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Dear Readers,

Self-reflection, critical assessment, continuous improvement. These are successful practices of any individual, organization or government. That is why the evaluation function is so important to UN Women. UN Women regularly evaluates its own work to enhance accountability, inform decision-making and contribute to learning on the best ways to achieve gender equality while strengthening the capacity of United Nations agencies and governments in designing, managing and using gender-responsive evaluations.

This new magazine, developed by UN Women's Independent Evaluation Office, aims to make more accessible good practices and lessons learned on what works for gender equality as identified by corporate evaluations managed by the Independent Evaluation Office, as well as in managing gender-responsive evaluations.

In this first issue, we present a review of policies, systems and practices promoting gender-responsive evaluation in the United Nations and national evaluation systems. You will learn how the United Nations as a system, as well as its individual entities, have been able to make progress in ensuring gender equality is being integrated in evaluation systems. You will also learn how countries, notably governments, voluntary organizations for professional evaluation and parliamentarians, are working together to promote gender-responsive national evaluation policies and systems.

The proposal to include gender equality in the post-2015 agenda as a stand-alone goal and integrated across all other goals elevates the strategic importance of gender-responsive evaluations. We hope the review presented in this magazine will help the evaluation community move forward and ensure gender-responsive evaluation is integrated in the post-2015 agenda.

Last but not least, I'd like to express my appreciation and thanks to the colleagues from EvalPartners, EvalGender+ and United Nations Evaluation Group who supported this review.

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Think Beyond. Stay Ahead.

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Promoting gender-responsive evaluation systems



Gender-responsive evaluation *Greater equality for generations to come*

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Gender-responsive evaluation

***Greater equality
for generations to come***

The year 2015 marks the 20th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the landmark Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Considered the most comprehensive blueprint on advancing women's rights, the 1995 Beijing roadmap was adopted by 189 governments. But 20 years on, a review of its implementation found that the commitments made have only been partially fulfilled.

Dr. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, UN Women Executive Director and Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, declared that “creating a world with greater equality for generations to come is the defining and most urgent challenge of this century. Gender equality and the realization of women’s and girls’ human rights are fundamental for achieving human rights, peace and security, and sustainable development and must be central to the post-2015 development agenda. We have set 2030 as the expiry date for gender inequality. Achieving this will require unprecedented political leadership, dedicated and vastly increased resources, and new partnerships

across the whole of society. I urge all our partners to give close attention to the recommendations of the review [\[link\]](#) and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform, as we turn now to develop and then implement the new post-2015 development agenda.”

One of the findings of the above-mentioned Beijing review was that implementation has been hampered by, among other issues, the absence of strong accountability mechanisms. As a result, the review called for strengthening this aspect, which includes evaluation, to accelerate progress.

The proposal to include gender equality and women’s empowerment

"Creating a world with greater equality for generations to come is the defining and most urgent challenge of this century."

—DR. PHUMZILE MLAMBO-NGCUKA

UN Women Executive Director
Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations



UN WOMEN/CHAUDOAN

in the post-2015 development agenda as a stand-alone goal, as well as integrated across all other goals, further elevates the strategic importance of establishing gender-responsive evaluation systems.

The United Nations General Assembly also underscored the importance of building national capacity for the evaluation of development activities and invited United Nations entities—with the collaboration of national and international stakeholders—to support, upon request, efforts to further strengthen the capacity of Member States for evaluation, in alignment with their national policies and priorities.

As a result, the international community has called for accelerated progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women, including by strengthening the capacity of evaluation systems to inform the implementation of the Beijing declaration and platform for action, as well as the gender-related goals in the post-2015 agenda. However,

this poses a number of important questions: To what extent are existing evaluation systems—within the United Nations and national governments—gender-responsive? Is the United Nations prepared to further strengthen the gender-responsiveness of its evaluation systems? When requested to do so, how can the United Nations best

partnership with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), EvalPartners, EvalGender+ and International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE), has commissioned this review of the policies, systems and practices in place to promote gender-responsive evaluation. By taking stock of existing gender-responsive evaluation systems within

Including gender equality in the post-2015 development agenda further elevates the strategic importance of establishing gender-responsive evaluation systems.

engage with national governments and stakeholders to strengthen capacity for gender-responsive evaluation systems? What have we learned from developing and implementing gender-responsive evaluation systems to date?

As a contribution to answering these questions UN Women, in

the United Nations and Member States, it provides information on the opportunities that can be addressed to strengthen these systems in the future, individually and collectively.

 **FIND IT ONLINE!**
<http://bit.ly/Beijing20review>

I want equality for women and men.

I am **#HeForShe**



Join me at HeForShe.org

I am one of billions of men who believe equality for women is a basic human right that benefits us all. Now it's your turn to join the solidarity movement for gender equality. Are you HeForShe?



UN Women is the United Nations organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. Photo credit: Celeste Sloman

What is **gender-responsive evaluation?**

Evaluation, as an agent of change, should bring attention to often overlooked gender equality issues.

According to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), gender-responsive evaluations “provide a holistic and meaningful assessment of how an intervention is guided by human rights and gender equality approaches... [It] draws upon established and well-known approaches, techniques and methods to design, implement and use evaluations. However, performing human rights and gender-responsive evaluations

mandates directed at... advancing gender equality.”

In most cases, when gender equality is not the focus of an intervention, this dimension is overlooked in the planning, design, implementation and monitoring phases. It is then not surprising that it is often overlooked in the evaluation phase as well.

However, given evaluation’s role as an agent of change, it can bring attention to this common over-

Evaluations that neglect or omit considerations of gender equality risk depriving stakeholders of evidence about who benefits (and who does not) from interventions, may contribute to perpetuating discriminatory structures and practices, and may miss opportunities for demonstrating how effective interventions are carried out. Furthermore, an evaluation that overlooks gender equality dimensions may be seen as less credible since it failed to regard this crucial aspect relevant to all development interventions and draw out potential

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