



# Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

Distr.: General  
X May 2026

Original: English

**ADVANCE VERSION**

**Annual session 2026**

23–25 June 2026

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

**Evaluation**

## **Report of the evaluation function of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, 2025**

### *Summary*

This report provides an overview of the performance of the UN-Women evaluation function in 2025. It highlights progress made in implementing the Corporate Evaluation Plan; summarizes key insights from corporate, regional and country portfolio evaluations; reviews performance against key evaluation indicators; and provides updates on system-wide and joint evaluation engagement and national evaluation capacity development. The report also introduces the UN-Women Corporate Evaluation Strategy and the Corporate Evaluation Plan 2026–2029, and outlines the Independent Evaluation Service's (IES) programme of work and budget for 2026.

The Executive Board may wish to: take note of the 2025 report on the evaluation function of UN-Women, the Corporate Evaluation Plan 2026–2029, and the IES 2026 programme of work and budget; acknowledge that UN-Women maintains an independent, credible and valuable evaluation function that contributes to system-wide, gender-responsive evaluation initiatives and national evaluation capacity development taking into account national plans, needs and priorities; and express continuing support for strengthening the evaluation function in UN-Women and the use of evaluations.

## I. Overview

1. In 2025, UN-Women operated in a context of organizational transformation, including a strategic pivot towards strengthened regional and country presence and anticipated system-wide reform under the UN80 initiative. The year marked both the conclusion of the Strategic Plan 2022–2025 and the development of the Strategic Plan 2026–2029, which increased demand for timely, credible and strategically relevant evaluative evidence. The Independent Evaluation Service (IES) responded by supporting organizational reflection and transition, ensuring that evaluation evidence remained forward-looking, fit for purpose and aligned with emerging institutional priorities.
2. In this context, IES successfully concluded implementation of the Corporate Evaluation Plan (CEP) 2022–2025, exceeding all planned targets. Over the four years, IES delivered 15 corporate evaluations and synthesis reports and 49 evaluations at regional and country levels, including IES-led regional strategic note evaluations across five regions and 21 IES-led country portfolio evaluations (CPEs) spanning all regions. These achievements strengthened evaluative coverage, depth and strategic relevance.
3. Corporate evaluations in 2025 addressed priority areas, including the prevention of and response to violence against women, sustainable financing and women’s participation in peacebuilding processes. A synthesis of UN-Women’s performance against the Strategic Plan 2022–2025 informed the new Strategic Plan, while findings from regional evaluations and CPEs directly supported the development of new strategic notes.
4. The evaluation function’s overall performance against key evaluation performance indicators remained largely on track, including indicators related to human resources, coverage, joint evaluations, implementation, implementation of management response, and use. Evaluation expenditure and evaluation quality indicators showed slight declines, indicating areas requiring continued attention.
5. The year also marked a major planning milestone, with development of the UN-Women Evaluation Strategy 2026–2029 and CEP 2026–2029. These frameworks were informed by an external independent assessment of the implementation of the UN-Women Evaluation Policy and the 2025 Evidence Gap Mapping. The external assessment confirmed that UN-Women’s evaluation function is maturing and effective, identifying opportunities to strengthen root cause analysis, prioritize recommendations and enhance performance communication to support the corporate pivot to regions and countries.
6. The Evidence Gap Mapping 2025 reviewed 119 evaluation reports and, for the first time, piloted the use of artificial intelligence tools to support evidence synthesis. While coverage across thematic areas was comprehensive, the analysis identified evaluation gaps in governance, peace and humanitarian action, gender financing, gender data, Gender Equality Accelerators, and selected organizational effectiveness and efficiency areas. These findings informed more targeted and responsive evaluation planning.
7. This report is presented in six parts. It outlines the IES strategic planning frameworks for 2026–2029; summarizes corporate evaluations and syntheses; reviews strategic evaluations at the decentralized level, and their dissemination and use; assesses performance against key evaluation indicators; highlights lessons from partnerships for gender-responsive evaluation at United Nations system and national levels; and presents the IES programme of work and budget for 2026.

## **UN-Women Evaluation Strategy and Corporate Evaluation Plan 2026–2029**

8. The UN-Women Evaluation Strategy 2026–2029 is aligned with the UN-Women Evaluation Policy and reflects key lessons from its external assessment, reinforcing the need for strengthened decentralized evaluation systems, enhanced evaluation use, adaptability and innovation. It is positioned within the context of the UN80 reform agenda, responding to increased demands for efficiency, system-wide coherence and evidence on joint outcomes and organizational effectiveness. The Strategy prioritizes corporate, regional and country portfolio evaluations; expanded engagement in system-wide and joint evaluations; and stronger partnerships with United Nations entities and national stakeholders. Innovation is a core enabler, with the responsible use of artificial intelligence identified as a means to improve efficiency, synthesis, accessibility and communication of evaluative evidence, in line with United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) standards. The Strategy positions evaluation as a key driver of institutional transformation and system-wide accountability for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.
9. The 2026–2029 CEP establishes a coherent and adaptive framework for generating credible evaluative evidence on UN-Women’s performance under the Strategic Plan 2026–2029. The CEP provides for five corporate evaluations, four evaluative syntheses, one joint system-wide synthesis, and four to six rapid assessments, complemented by approximately 40 regional and country portfolio evaluations led by IES. This expanded focus on regional and country-level evaluations responds to increased demands for evidence closer to implementation, and supports accountability, learning and efficiency in a context of organizational and United Nations system reform. The new rapid assessment modality aims to address evaluative evidence needs in the changing organizational context. The CEP will be reviewed annually and adjusted as required to remain responsive to emerging priorities, resource constraints and institutional transformation.

## **II. Corporate evaluations**

### **Progress against the Corporate Evaluation Plan 2022–2025**

10. In 2025, IES conducted four corporate evaluations and one synthesis report. The following section showcases insights and lessons from these corporate evaluations and reports.

### **Implementation of the Corporate Evaluation Plan**

11. IES completed the following corporate evaluations and synthesis reports in 2025:
  - Independent corporate evaluation of UN-Women’s approach to violence against women prevention and response: Navigating changes in global and regional contexts
  - Formative evaluation of UN-Women’s work in sustainable finance
  - Corporate evaluation of UN-Women’s support to women’s participation in peace processes
  - Evaluation synthesis of UN-Women’s performance against the 2022–2025 Strategic Plan

IES also initiated a corporate evaluation of UN-Women’s support to intergovernmental processes.

**Independent corporate evaluation of UN-Women’s approach to violence against women prevention and response: Navigating changes in global and regional contexts**

12. This evaluation assessed UN-Women’s efforts in preventing and responding to violence against women and girls between June 2020 and June 2024, amid global crises such as COVID-19 and the rising backlash against gender equality. The evaluation found UN-Women highly responsive to changing contexts and growing forms of violence. While effective in normative change, the evaluation noted the need for more robust strategies to transform social norms. UN-Women’s intersectional perspective, in line with the leave no one behind principle, was well-integrated, although scaling interventions and systematizing knowledge remain key challenges. The evaluation recommended that UN-Women refine and develop comprehensive corporate guidance for emerging issues (e.g. technology-facilitated gender-based violence); strengthen social norms change programming; and enhance support for grass roots women’s rights and civil society organizations (CSOs). It also recommended addressing barriers to long-term, sustainable programming at the country level. UN-Women management welcomed the findings, fully accepting four recommendations and partially accepting one recommendation.

**Formative evaluation of UN-Women’s work in sustainable finance**

13. This formative evaluation examined UN-Women’s sustainable finance portfolio from its inception in 2020 until data collection in mid-2024, focusing on its contributions to the sustainable finance agenda as laid out in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and its collaboration with public and private sector financial partners. UN-Women successfully established strategic networks across the financial market ecosystem and supported the creation of gender-responsive financial instruments. However, the portfolio lacked a unified organizational strategy, leading to a “piecemeal” approach to programming and resource mobilization. Internal capacity and visibility of the work within the Entity required strengthening. The evaluation called for a refined, organization-wide sustainable finance road map with clear priorities; deepening engagement with institutional investors; exploring innovative mechanisms such as green and blended finance; and scaling up internal technical expertise to better position UN-Women as a leader in gender-lens investing. Management fully accepted five of the recommendations and partially accepted one recommendation.

**Corporate evaluation of UN-Women’s support to women’s participation in peace processes**

14. This evaluation assessed which elements of UN-Women’s support to women’s meaningful participation in peace processes worked for whom, in what circumstances, and how, from 2018 to 2023. UN-Women’s unique mandate and deep-rooted relationships with women’s civil society were noted as primary strengths, enabling the Entity to bridge the gap between grass-roots voices and high-level negotiations. Convening stakeholders, increasing awareness, supporting mobilization, institutionalizing the Women, Peace and Security agenda, and building strategic relationships were the five mechanisms identified as drivers of success. The report recommended strengthening relevant personnel’s political and diplomatic skills; systematically sharing lessons across regions; increasing efforts to “build appetite” for women’s participation among key peace actors; and proactively documenting analytical practices across offices to unpack resistance against gender equality and develop actions plans accordingly. Management accepted all five recommendations.

### **Evaluation synthesis: UN-Women’s performance against the 2022–2025 Strategic Plan**

15. This synthesis analysed 175 evaluations to assess UN-Women’s progress against the seven systemic outcomes defined in the Strategic Plan 2022–2025. UN-Women’s work to strengthen global normative frameworks and gender-responsive laws, policies and institutions remained a core organizational strength. Although the conceptualization of systemic outcomes was coherent, harmful social norms were an external impediment to implementation while some siloed governance structures posed internal barriers. While UN-Women’s coordination across the United Nations system has been effective, the synthesis identified the need for more robust measurement of long-term outcomes of United Nations system coordination for gender equality. Insights from the synthesis informed UN-Women’s Strategic Plan 2026–2029. Key considerations from the synthesis included strengthening the relationship between systemic outcomes, gender equality accelerators and impact areas; adopting a common framework for capacity-strengthening; and enhancing the monitoring of long-term results to move beyond output-based reporting.

### **Evaluations for decision-making and fostering change**

16. IES contributes to enhancing how UN-Women incorporates evaluation results into its corporate planning and decision-making processes. It engages in ongoing discussions with senior management and the Business Review Committee, offering targeted briefings on common evaluation findings and recommendations, and sharing analyses of management responses and their implementation status to help shape organizational priorities and strategic direction. In 2025, in close collaboration with the Strategic Planning Unit, IES facilitated the integration of evaluation plans into the PRISM strategic note module, reinforcing the consistent inclusion of evaluation within corporate planning, monitoring and reporting processes.
17. The following examples illustrate how UN-Women management consulted recent corporate evaluation findings and recommendations to improve the Entity’s policies, strategies and programmes.

### **Corporate thematic evaluation of UN-Women’s support to women’s political participation: Insights from the field**

18. Responding to the evaluation’s recommendations, UN-Women developed a social norms strategy focusing on women’s leadership and decision-making. The strategy is informed by the discussions resulting from a global expert group meeting under the Women and Youth Democratic Engagement (WYDE) programme. UN-Women also made notable strides in empowering diverse women leaders and fostering a more inclusive women’s movement globally through a series of intergenerational dialogues. An intersectional approach to leave no one behind was bolstered through capacity development and leadership training targeting diverse groups of women leaders, and direct funding to women’s organizations. In 2024, through the WYDE programme, UN-Women management reported that it awarded over US\$ 900,000 in grants to women’s rights organizations across four regions, with a further US\$ 1 million call for proposals launched in 2025. UN-Women management also reported scaled up efforts to tackle violence against women in politics, implementing 254 initiatives in over 50 countries.

### **Feminist collaborative evaluation of UN-Women’s approach to social norms change**

19. UN-Women has made notable progress in implementing the recommendations of the corporate evaluation of its social norms work. Key achievements include the development and internal roll-out of a new corporate social norms framework, and its integration in the Strategic Plan 2026–

2029 and in global thematic strategies on sports, transforming care systems, women's political participation, and ending violence against women and girls. Guidance notes, proofs of concept and capacity-building workshops have been disseminated across regional and country offices. A global community of practice has been established to promote Entity-wide learning and sharing, alongside consultations with United Nations agencies and development partners at regional and global levels. UN-Women has also established mechanisms to enable women-led and grass roots organizations access to UN-Women's funding. As co-chair of an inter-agency task force, the Entity is advancing an United Nations-wide funding framework for women's organizations and CSOs. Resource mobilization efforts are ongoing, including donor outreach and plans to mainstream social norms change across programmes.

### **III. Decentralized and strategic independent evaluations**

20. Alongside independent corporate evaluations carried out by IES, UN-Women implements decentralized evaluations at regional, country and headquarters levels, including thematic, programmatic and project evaluations managed by regional and country offices and headquarters units. IES offers technical guidance and quality assurance for these decentralized evaluations, which represent the majority of all evaluations conducted annually.
21. In parallel, IES leads the conduct of strategic evaluations at regional and country levels, including regional and CPEs. In 2025, IES led 22 strategic evaluations across all regions, comprising five regional strategic note evaluations, 11 CPEs and six regional thematic or cluster programme evaluations. Of these, 13 IES-led strategic evaluations were completed in 2025.

#### **IES-led strategic evaluations at regional and country levels**

##### *IES-led regional evaluation of UN-Women's work on the care economy in East and Southern Africa*

22. This developmental evaluation assessed UN-Women's efforts to advance the care economy across the East and Southern Africa region between 2018 and 2024, focusing on how care responsibilities are recognized, reduced, redistributed, rewarded, represented and resourced (the 5R+ framework). The evaluation found that UN-Women's added value lies in thought leadership; data and advocacy; piloting approaches that inform systems change; and that direct service delivery is most effective when used to generate lessons for policy and systems. However, the evaluation identified the need to concentrate efforts on systems change and refocus on research, advocacy and policy engagement; advancing the full 5R+ agenda with greater emphasis on paid care; embedding care across thematic areas; strengthening measurement; and enhancing regional coordination and visibility. Management accepted all six evaluation recommendations.

##### *IES-led regional evaluation of UN-Women's contribution to gender-responsive budgeting in the Europe and Central Asia region*

23. The evaluation found that the relevance of UN-Women's gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) work across the Europe and Central Asia region remains high and that the Regional Office plays a critical role in coordinating GRB efforts, providing oversight, ensuring consistency and quality control, and facilitating cross-country knowledge exchange. The evaluation found UN-Women's efforts in the region had yielded results such as policy and legal framework development, institutional capacity-building, integration of GRB into national and local public finance systems and allocations for gender equality interventions. However, more systemic integration of GRB into organizational planning, staffing and financing is needed to maintain momentum and deepen impact. Management accepted all six recommendations.

*IES-led UN-Women Regional Office for the Americas and the Caribbean Strategic Note 2023–2025 evaluation*

24. This evaluation assessed the implementation of the Americas and the Caribbean Strategic Note (2023–2025), which focused on UN-Women’s contributions across 27 countries. The evaluation confirmed that UN-Women has effectively leveraged its triple mandate to achieve notable results, particularly in supporting the establishment of national care systems, advancing women’s political participation and strengthening gender statistics. Stakeholders identified the Regional Office’s technical leadership and strategic partnerships – notably with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and regional intergovernmental bodies – as critical drivers of normative influence and policy adoption across the region. While the Strategic Note provided a relevant and coherent framework aligned with regional priorities such as migration and climate resilience, implementation was constrained by some operational bottlenecks, alongside a reliance on short-term, project-based funding that challenges long-term sustainability. The evaluation recommended strengthening back-office agility; developing a coordinated regional resource mobilization plan; and systematically integrating intersectional safeguards to sustain transformative change. Management accepted all eight recommendations.

*IES-led UN-Women Regional Office for the Arab States Strategic Note 2022–2025 evaluation*

25. This evaluation assessed the performance of the Regional Office for the Arab States in advancing gender equality and women’s empowerment across 17 countries. The evaluation found that the Regional Office was agile in responding to regional crises, particularly through the production of timely gender alerts during humanitarian emergencies in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon. Key strategic strengths included advancing the care economy, promoting positive masculinities, and supporting legislative reforms such as paternity leave and gender-equal pension laws. However, political tensions and policy implementation gaps were frequent hindering factors. The evaluation recommended that the Regional Office integrate its social norms work across all thematic areas and enhance its role as a hub for knowledge exchange across the region. Management accepted all four recommendations.

*IES-led UN-Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific Strategic Note 2023–2025 evaluation*

26. This evaluation assessed the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific Strategic Note (2023–2025), which covers 22 countries. It focused on the office’s role in providing both technical oversight and regional normative, coordination and operational support related to gender equality and the empowerment of women. The evaluation found that the Regional Office’s Strategic Note is relevant to the region, and adds value across UN-Women’s triple mandate, with regional programming proving catalytic in advancing gender equality, particularly through Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) engagement and women’s economic empowerment. Regional programming has created cross-country learning platforms; facilitated engagement with global and regional normative mechanisms; and strengthened UN-Women’s credibility in strategic policy spaces across all thematic areas. The Regional Office played a pivotal role in generating, sharing and applying gender data, research and innovations to advance gender equality across the region. Stakeholders highly valued its technical expertise and thought leadership, particularly in emerging areas such as climate action and resilience, care economy, and gender statistics. The evaluation recommended strengthening coordination between the Regional Office and country offices and subregions, and building internal capacity to monitor long-term systemic change. Management accepted four recommendations and partially accepted two.

*IES-led East and Southern Africa Regional Office Strategic Note 2022–2025 evaluation*

27. This evaluation reviewed the effectiveness of the East and Southern Africa Regional Office's Strategic Note in supporting UN-Women's triple mandate between 2022 and 2025 across 25 countries. The evaluation found the Regional Office effectively strengthened normative and accountability frameworks; advanced gender-responsive policies and data; and supported country offices. The Regional Office's convening role was central to positioning gender equality and women's empowerment within regional policy agendas, fostering collaboration with United Nations entities, and amplifying feminist and youth-led movements. The evaluation identified the need to sharpen strategic focus and thematic integration; deepen structured engagement with Regional Economic Communities, resident coordinators and civil society; and provide more differentiated and predictable support to country offices. Management accepted all seven recommendations.

*IES-led UN-Women Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia Strategic Note 2022–2025 evaluation*

28. This evaluation assessed the Regional Office's Strategic Note 2022–2025 across 18 countries and territories. The evaluation found that the strategy was relevant in implementing UN-Women's triple mandate and aligning with regional priorities. The Office offered valuable thematic, technical and operational support to country offices, notably in resource mobilization, compliance, and knowledge generation. Work on women's economic empowerment and gender-responsive public finance management has translated into tangible activities and results across the region. The evaluation recommended that the Office further sharpen its strategic focus, consolidate, and prioritize its efforts in the new Strategic Note. Management fully accepted five of the recommendations and partially accepted two recommendations.

*IES-led South Africa Multi-Country Office multi-country portfolio evaluation*

29. This evaluation assessed the Multi-Country Office's portfolio covering Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa. Interventions have delivered meaningful results in economic empowerment, gender-based violence response and policy influence, with strong potential for sustainability. The office has also promoted inclusive programming for vulnerable groups. However, limited resources impacted efficiency and the ability to fully engage outside South Africa, despite recent improvements in systems, staffing and operations. Management accepted all seven recommendations.

*IES-led Bosnia and Herzegovina CPE*

30. The UN-Women Bosnia and Herzegovina Strategic Note 2021–2025 was assessed as highly relevant and well-aligned with international, local and United Nations gender equality priorities. The evaluation noted that the Country Office contributed to legislative reforms and increasing the capacities of Government and civil society; supported care economy policy and legislative measures; strengthened income generation for rural women and women entrepreneurs; influenced legal reforms on violence against women; and supported women's specialized services. The evaluation concluded that the Country Office was most effective in its normative work, having a significant influence on gender-related legislation and policy through the provision of expertise and capacities to its governmental and non-governmental partners. It was highlighted that ensuring impact for marginalized groups requires more strategic and long-term engagement as well as integrated approaches to shifting social norms and embedding intersectionality across programmes. Management accepted all six recommendations.

*IES-led Iraq CPE*

31. This evaluation assessed the normative, coordination and operational contributions of the UN-Women Iraq Country Office between 2019 and 2024, focusing on its transition from a multi-country cluster with Yemen to a stand-alone office. The evaluation found that UN-Women is a key partner for government stakeholders, and successfully drove the second National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, while expanding women's political representation. The Country Office demonstrated agility, but its efforts were often limited due to limited technical thematic expertise and short-term project funding. The evaluation highlighted that as the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) scales back its operations, UN-Women will be required to assume a more prominent role in advancing women's political participation and the Women, Peace and Security agenda. In this context, the Country Office will also need to adopt a more strategic approach aligned with its limited resources, emphasizing normative and institutional-level engagement, strengthening its advisory and technical role, and pursuing creative resource mobilization while carefully managing the financial implications of increased operating costs. Management accepted all five recommendations.

*IES-led Liberia CPE*

32. This evaluation was conducted alongside an internal audit of the Country Office and covered all four of UN-Women's impact areas, spanning interventions in all 15 of Liberia's counties. UN-Women Liberia successfully demonstrated adaptive, locally rooted strategies that translated global gender norms into tangible progress. However, the evaluation notes that the long-term sustainability of gender equality gains depends on adequate resources and on institutional incentives supporting women's participation in politics, as well as practical mechanisms that sustain engagement by communities, institutions and private actors. These include economic incentives such as access to village savings and loan associations, start-up microgrants, opportunities for women entrepreneurs to access markets or procurement systems, and livelihood inputs. Management accepted all six recommendations.

*IES-led Somalia CPE*

33. This CPE assessed UN-Women's contributions to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in Somalia from 2022 to 2024. The Strategic Note was found to be highly relevant and broadly coherent with national and humanitarian priorities, and strong performance was noted in policy advocacy, joint programme delivery and United Nations coordination. However, organizational and security constraints; limited human resources capacity and government ownership; and reliance on short-term funding, all hindered implementation at scale, and weakened prospects for sustaining efforts to shift entrenched gender norms. The evaluation also highlighted persistent gaps in working with women in hard-to-reach areas. Management accepted all four recommendations.

*IES-led Global Programme Evaluation on Women's Resilience to Disasters Global Programme*

34. This final evaluation assessed UN-Women's global flagship initiative on gender-responsive disaster risk reduction and climate resilience from 2021 to 2025, with a focus on Pacific Island countries. The Women's Resilience to Disasters Programme advanced UN-Women's position as a global thought leader and women's leadership in international climate agendas and institutionalizing gender-responsive disaster prevention, preparedness and recovery. Despite these achievements, the programme's sustainability was limited due to its complexity, which reduced operational efficiency. The evaluation highlighted a need to anchor disaster risk reduction more firmly within UN-Women to avoid regressing on disability and gender-responsive gains. Management accepted all four recommendations.

### Internal evaluation capacity development

35. IES further enhanced UN-Women’s internal evaluation capacity by offering training, learning initiatives and coaching, with a focus on gender-responsive evaluation and quality assurance in decentralized evaluations. More than 170 personnel participated in these initiatives, and technical assistance was provided to monitoring and evaluation (M&E) focal points and managers overseeing evaluations. Regionally, IES offered specialized training and coaching, e.g. 29 UN-Women personnel in East and Southern Africa received evaluation induction; the Arab States Regional Office offered evaluation induction for new personnel and promoted evaluative thinking in planning workshops; and in the Asia and the Pacific Regional Office, 128 participants attended evaluation learning events. IES also supported M&E focal points with evaluation training and hands-on coaching for managing country and regional evaluations in West and Central Africa, and Europe and Central Asia, and delivered targeted in-country training in Honduras and El Salvador within the Latin America and Caribbean region.

### Communication to facilitate the use of evaluation

36. In 2025, IES continued to strengthen evaluation use across UN-Women through communication and knowledge management, anchored in development of the UN-Women Evaluation Use Strategy (2025–2030). The strategy focuses on strategic communication to present evaluation findings in timely, accessible and audience-tailored formats; knowledge management to embed evaluations within UN-Women’s learning systems and planning processes; and advocacy for use to enhance the visibility, value and influence of evaluations.
37. IES advanced system-level improvements to support evaluation use through digital and artificial intelligence-enabled tools. These included the development of Power BI–based dashboards to monitor evaluation key performance indicators (KPIs) and track the Global Evaluation Plan, enabling more timely, transparent and interactive access to evaluation data. IES also piloted an artificial intelligence-enabled chatbot to facilitate easier, on-demand access to evaluation evidence and related knowledge products.

## IV. Performance of the evaluation function in UN-Women

38. UN-Women tracks and reports on a set of evaluation KPIs to ensure transparency and accountability in the evaluation function. Table 1 summarizes the results for 2025 and the trends over the Strategic Plan 2022–2025 period.

**Table 1. Evaluation KPIs and targets for UN-Women’s Strategic Plan 2022–2025**

KPI	Description	2022	2023	2024	2025	Target (by 2025)
Financial resources invested in the evaluation function	Evaluation expenditure over UN-Women programme expenditure (%)	1.9	2.3	1.6	1.5	Between 2.0–3.0 <sup>1</sup>
Human resources for M&E	Offices that appointed an M&E focal point or officer (%)	98	97	99	100	100

<sup>1</sup> The revised Evaluation Policy (2020) recommends that UN-Women allocate between 2 and 3 per cent of its total programme expenditure to the evaluation function.

Evaluation coverage	At least one evaluation per strategic note cycle (%)	93	98	96	99	100
Evaluation implementation rate	Percentage of evaluations being implemented (%)	92	84	87	99	100
Quality of evaluation reports	Percentage of evaluation reports rated “good and above” (%)	86	100	100	95	100
Joint evaluations	Percentage of joint evaluations contributed by UN-Women (%)	29	27	35	33	25
Management response submission to the Global Accountability and Tracking of Evaluation (GATE) use system	Percentage of completed evaluation reports submitted with management response to GATE (%)	100	100	100	100	100
Implementation of management response	Percentage of management response key actions being implemented (%)	91	92	86	89	95
Use of evaluations	Percentage of offices that reported using evaluation (%)	87	89	90	90	95

### Key performance indicator 1: Financial resources invested in evaluation

**Table 2. Evaluation function expenditure 2022–2025 (US\$)**

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total UN-Women programme expenditure	441,317,504	465,264,805	532,603,396	544,288,755
Total expenditure on evaluation	8,224,073	10,493,407	8,480,005	7,941,990
IES/IEAIS	3,800,044	3,882,841	4,047,523	3,897,660
Decentralized evaluations	4,424,029	6,610,566	4,432,482	4,044,330
Total expenditure (%)	1.9	2.3	1.6	1.5

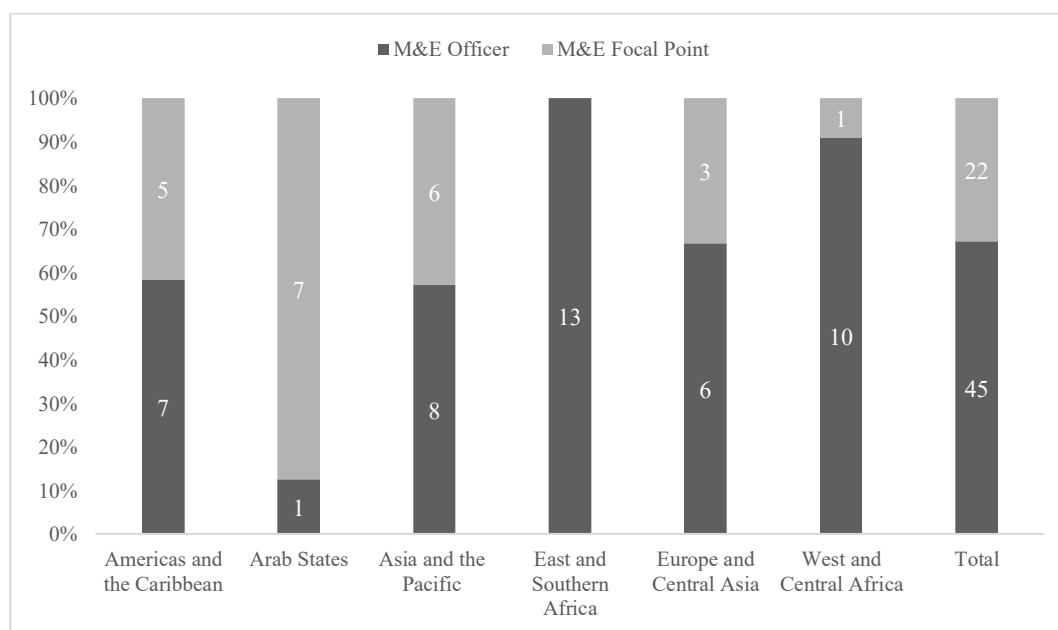
Source: “Total UN-Women programme expenditure” and “IES expenditure” values were generated from Quantum by the Division of Management and Administration (DMA). Values for decentralized evaluations were calculated based on figures by DMA and supplemented by IES data.

39. In 2025, UN-Women’s total spending on evaluation was an estimated US\$ 7.94 million. This figure is based on unaudited expenditure data provided by the Division of Management and Administration and reviewed by IES to the extent possible. This was lower than the 2024 evaluation expenditures, down approximately 6 per cent (2025: US\$ 7.94 million; 2024: US\$ 8.48 million), as shown in Table 2. The decrease is mainly due to the decreased decentralized evaluation costs related to the Spotlight Initiative. Also, in 2025 the IES non-staff budget was reduced by US\$ 50,000 in June, due to the cost-saving measures implemented across the organization. Overall, this resulted in the ratio of evaluation expenditure falling from 1.6 per cent in 2024 to 1.5 per cent in 2025.

### Key performance indicator 2: Human resources for monitoring and evaluation

40. In 2025, IES comprised a team of six evaluation specialists at headquarters and six regional evaluation specialists based in UN-Women’s regional offices, under the overall leadership of the Director, IEAIS and the Chief, IES. The evaluation function was complemented by the engagement of individual experts, consultants and interns, as required.
41. At the decentralized level, 100 per cent of UN-Women country and regional offices had at least one appointed M&E officer or focal point in 2025, meeting the target set in the UN-Women Global Evaluation Strategy 2022–2025 (see Figure 1). While overall M&E personnel coverage increased from 99 per cent in 2024 to full coverage in 2025, the proportion of offices with dedicated M&E officers declined slightly, from 70 per cent in 2024 to 67 per cent, indicating continued regional variation in evaluation capacity. In some regions, particularly the Arab States, M&E support was provided primarily through focal points who carry out M&E functions alongside other responsibilities, whereas in East and Southern Africa, offices more frequently benefited from dedicated M&E officers supporting evaluation and reporting functions.

Figure 1  
M&E officers/focal points by region in 2025

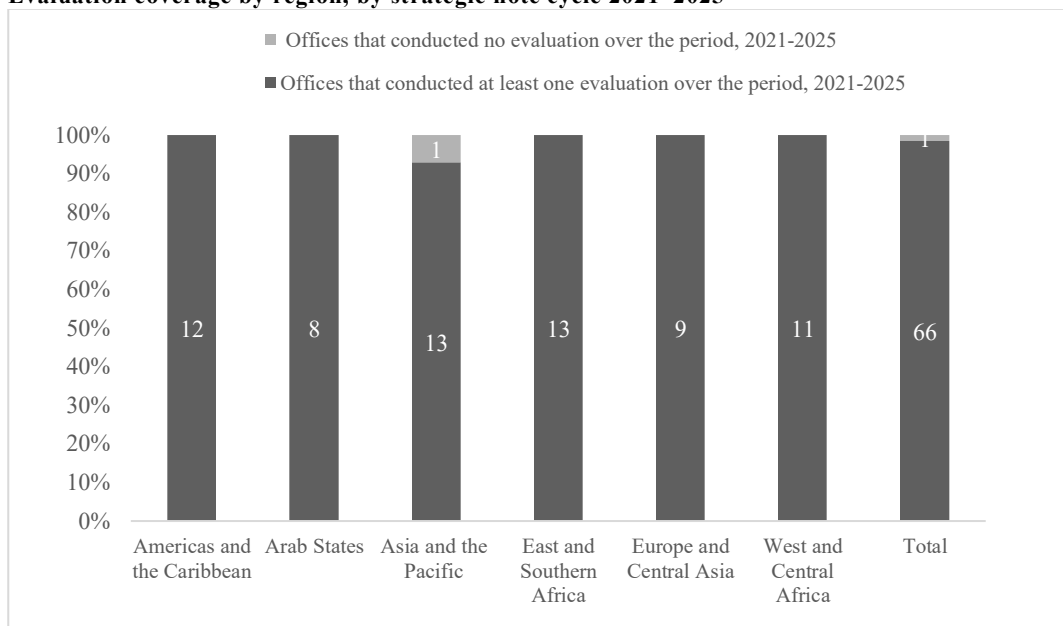


Source: Global Evaluation Oversight System.

### Key performance indicator 3: Evaluation coverage

42. Between 2021 and 2025, all regional and country offices, except the Myanmar Country Office, completed at least one evaluation during their strategic note cycle. This is slightly below the 2025 target of 100 per cent, but represents progress from 93 per cent in 2022 (see Figure 2). This high level of coverage was achieved through IES-led evaluations conducted by 2025, including the CPE in Iraq and the strategic cluster evaluation in Afghanistan, which addressed offices with limited prior evaluation coverage due to challenging operating contexts, including political and security sensitivities. IES will continue to proactively follow up to ensure adequate evaluation coverage of key UN-Women programmatic and operational areas.

Figure 2  
Evaluation coverage by region, by strategic note cycle 2021–2025



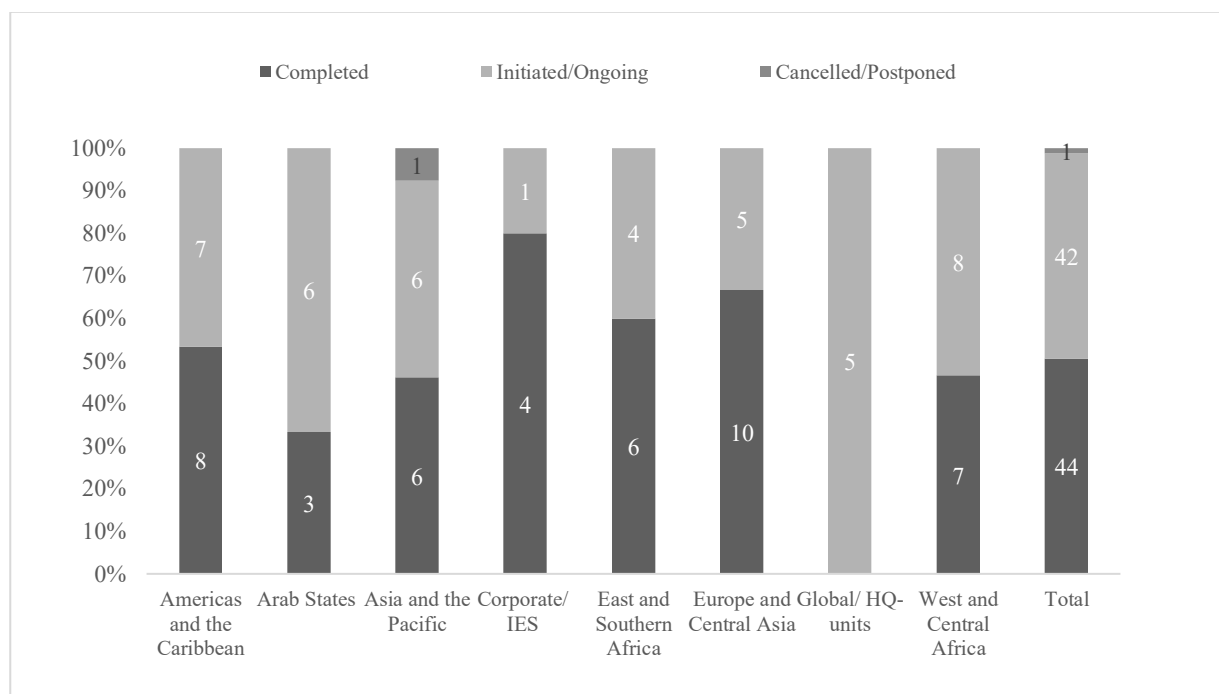
Source: Global Evaluation Oversight System.

#### Key performance indicator 4: Implementation rate of planned evaluations

43. IES develops an annual global evaluation plan to systematically track and monitor the progress of planned evaluations based on the evaluation plans formulated by field presences and business units, and validated under the guidance of the regional evaluation specialists. IES also undertakes a midyear review of the global evaluation plan, collaborating closely with country and regional offices to implement any necessary modifications to planned activities.
44. In 2025, of the 87 evaluations planned (compared with 83 in 2024), all except one were either completed or initiated. Specifically, 44 evaluations<sup>2</sup> (51 per cent) were completed, up from 42 per cent in 2024, while 42 evaluations (48 per cent) were initiated and were at various stages of implementation, broadly similar to that in 2024 (45 per cent). As a result, overall implementation was close to the target of 100 per cent for planned evaluations in 2025 (see Figure 3).

Figure 3

<sup>2</sup> This number includes 43 evaluations reported to GERAAS, and one synthesis (corporate evaluation synthesis assessing UN-Women's performance against the Strategic Plan 2022–2025) that does not require GERAAS review.

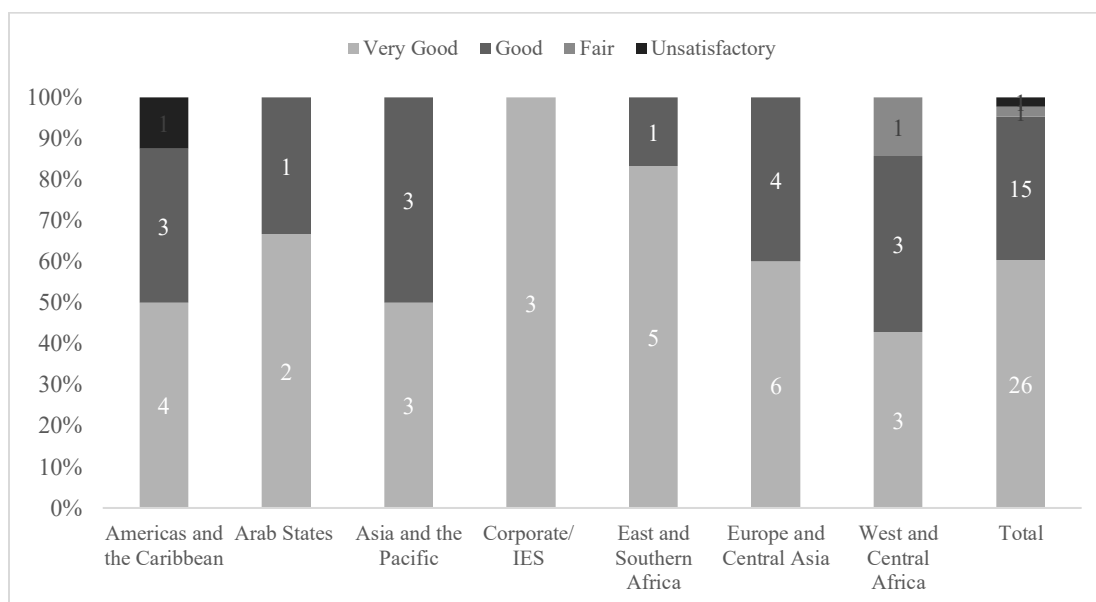
**Evaluation implementation rate for 2025**

Source: Global Evaluation Oversight System.

**Key performance indicator 5: Quality of evaluation reports**

45. All UN-Women evaluation reports are subject to an external quality assessment conducted through the Global Evaluation Report Assessment and Analysis System (GERAAS), based on nine standardized quality criteria. In 2025, 41 of 43 evaluation reports (95 per cent) received an overall rating of “very good” or “good” (see Figure 4). While this represents a slight decline compared to previous year (100 per cent in 2024), all IES-led evaluations continued to be rated “very good”. The minor decline was observed in decentralized evaluation reports managed directly by country offices. In response, IES will continue to provide targeted technical guidance and quality assurance support to decentralized evaluations throughout the evaluation cycle, with stronger emphasis on upfront planning and design.

Figure 4  
Quality of evaluation reports 2025



Source: Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System.

#### Key performance indicator 6: Joint evaluations

46. In 2025, UN-Women was involved in 40 joint evaluation initiatives, representing 33 per cent of the total evaluations undertaken during the year and exceeding the corporate target of 25 per cent.<sup>3</sup> This reflects sustained engagement in joint evaluation work across the United Nations system. Of these, 29 evaluations (72 per cent) were independent system-wide and inter-agency evaluations, including two system-wide evaluations and one global synthesis at the global level, three inter-agency humanitarian evaluations (Syrian Arab Republic/Türkiye, Somalia and the Sudan), and 23 United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) evaluations. These system-wide and inter-agency processes represent UN-Women's strategic contribution to collective accountability and learning at country, regional and global levels.

#### Key performance indicator 7: Management response submission to GATE

47. Management response for each evaluation is one of the key steps of the evaluation process, promoting accountability, transparency and learning by encouraging UN-Women to reflect on the recommendations and identify areas for improvement. Of the 43 evaluations completed in 2025, all of them had a management response at the time of this report. IES acknowledged that the six-week time frame for completing and approving management responses was not consistently met. IES will continue to support improvements in the timeliness of management response through the regional evaluation specialists' follow-up and engagement with country offices.

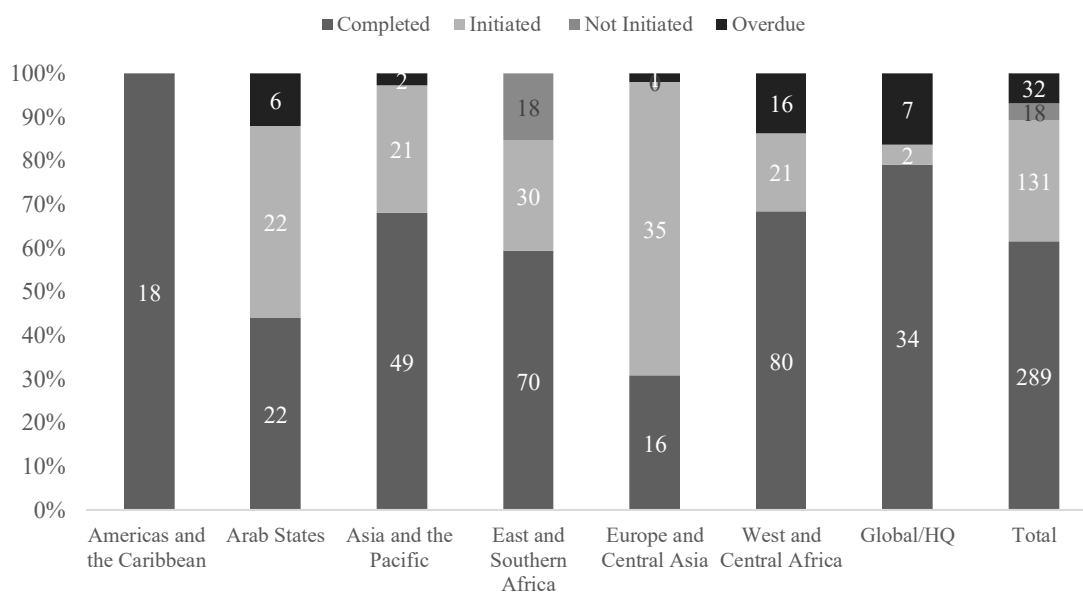
<sup>3</sup> The evaluation KPI on joint evaluations tracks UN-Women's contribution to all joint evaluations and initiatives, including independent, system-wide evaluations at the global level and UNSDCF evaluations. The denominator used to calculate the percentage is the total number of evaluations in which UN-Women participates, including evaluations that are not managed or led by UN-Women.

### Key performance indicator 8: Implementation of management response/key actions

48. Following completion of 35 UN-Women evaluations in 2024, management committed to 470 key actions.<sup>4</sup> As of January 2026, 289 actions (61 per cent) were reported by management as completed, 131 (28 per cent) were in progress, 18 (4 per cent) had not been initiated, and 32 (7 per cent) were considered overdue (see Figure 5). This reflects a modest increase in the overall implementation rate, from 86 per cent in 2024 to 89 per cent in 2025.

Figure 5

#### Management response implementation rate, as of January 2026



Source: Global Evaluation Oversight System

### Key performance indicator 9: Use of evaluation to inform programming

49. Based on self-reported data on evaluation use from UN-Women's annual reporting for 2025 and IES midyear questionnaires, 90 per cent of field offices reported leveraging evidence and lessons learned from recent evaluations to inform their programming and interventions (also 90 per cent in 2024).
50. Across regions, evaluation use was demonstrated through concrete planning and programming decisions. IES-led strategic evaluations, such as regional office strategic note evaluations and CPEs, directly informed strategic planning and programme design. For example, in the Arab States, strategic note evaluations and CPEs (supported by foresight analysis and leadership dialogues) directly informed new strategic notes, including in Iraq. In the Americas and the Caribbean, it was reported that evaluations in Panama, Guatemala and Argentina, and at the regional level, informed programme adjustments and the next strategic cycle. In Asia and the Pacific, evaluation findings informed the next phase of programme design, adaptive management

<sup>4</sup> This does not include 36 key actions marked as "no longer applicable".

and future Women, Peace and Security and women's economic empowerment and resilience programming in countries including China, Indonesia, Fiji, Nepal, Pakistan, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam. The strategic note evaluation, including data-collection process, directly informed the Regional Strategic Note, as well as a parallel functional review of the office, which allowed for an evidence-based Strategic Note with a fit-for-purpose structure to deliver.

51. In 2025, IES introduced a post-evaluation use and satisfaction survey for IES-led evaluations to gather feedback from key stakeholders. Overall satisfaction was high, with 82 per cent of respondents reporting they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the evaluation process, and technical aspects such as ethics, transparency and inclusivity consistently rated "good" or "very good". Respondents most frequently reported using evaluation findings to inform strategic planning and programme design, indicating their direct use in the development of strategic notes and new initiatives. Suggestions for improvement included more concrete and context-specific recommendations; clearer regional applicability and links to theories of change and measurement; and allowing more time for evaluation planning, implementation and dissemination to further strengthen evaluation use.

## V. Working in partnership for gender-responsive evaluation

### **Strengthening gender-responsive evaluation within the United Nations system**

52. In 2025, IES continued its role as co-convenor of the UNEG Gender Equality, Disability and Human Rights, and Evaluation Synthesis Working Groups. IES led the Gender Equality, Disability and Human Rights Working Group in implementing its workplan, which included providing guidance and facilitating knowledge-sharing on integrating gender, disability and human rights considerations into evaluations. This involved supporting implementation and reporting on the UN-SWAP and UNDIS evaluation indicators, and disseminating the updated UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations (2024). Key results in 2025 included development of the UN-SWAP 3.0 Evaluation Performance Indicator Technical Note and Scorecard, reflecting updates introduced under UN-SWAP 3.0. Building on this work, UN-Women developed Guidance on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in UN-Women Evaluations, which supports the systematic integration of the perspectives of persons with disabilities throughout the evaluation cycle within UN-Women and the broader United Nations system. The Evaluation Synthesis Working Group produced the UNEG Evaluation Synthesis Guidance, which provides a comprehensive framework for conducting evaluation syntheses within the United Nations system and beyond. As part of the Global SDG Synthesis Coalition, IES is a co-chair of the People Pillar, which is finalizing a synthesis on the implementation and effectiveness of social assistance interventions.

### **United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women Evaluation Performance Indicator**

53. IES continued its role as the secretariat for the UN-SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicator (EPI) in 2025. The 2024 EPI report indicated a slight decline in performance compared to previous years. Of the 53 entities reporting on the EPI, 83 per cent met or exceeded the requirements, down from 89 per cent in 2023. The use of the UNEG-endorsed scorecard decreased from 70 per cent in 2023 to 60 per cent in 2024, indicating that gaps still exist in the consistent application and expansion of gender-responsive evaluation practices. For the 2025 UN-SWAP reporting period, IES commissioned an external review of 45 evaluations completed in 2025. Based on the assessment, UN-Women continues to "exceed requirements" for the EPI.

### **Partnerships for national evaluation capacity development**

54. Throughout 2025, IES provided technical support to country-led evaluations of national gender strategies and/or policies at regional and country levels, and supported capacity-building and partnership initiatives. UN-Women participated in the reference group of a national evaluation of the Tugwi Mukosi programme led by the Government of Zimbabwe; and provided technical evaluation support for the Malawi Sustainable Development Goals country-led evaluation and the Evaluation of the Mozambique National Action Plan on Women (2018–2022). In terms of capacity-building, IES delivered training on M&E with a gender and human rights lens in Ecuador, Honduras and Chile in partnership with the Center for Learning in Evaluation and Results for Latin America and the Caribbean (CLEAR-LAC), and in the United Republic of Tanzania in partnership with the Government. At the global level, IES continued its partnership with the Global Evaluation Initiative and EvalGender+, including supporting their selection of awardees for the Small Awards Programme for feminist innovation in M&E, and the dissemination of achievements throughout the year.

## **VI. 2026 IES Programme of Work**

55. In line with the UN-Women Evaluation Strategy 2026–2029 and the CEP 2026–2029, IES will implement its 2026 programme of work across five interrelated focus areas, while remaining responsive to emerging organizational priorities and contextual changes.

### **Strategic evaluations and activities at the corporate level**

56. In 2026, IES will finalize the corporate evaluation of UN-Women’s support to intergovernmental processes, for presentation to the Executive Board at its annual session. IES will conduct the corporate evaluation of UN-Women’s support to building and sustaining women’s movements, scheduled for presentation to the Executive Board in 2027. IES will initiate a synthesis of UN-Women’s support to making institutions accountable for gender equality, and conduct a rapid assessment of UN-Women’s work related to HIV/AIDS, applying flexible evaluation methodologies to respond to evolving information needs.

### **Strategic evaluations and technical support at the decentralized level**

57. IES Regional Evaluation Specialists will lead approximately 20 strategic regional and CPEs in 2026. IES will maintain oversight of decentralized evaluations through the global evaluation and oversight system; monitor key evaluation performance indicators; assess the quality of decentralized evaluation reports; and strengthen corporate evaluation capacity through targeted training and coaching. IES will also provide technical support to an estimated 70 programme, project and joint evaluations commissioned by headquarters, regional and country offices.

### **Partnerships for gender-responsive evaluation**

58. IES will continue to engage actively in United Nations system-wide and joint evaluations, including UNSDCF evaluations, to ensure the systematic integration of gender equality perspectives. In 2026, IES will contribute to Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluations, including in the Sudan, and will participate in the system-wide evaluation of United Nations coordination

in the Sahel. IES will also continue co-chairing the People Pillar of the Global SDG Synthesis Coalition.

#### **Leadership in UNEG and national capacity development**

59. IES will participate in seven UNEG working groups and maintain its leadership role by co-convening the UNEG Gender Equality, Disability and Human Rights and UNEG Synthesis Working Groups. IES will lead reporting on the UN-SWAP EPI and serve as the designated gender focal point for UNEG. In parallel, IES will support national gender-responsive evaluation capacity development through EvalGender+ and the Global Evaluation Initiative, and provide targeted technical assistance to country-led evaluations of gender strategies and action plans.

#### **Strengthening evaluation use and communication**

60. Building on UN-Women's Evaluation Use Strategy 2025–2030, IES will reinforce engagement with senior management and key stakeholders to strengthen follow-up on evaluation recommendations. IES will further operationalize the strategy through audience-tailored communication products and monitor the uptake of evaluation evidence in strategic planning and organizational decision-making processes. IES will continue to collaborate closely with the Policy, Programme and Intergovernmental Division and the Strategy, Planning, Resources and Effectiveness Division, contributing to UN-Women's knowledge management through systematic dissemination of evaluation findings.

#### **Budget for the 2026 IES programme of work**

61. The approved budget for the 2026 IES programme of work amounts to US\$ 3,573,000, comprising US\$ 2,121,000 from the institutional budget and US\$ 1,452,000 in core resources. The overall budget allocation is similar to previous years; however, IES non-staff costs for travel and consultancy support were reduced by 20 per cent.

## Annex UN-Women evaluations completed in 2025

	Office	Region/ country	Type	Title	Evaluation report quality rating
1	Americas and the Caribbean	Americas and the Caribbean Multi-Country Office	Regional programme evaluation	Programme end evaluation: Women’s leadership, empowerment, access and protection in human mobility crisis in Central America Caribbean (LEAP)	Very good
2		Brazil	Project/ programme evaluation	Programme evaluation: Building pathways towards an integrated care system in Belém do Pará: Recognizing, redistributing and rewarding care work	Good
3		Americas and the Caribbean Regional Office	Project/ programme evaluation	Final evaluation of project: Supporting the Government of Panama on gender equality, gender-based violence prevention and response, and the empowerment of women and girls	Very good
4		Americas and the Caribbean Regional Office	Strategic note/ CPE	IES-led UN-Women Regional Office for the Americas and the Caribbean Strategic Note evaluation 2023–2025	Very good
5		Argentina	Project/ programme evaluation	Final evaluation of the project: Community care in Argentina	Unsatisfactory
6		Colombia	Project/ programme evaluation	Final evaluation of the joint programme: Acceleration of rural women’s economic empowerment in Colombia	Very good
7		Americas and the Caribbean Multi-Country Office	Project/ programme evaluation	Midterm evaluation: Phase II Programme Mujer, Economía Local y Territorio (MELYT) – El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras	Good
8		Guatemala	Project/ programme evaluation	Final evaluation project addressing electoral conflict from a comprehensive perspective	Good
9	Arab States	Iraq	Strategic note/ CPE	IES-led Iraq CPE	Very good
10		Morocco	Project/ programme evaluation	Final evaluation of programme aiming at strengthening GRB in Morocco	Good
11		Arab States Regional Office	Strategic note/ CPE	IES-led UN-Women Regional Office for the Arab States Strategic Note evaluation 2022–2025	Very good
12	Asia and the Pacific	Bangladesh	Project/ programme evaluation	Final evaluation report on women’s empowerment for inclusive growth (WING)	Very good
13		Asia and the Pacific Regional Office	Project/ programme evaluation	Final evaluation of “We Rise Together” project for women’s economic empowerment	Good

	Office	Region/ country	Type	Title	Evaluation report quality rating
14		Asia and the Pacific Regional Office	Strategic note/ CPE	IES-led UN-Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific Strategic Note evaluation 2023–2025	Very good
15		Asia and the Pacific Regional Office	Regional programme/ thematic evaluation	Final evaluation of the project: Empowering women for sustainable peace: Preventing violence and promoting social cohesion in ASEAN (2021–2025)	Good
16		Indonesia	Cluster evaluation	Final evaluation report of the Strategic Note direct funding project supported by the Government of the Netherlands	Good
17		Asia and the Pacific Regional Office	Regional programme/ thematic evaluation	IES-led programme evaluation on women’s resilience to disasters global programme	Very good
18	Corporate/ IES	HQ IES	Corporate evaluation	Formative evaluation of UN-Women’s work in sustainable finance	Very good
19		HQ IES	Corporate evaluation	Independent corporate evaluation of UN-Women’s approach to violence against women prevention and response: Navigating changes in global and regional contexts	Very good
20		HQ IES	Corporate evaluation	Corporate evaluation of UN-Women’s support to women’s participation in peace processes	Very good
21	East and Southern Africa	South Africa Multi-Country Office	Strategic note/ CPE	IES-led South Africa Multi-Country Office Strategic Note evaluation	Very good
22		Burundi	Project/ programme evaluation	Final evaluation of the project: Connecting the global to the local: Strengthening women’s leadership for the localization of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security in Burundi	Good
23		East and Southern Africa Regional Office	Regional programme/ thematic evaluation	IES-led regional evaluation of UN-Women’s work on the care economy in East and Southern Africa	Very good
24		Kenya	Project/ programme evaluation	Final evaluation for the project: Enhancing women’s participation in political leadership and decision-making in Kenya	Very good
25		East and Southern Africa Regional Office	Strategic note/ CPE	IES-led East and Southern Africa Regional Office Strategic Note evaluation 2022–2025	Very good
26		Somalia	Strategic note/ CPE	IES-led Somalia CPE	Very good

	Office	Region/ country	Type	Title	Evaluation report quality rating	
27	Europe and Central Asia	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Strategic note/ CPE	IES-led Bosnia and Herzegovina CPE	Very good	
28		Moldova	Project/ programme evaluation	Evaluation of the project: Building sustainable and inclusive peace, strengthening trust and social cohesion in Moldova	Good	
29		Albania	Project/ programme evaluation	Final evaluation of the project: Gender rural equality and tourism	Very good	
30		Kyrgyzstan	Project/ programme evaluation	Joint evaluation of the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund Gender Promotion Initiative project: Capacitated women CSOs sustaining peace in Kyrgyzstan	Good	
31		Europe and Central Asia Regional Office	Regional thematic evaluation	IES-led regional evaluation of UN-Women's contribution to GRB	Very good	
32		Türkiye	Project/ programme evaluation	Final evaluation of advancing gender equality and women's leadership in politics and business life	Good	
33		Georgia	Project/ programme evaluation	Final evaluation of the UN-Women Georgia project: Accelerating implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda in Georgia	Good	
34		Europe and Central Asia Regional Office	Strategic note/ CPE	IES-led UN-Women Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia Strategic Note Evaluation 2022-2025	Very good	
35		Türkiye	Project/ programme evaluation	Final evaluation of strengthening civil society capacities and multi-stakeholder partnerships to advance women's rights and gender equality in Türkiye project	Very good	
36		Bosnia and Herzegovina	Project/ programme evaluation	Final evaluation of the project: Women driving resilience in agriculture and rural areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina	Very good	
37		West and Central Africa	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Project/ programme evaluation	Final evaluation of the project for the reform and dissemination of laws in favour of women under the Project to Support the Development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises	Fair
38			Mali	Project/ programme evaluation	Evaluation of the project: Strengthening the protection and economic recovery of women, girls and their affected communities COVID-19 Mopti and Gao"	Very good
39			West and Central Africa Regional Office	Regional programme/ thematic evaluation	Final evaluation of women's economic empowerment through affirmative procurement reform in West Africa	Very good

	Office	Region/ country	Type	Title	Evaluation report quality rating
40		West and Central Africa Regional Office	Regional programme/ thematic evaluation	Midterm evaluation of the project to strengthen the capacities of women's organizations and build a strong women's movement for peace in the Sahel region	Good
41		Nigeria	Project/ programme evaluation	Final report of the midterm evaluation of enhancing gender-responsive security operations and community dialogue project in Nigeria	Good
42		Liberia	Strategic note/ CPE	IES-led Liberia CPE	Very good
43		Sierra Leone	Project/ programme evaluation	Report for the final evaluation of the project: Localizing for change: Positioning women's civil society organizations for effective implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda in Sierra Leone	Good