

TRANSFORM

What can we learn from UN Women evaluations?

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Dear Readers,

Meta-analysis offers a unique opportunity for learning and provides useful feedback for influencing positive change. As part of its continuous effort to promote learning and accountability, the UN Women Independent Evaluation Office undertakes an annual meta-analysis to ensure that the body of evidence produced by corporate and decentralized evaluations are synthesized and used to inform corporate-level and decentralized policies and strategies.

This year's meta-analysis aggregates and synthesizes information generated from 49 evaluations and transformed this evidence into accessible knowledge to help strengthen programming and organizational effectiveness. It will also help inform the new UN Women Strategic Plan 2018–2021.

To serve the dual purpose of accountability and learning, annual meta-analyses alternate between a focus on accountability and learning. This way the exercise is more robust and relevant, serving better the organization.

This meta-analysis constitutes the third synthesis of UN Women commissioned evaluations since the adoption of the current Strategic Plan (2014–2017). Since the focus of last year was on learning, this year's focus is on accountability. The scope of the meta-analysis includes corporate and decentralized evaluation reports produced by UN Women in 2015 (28 reports) and 2014 (21 reports). For 2015, it includes three country portfolio evaluations for the first time.

We hope you find the synthesis useful to further reflect on what works and what does not in accelerating efforts towards achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

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Think Beyond. Stay Ahead.

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A meta-analysis of UN Women evaluation in 2014 and 2015

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Making an organization greater than the sum of its parts

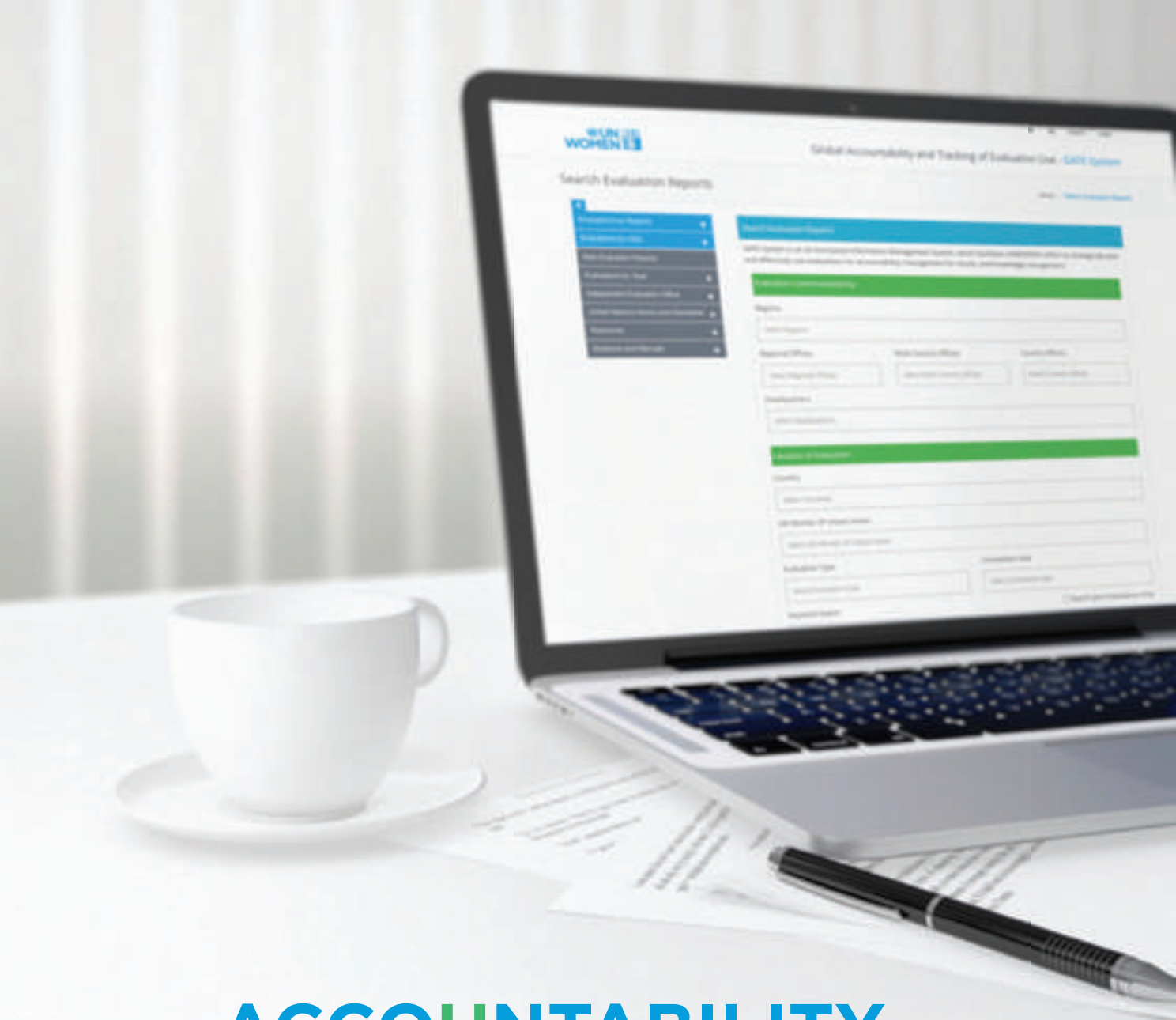
On a day-to-day basis we are focused on the tasks that help us get the job done. There are rarely opportunities to reflect on these experiences at an individual level, and even fewer opportunities for reflecting on experience across an organization. However, a comprehensive understanding of what factors at an organizational level are facilitating or hindering progress towards our common goals is critical to making the organization greater than the sum of its parts.

Organizations have a responsibility for facilitating learning by building it into the fabric of their operations. The UN Women evaluation policy identifies learning and accountability as the key purposes of evaluation, and it acknowledges that the production of evaluation reports is not enough – it is in how we use the findings and recommendations that the organization and individual staff will begin to take steps to act on the lessons learned.

The meta-analysis is a powerful tool for making sense of the common findings from individual evaluations conducted all over the world that are relevant to the organization as a whole. This year's meta-analysis points to the effectiveness of UN Women as a knowledge broker—a

role that it in theory has the capacity to do and a role that is demanded by its stakeholders—which is being hindered by a lack of capacity and investment in systems and capacities for knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation. In this respect, hopefully this meta-analysis can serve as inspiration for UN Women on how to digest the large amounts of information generated by multiple evaluations and translate it into something relevant beyond “the parts”.

Ultimately, the aim of evaluation is to help improve an organization's ability to drive transformational change—both within itself and in society—in order to achieve its goals in the most effective, efficient and sustainable manner.



ACCOUNTABILITY S LEARNING

GATE System: **The Global Accountability and Tracking of Evaluation Use**

An on-line based Public Information Management System, which facilitates UN Women's effort to strategically plan and effectively use evaluations for accountability, management for results, and knowledge management.

>>>> <http://gate.unwomen.org/>



Independent
Evaluation Office



Why meta-analysis?

The UN Women Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System considers meta-evaluation to be a systematic and formal assessment of the quality of evaluations report against UN Evaluation Group evaluation standards, and meta-analysis to be an instrument to synthesize evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations from a series of evaluations that meet UN Evaluation Group quality standards.

In the current Corporate Evaluation Plan (2014–2017), annual meta-analyses are scheduled to ensure that the body of evidence produced by evaluations, including those managed by field offices, can be synthesized and inform corporate-level policies and strategies. There are two main purposes to evaluation in UN Women: learning and accountability. To enhance utilization, annual meta-analyses alternate between a focus on accountability and a focus on learning. The focus of this year's

meta-analysis was accountability.

The purpose of this meta-analysis is to share the key insights from evaluation reports in order to develop constructive lessons for future systemic strengthening of programming, normative and coordination work. This meta-analysis assessed corporate and decentralized evaluation reports from 2014 and 2015 that were submitted to UN Women's Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System.

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

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



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