Dear Readers,

As part of UN Women's continuous focus on promoting learning and knowledge management, the Independent Evaluation Service undertakes an annual meta-analysis of evaluations. The main purpose of the meta-analysis is to maximize the influence and use of evaluative evidence by providing the synthesis of corporate and decentralized evaluations for learning, accountability and improved programming. This approach has helped to broaden and deepen understanding of the performance of UN Women across its impact areas, as well as its organizational effectiveness and efficiency results, over the years.

This year's annual meta-analysis is the final report covering the Strategic Plan 2014-2017 cycle. It synthesized information from 39 evaluations and provided a consolidated assessment of the development effectiveness and efficiency results of UN Women. The analysis also provided insights on the drivers of change and contributions made by UN Women to humanitarian response. It serves as part of the knowledge base for how to implement the subsequent Strategic Plan 2018-2021.

I hope the insights and lessons captured in the analysis helps UN Women and its partners to gain a deeper understanding of UN Women's results and the drivers of change that facilitate or hinder performance in order to maximize programming impact and effectiveness in the future.

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A meta-analysis of UN Women evaluations in 2017

Meta-analysis: Reflections on results, lessons and drivers of change

Analysis and synthesis for insight

FINDINGS

What do the evaluations tell us?

THE POWER OF INTEGRATION, COORDINATION, AND PARTNERSHIPS

What boosts UN Women's work?

OVERARCHING CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Moving from meta-analysis to action

The meta-analysis methodology: Synthesizing evidence

ON THE COVER Nguyen Thi Thu, is a 24-year-old migrant worker from Ha Tinh, Vietnam, she works at a special farm in Cameron Highlands, Friday 1 December 2017.

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INDONESIA - SAFE CITIES -
PREVENTING VIOLENCE
AT A NEIGHBORHOOD LEVEL.

Reflections on results, lessons and drivers of change

UN Women's Independent Evaluation Service conducts evaluations to demonstrate accountability in managing results for UN Women and its governing bodies, provide credible and reliable evidence for decision-making, and contribute important lessons in the knowledge base of UN Women. In this respect, UN Women, as an organization focused on building knowledge and facilitating learning, continuously seeks methods that drive the realization of its strategic priorities as outlined in its latest Strategic Plan 2018-2021. One such method is through the meta-analysis of its evaluations, which provides a comprehensive perspective on organizational progress, which is critical to understanding what can be done in the future to support gender equality and the empowerment of women.

By looking across a wide range of evaluations to identify common themes from the findings, conclusions, and lessons learned, this year's meta-analysis synthesized information from 39 evaluations to respond to selected operational effectiveness and efficiency results identified in the Strategic Plan 2018-2021, and examined contributions made by UN Women to humanitarian response.

The analysis provided several important insights and recommendations that merit close attention. Overall, the analysis concluded that UN Women interventions were relevant, efficient, and effective, with most achieving the expected results. Similarly, the UN Women integrated mandate was found by many evaluations to be a key factor in supporting the participation of a broad group of stakeholders in national institutional processes. The analysis also showed that UN Women comparative strengths are most pronounced in alliance and network building, leveraging the integrated mandate, and working with partners.

Network building is a key driver of UN Women contributions to impact – especially when linked to strategic partnerships and formal collaboration. Using such approaches, UN Women is overcoming barriers to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment, despite reliance on short-term non-core resources that are poorly suited to gender transformative programming. Given

"The UN Women integrated mandate was found by many evaluations to be a key factor in supporting the participation of a broad group of stakeholders in national institutional processes"

the short timeframe of many interventions, drawing on local capacities for implementation and supporting the development of informal networks contributed to sustainability.

Nonetheless, securing multi-year funding, scaling-up of high impact innovative approaches, and strengthening results-based management systems that go beyond capturing immediate outputs to tracking outcomes needs to be further expanded and improved. It also highlighted the importance of strengthening knowledge management and exchange to better report evidence of progress over the long-term and ensure knowledge is translated into results. Effective UN coordination, joint programming, and strategic partnerships are also among the key drivers of change found to be instrumental in further boosting UN Women's achievements. The analysis in particular suggested the need for strengthening the results-based management systems to support adaptive programme management and use evidence of progress towards outcomes to advocate for long-term and more stable core resources for UN Women to scale and accelerate successful interventions.

We hope the synthesis is useful for further reflection and translates into learning that informs future thinking and practices to drive transformative change on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW TO MANAGE OR CONDUCT AN EVALUATION AT UN WOMEN?

HOW CAN EVALUATION BE A DRIVER FOR CHANGE TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT?

HOW IS GENDER-RESPONSIVE EVALUATION DIFFERENT FROM OTHER EVALUATION?

HOW TO MANAGE GENDER-RESPONSIVE EVALUATION

EVALUATION HANDBOOK

Find out how UN Women manages gender-responsive evaluation with the new UN Women Evaluation Handbook: *How to manage gender responsive evaluation*.

The Handbook is available at:
http://genderevaluation.unwomen.org

UN WOMEN

Analysis and synthesis for insight

VERONICA CASIMIRA, MENTOR TO EIGHT SELF-HELP GROUPS IN THE BOBONARO REGION, AND PROUD OWNER OF LIVESTOCK IN MEMO VILLAGE, TIMOR-LESTE.

UN WOMEN/BETSY DAVIS-COSME

The Global Evaluation Report Assessment and Analysis System is used to strengthen the quality and use of evaluation at UN Women. The System produces a meta-evaluation which rates the quality of each evaluation report and a meta-analysis which synthesizes key findings, conclusions and recommendations of highly rated evaluation reports. The System uses the UN Evaluation Group evaluation report standards, plus specific standards relevant to UN Women.

Analysis

39 34
EVALUATIONS   COUNTRIES

The purpose of this meta-analysis is to aggregate and synthesize information generated from evaluations conducted in 2017 and transform it into accessible knowledge for future systematic strengthening of programming, organizational effectiveness and the evaluation function. This new knowledge is intended to help inform the implementation of the new UN Women Strategic Plan 2018-2021.

The meta-analysis is based on 39 evaluation reports independently rated as satisfactory or above according to UN Evaluation Group quality standards. It uses a process of realist synthesis to distill all relevant existing evidence and draw out relevant

programmatic and operational evidence. In addition to qualitative analysis of evaluation findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons, the meta-analysis applies a quantitative assessment of development effectiveness based

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**META-EVALUATION:
An assessment of the quality of evaluations.**

**META-ANALYSIS:
A synthesis of findings, conclusions and recommendations
from various evaluations.**

....

on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Development Assistance Committee's methods for evaluating multilateral organizations.

Looking through the lens of the UN Evaluation Group and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Development Assistance Committee's evaluation criteria (effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, sustainability), this meta-analysis responds to selected operational effectiveness and efficiency results identified in the UN Women Strategic Plan 2018-2021, and also examines contributions made by UN Women to humanitarian response.