

Overview: evaluation evidence related to UN development system reform (2021-2024)

1. Published UN system-wide evaluations by the System-Wide Evaluation Office

System-wide evaluation of the Joint Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Fund

The evaluation made recommendations on the management and governance arrangements of the Fund and the design of projects. It highlighted a need for improved clarity in value proposition and synergy with other pooled funds. A management response was prepared and approved by the Joint SDG Fund's Operational Steering Committee (OSC). Follow up reporting noted that all eight initial recommendations were accepted and implemented by the end of 2023, including a restructuring of the OSC, a new multi-year strategy, new funding tracks, and increased collaboration with interagency coordinating bodies.

[Link to report](#)

[Link to management response](#)

System-wide evaluation of United Nations Development System Response to COVID-19

This evaluation made several recommendations to strengthen aspects of United Nations development system reform including greater integration of reform actions in entities' strategic plans. The Development Coordination Office (DCO) provided and published a management response to this evaluation in March 2023. As of April 2024, DCO and the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) have initiated actions in response to all three of the overarching recommendations, including a review of the Management and Accountability Framework for the Resident Coordinator System (MAF) and creation of a "UN Development System Reform Checklist" for governing bodies of UNSDG entities.

[Link to report](#)

[Link to management response](#)

System-wide evaluation of the Spotlight Initiative to eliminate violence against women and girls

This evaluation makes recommendations to strengthen efforts to End Violence Against Women and Girls and to strengthen aspects of United Nations development system reform. The evaluation report was published in October 2024. [Link to report](#)

Value for Money Assessment of the Spotlight Initiative to eliminate violence against women and girls

This report was commissioned as a companion to the evaluation to provide an assessment of the value for money of the Spotlight Initiative. The report was published in October 2024. [Link to report](#)

2. Other published development system reform evaluations

The Office of Internal Oversight Services' (OIOS) Inspection and Evaluation Division has conducted annual evaluations of the Resident Coordinator System since 2021. The available reports (which include management responses) are:

- **Evaluation of Resident Coordinator system support to enabling coherent United Nations policy advice** (December 2023): [Link to report and management response](#)
- **Evaluation of the Development Coordination Office regional support** (January 2023): [Link to report and management response](#)
- **Evaluation of the Development Coordination Office: contribution of the Resident Coordinator system to country-level programme coherence** (March 2022): [Link to report and management response](#)

The Independent Evaluation Office of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) completed a 'Formative evaluation of the UNFPA engagement in the reform of the United Nations development system' in 2022: [Link to report and management response](#)

3. Ongoing and planned evaluations

Evaluation of the Resident Coordinator System in Complex Settings (OIOS)

OIOS is currently conducting an evaluation of the relevance, effectiveness, and coherence of the RC system in delivering its sustainable development-focused mandate in settings where the Resident Coordinator is additionally designated as the Humanitarian Coordinator and/or Deputy Special Representative of Secretary-General. The evaluation is due to be published by the end of 2024.

System-wide evaluation on country programme derivation from Cooperation Frameworks and UNCT configuration (SWEO)

The evaluation aims to learn lessons from the first generation of CFs and inform revisions to the Cooperation Framework guidance and the Management and Accountability Framework (MAF). Following consultations with evaluation stakeholders on the scope and objectives, the evaluation Terms of Reference have been finalised and an evaluation team has been onboarded. The Inception Report will be completed in early October 2024. Data collection will be undertaken from October to December 2024, with analysis and reporting in Q1-Q2 2025.

Evaluation of the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (SWEO)

The evaluation of the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS), reviews progress five years after the strategy was launched (June 2019). Following consultations with evaluation stakeholders on the scope and objectives, the evaluation Terms of Reference will be finalised, and the evaluation team will begin the evaluation and complete and Inception Report in October 2024. Data collection will be undertaken from November 2024 to January 2025, with analysis and reporting in Q1-Q2 2025.

5. Mapping and summaries of existing evaluation evidence

In 2024, SWEO launched a cross-system initiative¹ which aims to draw on the extensive knowledge and evidence generated by independent evaluations conducted across the United Nations development system between 2021 and 2024 by producing an interactive digital map of UN system evaluation evidence against the themes of the 2020 QCPR and short evidence summaries on the following priority topics:

- (i) the Resident Coordinator system
- (ii) the UN development system regional architecture
- (iii) sustainable food systems
- (iv) humanitarian-development-peace linkages
- (v) funding quality

The summaries present key issues and learning from evaluations for consideration in the context of United Nations system-wide and intergovernmental policy discussions. Their publication is timed to provide information to stakeholders involved in the 2024 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR), in line with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 78/166 (2023).

The interactive map and summaries are published on the ECOSOC QCPR status reporting webpage: <https://ecosoc.un.org/en/what-we-do/oas-qcpr/2020-qcpr-status-reporting>

6. Existing and ongoing inter-agency syntheses

UN system evaluation offices and partners have produced a number of inter-agency and system-wide **syntheses** – for example on a particular theme, cross-cutting issue, or SDG – to promote strategic level use of evidence, including from UN evaluations. The following recently published or ongoing syntheses are of particular relevance to 2020 QCPR priorities:

- UN Women, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, and WFP: **Are we getting there? A synthesis of UN system evaluations of SDG 5 (2024)**: [Link to report](#); **Getting there together: A synthesis of inter-agency programme evaluation on SDG 5 (2024)** – [Link to report](#)
- UNFPA, UNICEF et. al - **What works to amplify the rights and voices of youth in peace and resilience building? (2023)** – [Link to report²](#)

Global SDG Synthesis Coalition:

- **Partnership Pillar (2023)** focusing on finance, technology, trade, capacity building, and systemic issues: [Link to report, evidence gap maps and briefs](#)
- **Peace Pillar (2024-25)** focusing on violence prevention and peacebuilding: [Link to initial findings and evidence gap maps](#)
- **People Pillar (2025)** focusing on social protection interventions: [Link to webpage where products will be published in 2025](#) (ahead of the HLPF and World Social Summit)

¹ With IFAD, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP and peer review by twelve entities

² Part of a series of syntheses, also covering youth participation and youth human rights (2021) and education and employment (forthcoming - 2024)