countries in the region, for example in relation to Small Island Developing States.
- Identify the **complementarity of roles and capacities** between COs and ACRO.
- Develop a strategy of **inclusion** to connect with the Caribbean region, addressing the issue of language as a strategic issue not only of "translation".
- Expand the **South-South approach** to other regions, around relevant experiences for countries in the region and pioneering strategies that can serve as an example, inspiration and potential replication.

RECOMMENDATION 6

Develop an innovative, integrated and ambitious financing strategy to optimize the use of limited regular resources and the joint mobilization of resources with donors, while considering alternative sources of financing from the private sector and impact investors.

Priority: High

Term: Short to medium

Linked findings: 18, 22, 23

- Map innovative **financing initiatives globally**, as well as post-COVID-19 trends.
- Develop a **strategic dialogue** between ACRO and countries to establish common priorities on which to allocate resources.
- Articulate, under a strategy, different alternatives and **fundraising approaches**. Strengthen relationships with **bilateral and multilateral banks**.
- Develop regional guidelines for **innovation in funding**.

- Strengthen **investment offerings** for governments and impact investors.
- Channel **more investment resources**, credit and projects to: (a) women-led ventures or companies; (b) companies working for equality; and (c) products and services that benefit women and girls.

RECOMMENDATION 7

Strengthen the strategic nature of regional and national partnerships for WEE, and expand their scope to actors linked to macroeconomics, STEM, innovation, and academia, whilst bearing in mind that each partnership must be seen as an investment towards greater impact.

Priority: High

Term: Short to medium

Linked findings: 11, 12, 13, 21

- Based on the global experience and experiences of some countries such as Bolivia, in which UN Women has implemented evaluations of its strategic partnerships, **conduct national evaluations of partnerships** for WEE, both at the level of implementing partners and sectoral, thematic and donor partners.
- Develop plans with partners with **medium and long-term results**.
- Strengthen and diversify **partnerships with civil society and the women's movement** around WEE.
- Strengthen **interagency bridges** and links that contribute to comprehensive approaches, **resource targeting and optimization**, and move towards **integrating the gender perspective** into the DNA of all UN agencies; analyze the possibility of leading a **multi-agency strategy for WEE**.

RECOMMENDATION 8

Operationalize cross-cutting approaches and strengthen systematic implementation of an intersectional approach of interventions.

Priority: Medium

Term: Medium

Linked finding: 24

- Strengthen the capacities of teams in countries in **cross-cutting approaches and interests**.
- Develop regional guidelines and tools for the **operationalization and monitoring of cross-cutting** approaches and an intersectional perspective.
- Provide **country-specific technical assistance** for the implementation of cross-cutting approaches.
- Establish **monitoring mechanisms** to ensure the implementation of these approaches.