

IN BRIEF



CORPORATE EVALUATION OF UN WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO GOVERNANCE AND NATIONAL PLANNING

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WHAT WAS EVALUATED



The evaluation focused on UN Women's work on **Governance and National Planning (GNP)** - Impact Area 5



The evaluation was conducted from Dec. 2017 to Dec. 2018 and focused on the **period of 2011- 2017**



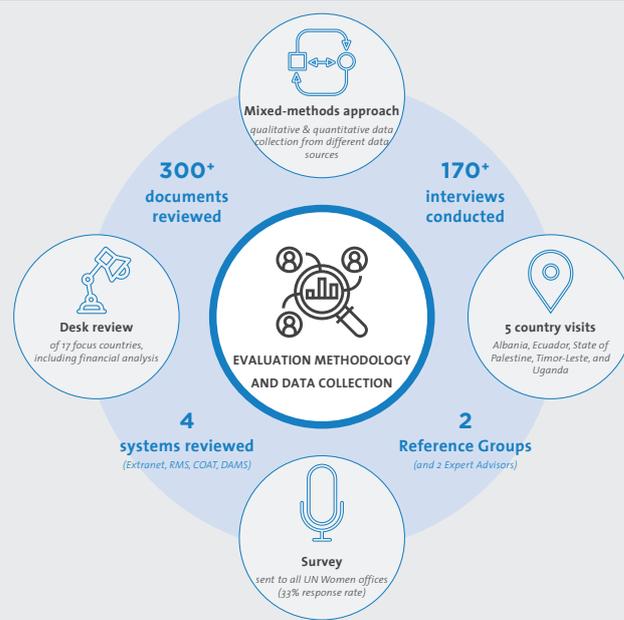
Work on **gender-responsive HIV/AIDS planning** is also included in the scope of the evaluation



During this period, UN Women's GNP operations took place across **76 countries** (targeted HIV/AIDS programs in 35)



The **total expenditure** for UN Women's GNP work amounted to **US\$125.8 million**, approximately **8% of expenditures** across all of the impact areas



UN Women has long experience in Governance and National Planning (GNP)—an area of work that has contributed to UN Women's identity and framed a specialism for which it is recognized and valued.

UN Women's approach to integrating gender equality in GNP is aimed at ensuring that governments take the necessary measures to achieve results in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment. It entails putting in place the necessary capacities, systems, and resources for governments to plan, budget, and monitor the functions of public institutions. The approach seeks to strengthen government accountability toward gender equality by ensuring that it is explicit in the strategic objectives and priorities of governments, is evidenced by the increase in invested resources toward gender-focused programs and services,

and is integrated in accountability frameworks that monitor government performance and effectiveness. Within the GNP work, UN Women also works to ensure that national HIV/AIDS plans, budgets and monitoring frameworks are gender responsive.

The Evaluation assessed the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and extent to which human rights approach and gender equality principles were integrated adequately in UN Women's approach to GNP across its integrated mandate: normative, operational, and coordination – at country, regional and global levels. The evaluation also assessed the specific contribution of UN Women to ensure that national HIV/AIDS plans, budgets and monitoring frameworks are gender responsive.

KEY MESSAGES

from the evaluation's conclusions and recommendations

Over the last eight years, UN Women has accumulated experience and articulated ambition in how to secure financing and capacity for enhancing gender equality through governance. The contexts of UN reform, and the 2030 Agenda offer a potential platform for UN Women's leadership and expertise to be fully utilized and duly recognized. However, capitalizing on this opportunity would require some collaborative re-thinking and some rearrangement of financial resources so that this core area of work is properly buttressed, receives sufficient focus and is convincingly linked to other thematic areas.

A number of the evaluation's findings highlight an organizational framework that has supported the considerable achievements to date towards the vision for resourcing progress to gender equality. Nevertheless, elements of UN Women's work on GNP, including in the area of HIV/AIDS, remain challenging to describe and communicate. Select findings related to effectiveness, efficiency and learning

suggest that UN Women's ongoing work on GNP could be better supported by mechanisms and processes to enable a clearer articulation of GNP achievements for use both within UN Women and beyond.

The evaluation's conclusions and recommendations coalesce around the following five broad themes:

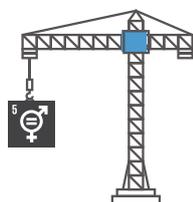
1. Positioning GNP, including in the area of HIV/AIDS, within UN Women (**Conclusions 1 and 2**)
2. Positioning GNP in the context of UN reform (**Conclusions 3 and 4**)
3. Evolving the GNP ToC and deepening work across the GNP cycle (**Conclusion 5**)
4. Capturing GNP results, including in the area of HIV/AIDS, to drive accountability and learning (**Conclusions 6, 7, 8 and 9**)
5. Enhancing the financial sustainability of UN Women's GNP work (**Conclusion 10**).



1. POSITIONING GNP WITHIN UN WOMEN

CONCLUSION 1

Conceptualizing **GNP as a central platform for UN-Women's** support to national governments



Recommendation 1

UN Women to **develop an integrated policy and program package to support national governments** with gender-responsive GNP.

CONCLUSION 2

Resetting **UN-Women's vision for its HIV/AIDS work** and relationship with GNP



Recommendation 2

UN Women to **determine the intended relationship between GNP work and work to support gender responsive HIV/AIDS** planning and budgeting specifically, and take specific actions to operationalize it.

Conclusion 1

Gender-responsive GNP is foundational work for achieving gender equality, in which UN Women has played a unique and catalytic role. But, in most countries, GNP needs to be cemented with monitoring and evaluation systems that capture results from policy to budgeting decisions and enable governments to be held to account. Similarly, this needs to be addressed through capacity development of partner organizations that UN Women seeks to enable. Going forward, UN Women could further conceptualize its GNP programming as a central platform and strengthen the linkages between other thematic areas in which it works and GNP.

Conclusion 2

Although promoting gender-responsive HIV/AIDS policies, plans and budgets forms a significant component of UN Women's HIV/AIDS work, the linkages between it and the entity's wider GNP work are not strongly aligned. This calls to resetting UN Women's vision in the area of HIV/AIDS and to put in place operational arrangements to support its realization. Within the proposal of having UN Women's GNP work becoming a central platform for the Entity's support to national governments, HIV/AIDS would then be one of several potential thematic or sectoral areas included in the integrated package of governance support provided by UN Women to governments.



2. POSITIONING GNP IN THE CONTEXT OF UN REFORM

CONCLUSION 3

UN-Women's gender-responsive **GNP work** to become the **entry point to work with other UN entities** at country level



Recommendation 3

As part of on-going UN reform processes, UN Women to leverage **coordinated UN support to national governments on gender-responsive GNP**, with UN Women providing leadership and expertise in this area.

CONCLUSION 4

Maximizing the opportunities of strengthened **GNP global normative frameworks**



Recommendation 4

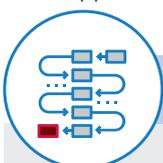
UN Women to **strengthen support for Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) implementation** at country level.

Conclusion 3

UN Women has shown strong performance in setting the global agenda for gender-responsive GNP, including in the area of HIV/AIDS, in part through its ability to develop and maintain strategic partnerships. UN Women's gender responsive GNP work appears well placed to integrate more closely with coordinated UN support to governments. With its established partnerships with central government departments, its focus on policy and planning systems that apply across all government departments, and with the opportunity to link to sectoral ministries and local government, UN Women's GNP work has the potential to connect with and enable national policy development and implementation supported by other UN entities.

Conclusion 4

UN Women's support to global normative agreements like the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) has contributed to making impressive advances in international commitments for financing for gender equality as part of the financing the Sustainable Development Goals. At country level, opportunities are only starting to be taken up. Opportunities to extend UN Women's engagement in financing for gender equality at the country level beyond GNP and into taxation and international trade, for example, are also present. Engagement in AAAA action areas beyond the current scope of UN Women GNP work would be strategic to position UN Women at the heart of financing for SDG implementation at country level



3. EVOLVING THE GNP THEORY OF CHANGE

CONCLUSION 5

Evolving the theory of change for GNP, clarifying the scope of UN-Women's GNP work and terminology



Recommendation 5

UN Women to lead an inclusive process to prepare **an evolved Theory of Change for GNP that captures the complexities of UN Women's approach** and provides a medium to long-term strategic overview of objectives and the process of their achievement.



4. CAPTURING RESULTS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY & LEARNING

CONCLUSION 6

Promoting government accountability through **enhanced civil society participation** in the GNP cycle



CONCLUSION 7

Capturing the benefits of gender-responsive GNP, including in the area of HIV/AIDS *to women and especially marginalized women.*



CONCLUSION 8

Improving corporate systems to better capture results and processes of change



CONCLUSION 9

Strengthening systems for GNP **knowledge management** and learning



▶ Recommendations 6 & 7

UN Women to **work proactively with ROs & COs, (1)** to support **consistent national civil society roles**; and (2) to assist national GNP partners to **put in place systems to measure the impact of gender-responsive GNP.**

▶ Recommendation 8 & 9

UN Women to accelerate the institutionalization of the RMS, and **gain insights into what is working and how.** UN Women to continue the drive for its knowledge management strategy to **support knowledge management for GNP.**

Conclusion 6

UN Women's technical support and capacity building has helped to strengthen civil society's role in GNP, including in HIV/AIDS as well as facilitate greater government responsiveness to it. This work has been effective, but it has not been fully consistent, as the engagement with civil society organization has often been dependent on project-based tasks and on timelines for engagement with international agreements.

Conclusion 7

Relatively little emphasis in GNP work, including in the area of HIV/AIDS, has been on monitoring and evaluation in the government policy-budget-review cycle. This means that relatively little is known about how far gender responsive GNP benefits the most marginalized groups, such as women living with HIV/AIDS and especially marginalized groups within this group.

Conclusion 8

UN Women has made good progress in establishing the Results Management System (RMS) but there are still gaps that affect the reporting of Impact Area 5 outcomes. Planning and reporting formats do not fully capture how objectives are being met and the challenges in promoting gender-responsive GNP work.

Conclusion 9

Systems for learning in GNP have, on the whole, offered good support for refining and sharpening the effectiveness of work in this area, including for HIV/AIDS national planning. There are new opportunities with the UN Women knowledge management strategy to support an informed and strategic approach in GNP creating the conditions in which UN Women can flourish as a knowledge broker in this area.



5. ENHANCING THE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF GNP WORK

CONCLUSION 10

Ensuring GNP financial resourcing facilitates strategic planning



▶ Recommendation 10

UN Women to **review the use of core funding** and consider how it can best be used to enable strategic planning and delivery in GNP at the normative and operational work at country level.

Conclusion 10

The evaluation found that UN Women’s GNP relies heavily on non-core resources. While the ratio of core to non-core resources supporting GNP is similar to that in other impact areas, it is a concern for an area of work considered one of UN Women’s flagships and one with such strategic potential. It exposes GNP normative and operational programming to the shifting priorities of donors as well as the challenges of short-term funding horizons for processes that take years to embed. This risks undermining UN Women’s ability to make strategic

decisions about how to progress GNP, in line with its ToC, and potentially diluting the focus.

A number of the evaluation’s recommendations highlight the need for additional financial resources. Raising more non-core funding to drive this new phase of UN Women’s GNP work is one option, although it is recognized that few donors are particularly active in this area of work. In addition, a reliance on non-core funding is problematic as the short-term nature of most non-core funding does not provide the long-term planning horizons that are needed for systemic change to governance processes to take root.

Carrying the GNP Flag in Uganda and Albania

In Uganda, UN Women was at the forefront of national discussions around GNP, one of the biggest areas in which UN Women wielded influence either in its own efforts or efforts under the umbrella of the UN Joint Programme on Gender Equality. The entity has been “*persistent and consistent*”; “*UN Women have walked the journey, been patient, they understand the process and they stay the course*”.

In Albania, UN Women is the only organization working with a direct and targeted focus on GNP in all the PRGP-SEE countries. Stakeholders in all three countries of Albania’s regional programme consistently stated that without UN Women’s pioneer work on GNP in the region and in each country, the topic would not be as widely discussed or accepted.

(Source: Uganda and Albania case studies)



The Independent Evaluation Service (IES) of the Independent Evaluation and Audit Services (IEAS) conducts corporate evaluations of UN Women’s work and achievements in its strategic impact areas. This evaluation focused on the Impact Area 5 of UN Women Strategic Plan 2014-2017 and reviewed UN Women’s work on governance and national planning, including work on gender-responsive HIV/AIDS governance and planning.

The purpose of the evaluation was to support accountability, learning, and knowledge generation by providing evidence on what has been achieved in Governance and National Planning (GNP), and to provide forward-looking recommendations to inform future decision-making about UN Women’s support to GNP. To provide a conceptual framework, a theory of change for UN Women’s GNP work was reconstructed based on available documentation and interviews.

Find the full evaluation report at:

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/accountability/evaluation/corporate-evaluations>