

EVALUATION BRIEFS

INDEPENDENT STRATEGIC EVALUATION

THE WORK OF UNOV/UNODC TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

Region: Global

Duration: 2017–2021

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Full report:

www.unodc.org/unodc/en/evaluation/reports_year_2022.html

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The United Nations Office at Vienna (UNOV) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) have the responsibility and commitment to understand how and where Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW) is relevant, and to mainstream a gender perspective internally and throughout their work.

UNOV/UNODC have made considerable efforts since 2013 to promote and advance GEEW at the institutional level and in their respective areas of activity, sharing a common strategic framework, that is, the UNOV/UNODC Strategy for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women 2018–2021 (GEEW Strategy).

As part of this commitment, a strategic evaluation of the work of UNOV/UNODC to promote GEEW has been conducted, this being the first strategic and institutional evaluation of UNOV/UNODC. It covered GEEW efforts at the institutional level from 2017 to 2021, focusing on two analytical dimensions: (1) mapping the most salient efforts and assessing their quality; and (2) understanding their contribution to individual and systemic changes at the institutional level.

MAIN FINDINGS

A HUGE STEP FORWARD: UNOV/UNODC have made considerable progress in GEEW at the institutional level since 2017. All institutional results achieved are preconditions for the necessary deeper transformations through programmatic work. However, despite significant progress, the GEEW initiatives have yet to trigger a real transformational shift towards an inclusive organizational culture that enables GEEW in everyday office life.

ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES: UNOV/UNODC have made tremendous strides in integrating GEEW into relevant policies, strategies, regulations, and internal processes. However, the practical realization of the expectations set by these efforts has not been adequately resourced.

COLLECTIVE OWNERSHIP: The development of a formal Gender Architecture, consisting of the Gender Strategy Focal Points (GSFPs) network and the Gender Team, has been a significant advancement in promoting GEEW in the offices. Although not strictly part of the official architecture, HRMS has also played an essential role in the promotion of GEEW at the institutional level. Nonetheless, the present architecture does not have sufficient authority and resources to adequately ensure collective ownership to support and create accountability mechanisms for actions (or inaction) on GEEW.

GENDER AND OTHER VARIABLES: UNOV/UNODC approached equality from a binary point of view. This means that many intersecting variables are still not embedded in a broader definition of gender analysis. This does not allow strategies to be fully inclusive or to ensure that empowerment processes do not leave any women behind. These relevant variables include

different (dis) ability or geographical backgrounds and also, very relevantly, the contracting modality from which much of the power derives.

TRUST IN POLICIES AND PROCESSES: There is a paradox between the excellence of many of the processes and outputs concerning GEEW (training, information and knowledge products, strategies, awareness-raising campaigns, human resources policy regulations, evaluations, etc.) and the lack of confidence among personnel that such processes and products (and the teams behind them) have the potential to bring about the desired changes in their work and their lives.

CULTURAL CONTEXTS AND ESPOUSED VALUES: There has been clear progress in the kind of values that UNOV/UNODC espouse about GEEW, including those made by personnel and leadership. However, these values often conflict with opposing values strongly rooted and prevalent in individuals and/or certain contexts. This has prevented the values espoused from being reflected in further tangible changes regarding GEEW.

GOOD PRACTICES

Good practices found during the evaluation include the modus operandi of the Gender Team; the central location of the Gender Team within UNOV/UNODC; keeping GEEW on the agenda; positioning GEEW in corporate communications; developing knowledge products in a participatory way and adapting them to specific contexts; appointing GSFPs who are experts and/or activists in GEEW; women in powerful positions; and collaboration with others.

METHODOLOGY



The entire evaluation process adhered to professional and ethical guidelines, the provisions of the UNODC Evaluation Policy and Handbook, and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards. The findings of the evaluation report are based on a rigorous evaluation methodology that was gender-sensitive, human rights-based and inclusive. The evaluation findings draw on evidence that emerged from the review of 786 documents and the input provided by 524 individuals (35% male and 65% female), mostly UNOV/UNODC personnel (98%). All information gathered was systematically coded using qualitative research software around the evaluation questions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Investment and expectations:** Develop a realistic budget plan linked to the implementation of the next GEEW Strategy for UNOV/UNODC to match the expectations set by the offices.
- 2. A Theory of Change and follow-up mechanism:** The next GEEW Strategy should complement the UN-SWAP 2.0 framework with a holistic Theory of Change that can be adapted to contexts at different levels and revised regularly to validate assumptions.
- 3. Trust in institutional processes related to GEEW:** Identify and roll out concrete measures for increasing trust in institutional processes addressing GEEW.
- 4. Prohibited conduct:** Conduct a dedicated assessment of the prevalence of prohibited conduct and develop a concrete set of actions to address prohibited conduct.
- 5. Beyond traditional categories:** The next GEEW Strategy should focus on disaggregating the traditional categories of women and men, integrating and empowering more women from the Global South and women with contracts other than P+ and integrating men in a way to act as agents of change.
- 6. Capacities and mindsets:** Design an organization-wide learning plan on GEEW to support implementing the next GEEW Strategy and mainstreaming GEEW within UNOV/UNODC.
- 7. Female talent:** Maintain and further enhance targeted human resources initiatives for developing the career prospects of less powerful profiles to retain talent by challenging gender stereotypes in different tasks and jobs and ensuring equal application and promotion of work-life balance mechanisms.