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evaluation

2017 Annual Report

Independent Evaluation Office

United Nations Development Programme

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Acronyms

ADR	Assessment of development results
AEAC	Audit and Evaluation Advisory Committee
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EAP	Evaluation Advisory Panel
GEF	Global Environment Facility
ICPE	Independent country programme evaluation
IEO	Independent Evaluation Office
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNV	United Nations Volunteers



Foreword

As President of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Executive Board, I am pleased to introduce the 2017 Annual Report on Evaluation of the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO). This report comes at a seminal moment for UNDP as it implements its transition to a new Strategic Plan (2018 to 2021) under the new Administrator, Achim Steiner.

UNDP and the Executive Board continue to highly value the work of the IEO, which in 2017 included a detailed and comprehensive evaluation of UNDP's Strategic Plan for the 2014 to 2017 cycle. Aligned closely with the development of the new Strategic Plan, the evaluation informed the preparation of the plan as well as its review, discussion and final approval by the Executive Board.

Upholding UNDP's principles of accountability and transparency requires thorough and credible evaluations, which reflect and report clearly and freely on the work of the organization. Evaluation is therefore essential for the oversight work of the Executive Board and ensuring that the organization successfully achieves the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We welcome the anticipated full coverage of country programme evaluations supporting our consideration of new country programme documents presented to the Executive Board. At the same time, we welcome the IEO's oversight of decentralized evaluations, outlined in this report, as well as its support to the evaluation function both within the United Nations and globally.

It is the Executive Board's hope that as UNDP undergoes its transition, the work of the IEO is strongly embedded, so that it can support and influence the performance of the organization and assist the Executive Board in its oversight tasks.

I am confident that readers will find the report extremely useful.

Jagdish D. Koonjul, G.O.S.K.

Permanent Representative
Permanent Mission of Mauritius to the United Nations
President of the UNDP Executive Board



Preface

It gives me great pleasure to present the 2017 Annual Report on Evaluation to the President of the UNDP Executive Board, his Excellency Ambassador Jagdish D. Koonjul. This year's report outlines in detail the work of 2017 as well as our work going forward under the new UNDP Strategic Plan and the IEO's multi-year Evaluation Plan (2018 to 2021).

In 2017, the second year of the UNDP Evaluation Policy, the IEO continued to recast and reaffirm the role of evaluation within development and UNDP as the organization enters a period of transition under a new Administrator and Strategic Plan. We would like to congratulate Achim Steiner on his appointment as Administrator during 2017, and we welcome the importance he has already placed on evaluation to strengthen UNDP's development work.

While many pieces are now in place, the IEO continues to build a culture of evaluation in support of accountability, transparency and organizational learning both within UNDP as well as with governments across the world. With further reforms across the United Nations, and a renewed focus on illustrating strong value for money in all the work we undertake as a key development partner, evaluation now more than ever is essential to illustrating how we act on our principles and place high importance on delivering results.

The National Evaluation Capacities Conference, held in Turkey in October 2017, saw unprecedented participation and interest in the role of evaluation globally to support the achievement of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The conference was the largest and most comprehensive global evaluation gathering of governments engaging with evaluation practitioners on the explicit link between evaluation and development. It demonstrated that there is an ever-growing desire across governments and countries to embrace evaluation practices to strengthen governance and public service delivery.

As the IEO strengthens its capacity and increases staffing, we look forward to the next stage of evaluation under the new Strategic Plan and to a continued constructive engagement with UNDP, governments and other donor partners in furthering evaluation in pursuit of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda.

Indran A. Naidoo

Director

Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP



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chapter 1.



Introduction

This Annual Report on Evaluation details the work undertaken by the Independent Evaluation office (IEO) in 2017, which has included conducting eight independent country programme evaluations (ICPEs), the evaluation of the 2014-2017 UNDP Strategic Plan as well as considerable support to national and UNDP evaluation functions.

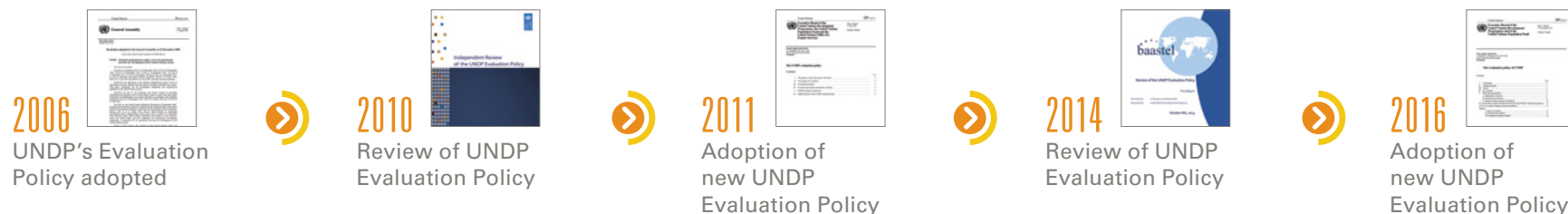
In 2017, UNDP underwent a period of reflection as it approached the conclusion of its Strategic Plan, started to prepare a new one for 2018 to 2021, and welcomed its newly appointed Administrator, Achim Steiner. The IEO supported this transition with a detailed, evidence-based evaluation of the previous Strategic Plan and its global and regional programmes, providing insights and lessons to enable the transition to a new period of assisting the achievement of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The year also marked a critical milestone for the IEO and the implementation of the 2016 Evaluation Policy. The UNDP Executive Board approved the 2018-2021 Evaluation Plan. Further, in line with the Evaluation Policy, 0.2 percent of UNDP core and non-core funding was committed to the IEO.¹

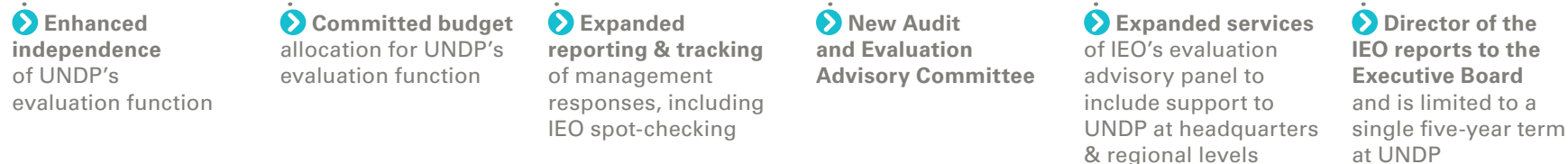
The IEO also finished its 2014-2017 Evaluation Plan. This period saw considerable change within the office, as it further affirmed its independence and pushed forward the professionalization of evaluation. It sharpened

approaches to evaluation, accountability and oversight. The Evaluation Policy both entrenched the IEO's independence, and established solid oversight mechanisms for the office and its work as a whole. The IEO and its Director continued to report directly to the Executive Board and were overseen by the Audit and Evaluation Advisory Committee (AEAC), while professional guidance, ensuring the quality of evaluations, regularly came from the Evaluation Advisory Panel (EAP), now in its fifth year.

Evaluation Policy Evolution



Key aspects of the current policy



Moving into a new era for UNDP, the IEO team is aware of the increasing demand for UNDP to prove its comparative strengths and value added as a development partner that accomplishes increased and well-demonstrated impacts. The IEO and its evaluations will continue to offer unbiased examinations of UNDP approaches and achievements.

Deepening implementation of the Evaluation Policy

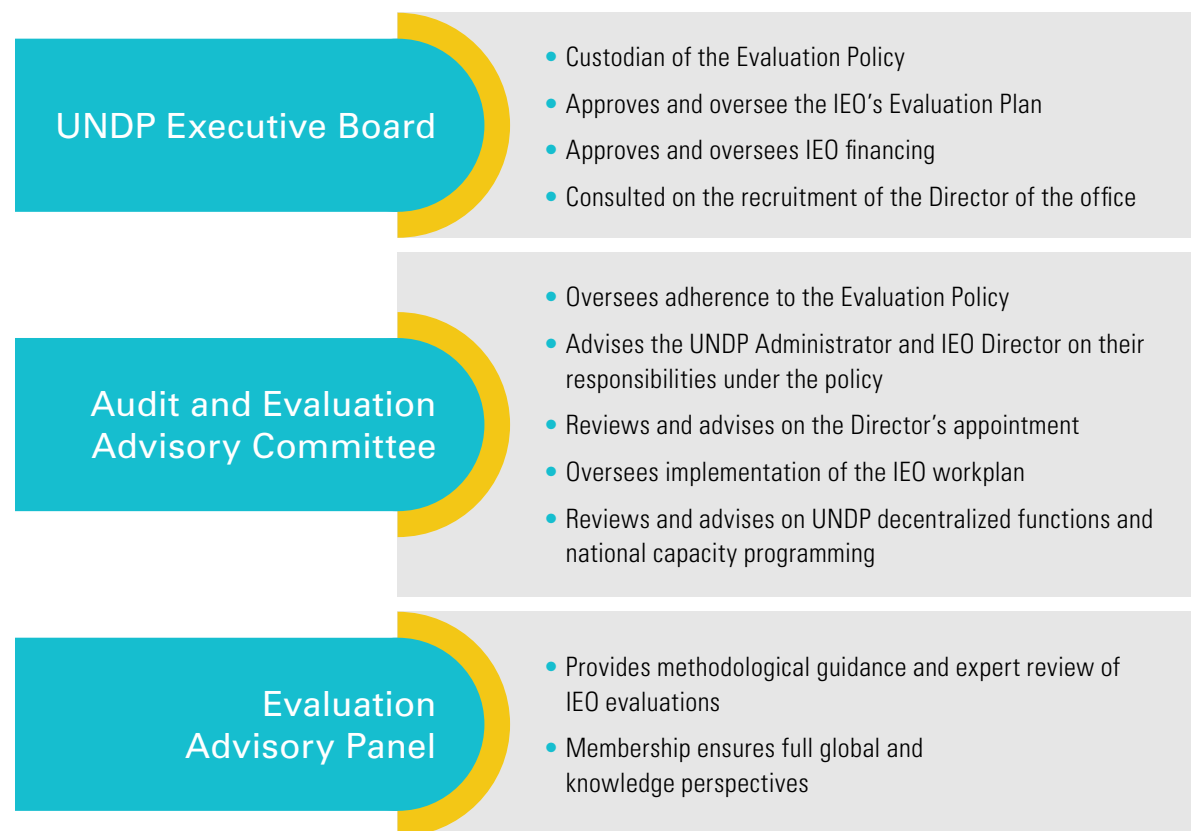
2017 was the first full year of implementation of the revised Evaluation Policy, approved by the Executive Board in September 2016. Key features include greater clarity on IEO independence and IEO Director responsibilities, precise financial targets for evaluation, a revised committee structure for audit and evaluation, and stronger mechanisms for the implementation of management responses to evaluation.

The office welcomed increased funding of US \$9 million, which allowed the IEO to grow in line with its expanding commitments. This sum also fully meets funding commitments under the Evaluation Policy which allocates 0.2 percent of the regular (core) and other (non-core) programme budget for the IEO. The office welcomes the reiterated UNDP commitment to this budget benchmark under its integrated resources plan and integrated

budget estimates, 2018-2021.² Yet funding for evaluation in other UNDP implementing entities continues to lag behind benchmarks set in the Evaluation Policy, which commits each organization to spending 1 percent of its regular (core) and other (non-core) programme budget on evaluation.

The oversight and methodological support structures of the IEO were fully operational in 2017, with the office presenting updates and progress reports to the Audit and Evaluation Advisory Committee at its regular sessions, and the EAP giving critical methodological insight and guidance.

Oversight of the UNDP evaluation function



The UNDP Executive Board

A key independence provision of the Evaluation Policy is that it makes an explicit reporting and accountability line from the Director of the IEO to the Executive Board, which is the custodian of the policy. The IEO enjoys a constructive relationship with the Executive Board, with serious engagements at all informal and formal board sessions in 2017 focussing on IEO thematic evaluations and reports. The high number of delegations providing remarks and asking questions attests to the value placed on this engagement.

The IEO is committed to offering increased information on its activities, including through progress reports on key areas of its work in addition to the formal presentation of evaluations. This will continue in 2018 and beyond, and is outlined in detail in the multi-year workplan presented and approved by the Executive Board in January 2018.

“ The Audit & Evaluation Advisory Committee strengthens the harmonization of essential oversight functions. ”

In 2017, the IEO formally presented to the Executive Board for its consideration and decision:

- **First regular session:** Evaluations of UNDP's contribution to anti-corruption and addressing drivers of corruption, and of UNDP support for disability-inclusive development
- **Annual session:** Annual Report on Evaluation 2016 and the joint assessment on institutional effectiveness
- **Second regular session:** Evaluation of the UNDP Strategic Plan and global and regional programmes

The Audit and Evaluation Advisory Committee

During the year, the IEO reported regularly to the Audit and Evaluation Advisory Committee on all aspects of its work. The committee's April, June and November sessions considered IEO presentations on thematic and country programme evaluations. As a single entity charged with reviewing the work of the IEO, the UNDP Office of Audit and Investigation, and the UNDP Ethics Office, the Audit and Evaluation Advisory Committee increases the harmonization of these essential oversight functions.

IEO presentation to the AEAC

April 2017

- UNDP contribution to anti-corruption and addressing drivers of corruption
- Disability-inclusive development at UNDP
- Annual Report on Evaluation 2016
- Joint assessment of UNDP's institutional effectiveness
- ICPE coverage since 2012

June 2017

- UNDP Executive Board Annual Session
- Work of the EAP
- Kyrgyzstan ICPE presentation
- Somalia ICPE presentation
- Zimbabwe ICPE presentation
- United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) week update
- Support to decentralized evaluations

November 2017

- ICPE 2016 and 2017 overview
- Mexico ICPE presentation
- Pakistan ICPE presentation
- National Evaluation Capacities Conference 2017
- National SDG Evaluation Guidance
- IEO staffing and workplan
- Support to decentralized evaluation

The Evaluation Advisory Panel

In 2017, the role of the EAP was further bolstered within the oversight structure of the IEO, which continued to regularly draw on panel expertise to ensure the quality of its work. The 12 members of the panel are experts in evaluation drawn from all areas of the globe, and have an academic as well as practical understanding. At the regular panel meeting in May 2017, members gave guidance to IEO staff on critical changes taking place within the office, including changes to the ICPE methodology, approaches to support decentralized evaluations and challenges faced in implementing the evaluation of the Strategic Plan. The panel also gave inputs into the new IEO workplan. Individual panel members provided guidance on ICPEs and thematic evaluations, as well as peer reviews throughout the year, ensuring evaluations were of the highest quality.

For the first time, the panel issued a statement on the work of the IEO (Annex 13), which highlighted:



While independence of the evaluation function has been established, priority must now be given to further strengthening the methodological rigour and authority of IEO evaluations.



The goal of achieving 100 percent ICPE coverage of all country programmes presents both a challenge and new opportunities.



The IEO should focus on innovative ways to collect and analyse data and communicate results.



The office should be commended for its continued efforts to strengthen institutional links across UNDP and the UN system.



The panel notes the IEO's evolving thinking about evaluation capacity development, which is timely given the now extensive experience with national evaluation capacities and the continued importance of decentralized evaluations for the IEO's own reporting.

The IEO will continue to work closely with the panel during 2018. It has developed a full schedule of work drawing on each member throughout its ICPE, thematic and capacity-building work. Details of the panel's full engagement with the IEO in 2017 can be found in Annex 12.

chapter 2.



Key Evaluations Undertaken in 2017

This chapter highlights the IEO's work in 2017, including the detailed evaluation of the UNDP 2014-2017 Strategic Plan and eight country programme evaluations. The chapter outlines some of the innovative work the office has undertaken in formulating guidelines for countries to develop national evaluation systems.³



Evaluation of the UNDP Strategic Plan and global and regional programmes

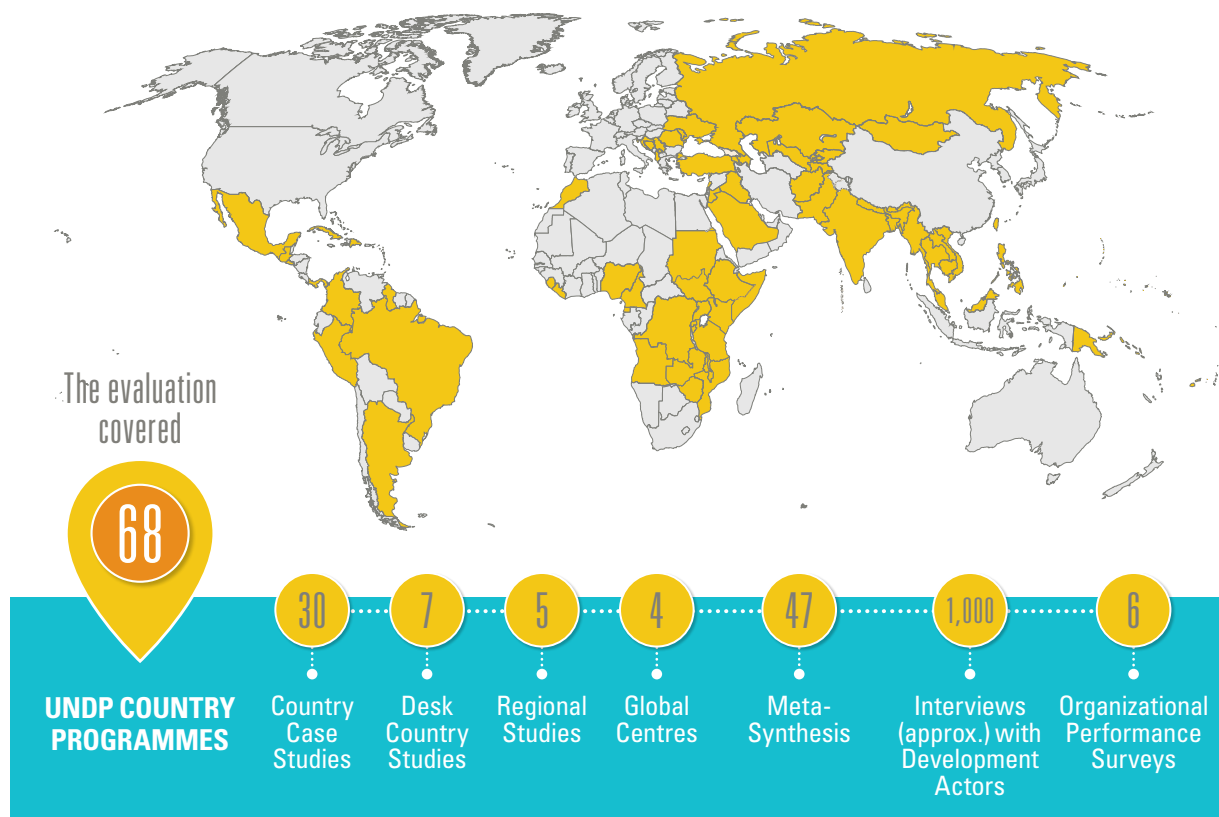
The evaluation of the 2014-2017 Strategic Plan sought evidence on whether or not UNDP was achieving intended outcomes, and whether or not the Strategic Plan and global and regional programmes were effective. The evaluation took place during a time of significant challenges, including internal restructuring, and was conducted in parallel with the drafting of the new Strategic Plan for 2018 to 2021,⁴ to which it provided evaluation-based evidence and lessons.

The Strategic Plan evaluation is one of the most comprehensive evaluations undertaken by the IEO to date, with considerable research and analysis informing an extensive set of findings, conclusions and recommendations. The evaluation gathered data and evidence from document reviews, meta-analyses of evaluations and audits of UNDP’s work, regional and country case study missions, interviews, focus groups and surveys. Documentary evidence was supplemented by over 1,000 interviews with staff and stakeholders across the globe.

Triangulating among multiple perspectives and evidentiary sources, the IEO came to a judgement on the balance of UNDP performance. This covered key issues such as inclusive sustainable development pathways, governance for inclusive and peaceful societies, resilience for enhanced development

results, and cross-cutting issues comprising gender equality and women’s empowerment, South-South and triangular cooperation, and partnerships for development. The evaluation also looked closely at UNDP’s global and regional programmes and institutional effectiveness.

Data collection method and sources



The evaluation used multiple data collection methods and sources to gather evidence to support findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Inclusive sustainable development

Inclusive sustainable development continued to be a central focus of UNDP's work globally in 2017. The Strategic Plan evaluation found that UNDP was well positioned to provide support as countries accelerated their efforts to meet the 2015 end date for the Millennium Development Goals and prepare for the SDGs. At this early juncture in the SDGs, UNDP has made a promising start through the Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) programme, which assists countries in harmonizing the SDGs with national planning priorities. The IEO recommends that supporting countries with the SDGs should be a cross-cutting priority for all UNDP country offices.

UNDP states that its overarching objective is to help the poorest and most marginalized populations. While evidence suggests that UNDP has embedded a multidimensional perspective on poverty across national and global debates, the evaluation noted concerns that UNDP sometimes settles too easily

for small-scale livelihood interventions that may not be sustainable.

UNDP has managed over one-third of all Global Environment Facility (GEF) projects and a similar percentage of projects under the new Green Climate Fund. It is through environmental services that UNDP works most directly at the community level, especially through implementation of the GEF Small Grants Programme. The evaluation recognized UNDP achievements in assisting countries to promote greater energy efficiency and more sustainable energy production, with special attention to poor and rural communities.

Governance

The Strategic Plan evaluation looked extensively at UNDP's portfolio of governance work, a major outcome area accounting for a considerable number of programmes and overall spending. In many countries, UNDP has been an important provider of support for democratic governance and public administration, helping to solidify peaceful and resilient state and society relations. This area of work absorbs about half of UNDP's resources, primarily to help strengthen basic services, as well as accountability, the rule of law, electoral systems and peacebuilding.

While UNDP is well positioned to promote governance reform, it can do more to push for inclusive and accountable processes. The evaluation recommended that UNDP be more proactive in supporting sectoral governance approaches and more persuasive in promoting democratic governance reforms.

The evaluation gave some focus to the work of UNDP in helping governments improve their civil service processes, especially in countries that have been in crisis, and highlighted a need for governance support to be targeted to critical government functions essential for stability. The evaluation recommended that UNDP should improve its strategic support to SDG 16 and related intergovernmental agreements on peacebuilding and state-building.

Resilience

Resilience is the third main area of UNDP work. The internal organization of support for disaster risk reduction was restructured during the period reviewed by the Strategic Plan evaluation. While a well-recognized crisis prevention and recovery bureau was dissolved, the replacement UNDP Crisis Response Unit has been effective at deploying staff and consultant resources, and at quickly releasing initial funding to get recovery programmes moving.

Disaster risk reduction has important synergies with UNDP's rapidly expanding support for climate change adaptation. The evaluation identified 'cash for work' programmes as interventions that often receive too much attention in early recovery engagements, however, displacing prevention, planning and coordination efforts. It recommended that UNDP retain resilience as a distinct area of work under the subsequent Strategic Plan.

Gender equality

With respect to gender equality, the Strategic Plan evaluation focused especially on UNDPs efforts to implement its Gender Equality Strategy, and its contributions to women's empowerment through support to partner governments. The evaluation noted some weaknesses, such as limitations in the implementation of the strategy, both in terms of providing resources to support gender programming and in mainstreaming gender equality across UNDP programmes.

Work on gender equality and women's empowerment should not be confined to a gender team alone, but should ensure that there is specific gender expertise associated with programmatic areas such as environment, energy and crisis response, where gender mainstreaming remains weak. This

component of the evaluation was greatly supported and guided by the IEO's 2015 evaluation of UNDP's contributions to gender equality.⁵

South-South and triangular cooperation

During the past four years, UNDP has clarified its corporate structure and defined more precisely its operational approaches to South-South and triangular cooperation. The UNDP role as administrative agent for the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation was acknowledged in the Strategic Plan evaluation, along with recent improvements in the office's planning and management. Challenges remain in the mainstreaming of South-South cooperation in country programming, and UNDP has yet to prioritize thematic areas where South-South exchanges will be pursued more systematically.

Global and regional programmes

The Strategic Plan evaluation's review of global and regional programmes as well as South-South cooperation was a shift from

previous Strategic Plan evaluations, which dedicated separate evaluations for these areas. This approach reduced required resources, coordination and other inputs, and allowed greater cooperation and sharing of results within the evaluation team.

The global programme fulfils an important policy support function that has enabled UNDP to maintain intellectual engagement in the global development arena by participating in major international events and channelling country lessons into global policy discussions. The evaluation considered the programme's results framework and indicators to be excessive, however, as they covered the breadth of UNDP work under the Strategic Plan, including country results. Further, the evaluation viewed the global programmes more as funding lines to support staff positions for achieving corporate-wide results than as a distinct global programme. Consequently, it recommended that UNDP change the global programme into a service line for supporting staff positions at global and regional levels.

With respect to regional programmes, restructuring posed a number of challenges, including the movement of personnel from headquarters to regional hubs, and changes in country locations for three of the regional

hubs. The regional programmes have variably expanded support for new approaches and innovative solutions, and promoted sub-regional programming, but in some regions, too many country-related activities overlap with country office programming. The office recommended that UNDP reassess the roles and financial sustainability of the regional hubs, striving to make them centres of excellence for innovation and learning, while expanding cooperation and partnerships with regional institutions.

Institutional effectiveness

Building on an earlier joint assessment with the UNDP Office of Audit and Investigation, the Strategic Plan evaluation found signs of improvement in institutional effectiveness, including higher-quality programming, and greater openness, agility and adaptability. But these have had a limited impact in harnessing knowledge, solutions and expertise to improve results, as envisaged in the Strategic Plan.

To better promote a results culture, UNDP leadership should encourage an environment that welcomes critical reflection and continuous organizational learning. Beyond reporting for compliance and capturing

best practices, the focus should be on using lessons learned to harness knowledge, solutions and expertise to amplify effectiveness. UNDP should also bolster transparency and communication at the most senior levels.

The evaluation recommended that UNDP increase the involvement of the Office of Human Resources in strategic decision-making. Given the growing complexity of programme delivery, inter-agency work and collaboration with a range of partners, including civil society, it stressed that investment in developing skills in leadership, relationship management and management across complex systems should be prioritized. The evaluation also suggested that UNDP transition from political budgeting to a more risk- and results-based budgeting process. This should aim to more effectively link results to resources, towards improving resource mobilization and better highlighting investment gaps for donors.


Overall conclusions from the Strategic Plan evaluation

Although UNDP is now a leaner and more cost-conscious organization, there has been insufficient progress on results-based

budgeting. Financial sustainability is challenged by diminishing regular resources, inadequate funding models and exchange rate losses.

The final evaluation of the Strategic Plan was well received by UNDP and the Executive Board, and received a robust management response from the Administrator. This will strengthen UNDP's future work and bolster implementation of the new Strategic Plan. The IEO looks forward to a similarly comprehensive evaluation in four years, considering achievements under the newly adopted Strategic Plan.

“ Beyond reporting for compliance & capturing best practices, the focus should be on using lessons learned to harness knowledge, solutions & expertise to amplify effectiveness. ”



Tracking implementation of IEO recommendations and follow-up actions

In response to requests from the UNDP Executive Board, and in line with the IEO's move towards greater oversight, the office is reviewing the implementation of management response actions from thematic and country programme evaluations.

A brief study, to be presented to the Executive Board at its 2018 Annual Session, and included as an addendum to the Executive Board paper for the Annual Report on Evaluation, looks at the extent to which UNDP has implemented and reported on key actions under management responses to IEO evaluation recommendations. While the vast majority of recommendations have management responses that set out key actions, actual implementation has been uneven and reporting weak. A review of 62 IEO evaluations, finalized between 2012 and 2016, showed that only 55 percent of 877 key actions were reported as completed, with the remainder initiated or ongoing without a due date (29 percent), overdue (10 percent), not yet initiated (4 percent) or no longer relevant (2 percent). A similar rate of implementation is seen globally with key actions in decentralized evaluations.⁶

Going forward, the IEO will improve the usability of evaluation recommendations. It will develop clear guidelines for follow-up and scheduling of key actions, and regularly oversee and follow up on implementation. UNDP needs to ensure it takes agreed key actions, regularly updates the IEO and records actions in the Evaluation Resource Centre. UNDP should revise its guidance to set higher standards for implementing recommendations, and incorporate recommendation tracking data into corporate and senior staff performance reporting.

Independent Country Programme Evaluations in 2017

The final transition from assessments of development results (ADRs) to ICPEs took place in 2017, along with the finalization of the new approach methodology. Over 100 countries have been evaluated under the ADRs since 2002, as outlined in Annex 15. UNDP's 2018-2021 Strategic Plan reaffirms that country offices are the programmatic and operational backbone of the organization. Country programme documents developed in cooperation with governments set the strategic direction for UNDP engagement over a four- or five-year planning cycle.

During 2017, ICPEs were carried out for eight countries: Bhutan, Chile, the Republic of the Congo, Kuwait, Namibia, the Philippines, Rwanda and Togo. These will accompany the country programme documents presented to the Executive Board in 2018, and cover 37 percent of countries submitting such documents.

The IEO has found, through the ADRs and ICPEs, that there continue to be a number of common and recurring issues and challenges in country programme development. This was further supported through the findings and conclusions of the 2017 Strategic Plan evaluation. Issues include:

- i. Country programme interventions need to strengthen their support to gender equality;
- ii. More strategic and focused support can expand South-South cooperation;
- iii. Improved monitoring and evaluation (M&E) would ensure programmes are built on lessons learned and evidence gleaned from evaluation; and
- iv. There should be more strategic planning prior to new development interventions, based on UNDP and country office comparative strengths, and with less ad hoc support.

There was a continued transition in the ICPE process in 2017, in preparation for an increased number of ICPEs. Starting in 2018,

based on a request by the UNDP Executive Board, all country programmes will be evaluated at the end of their cycle. The ICPE team has been strengthened and enlarged, while to ensure quality within a reducing budget envelope, the methodological approach has been further tightened to allow for a quicker turnaround.

Country programme evaluation briefs

As part of a more effective dissemination strategy, and to ensure the IEO's work is accessible and utilized, the office developed 105 two-page briefs consolidating findings, conclusions and recommendations from ADRs and ICPEs since 2002. The briefs give readers an opportunity to quickly review the main evaluation findings and recommendations, and will be produced for all ICPEs in the future. Briefs for Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, Pakistan, Somalia and Zimbabwe were presented at the Audit and Evaluation Advisory Committee in 2017.

Charter of the IEO

As part of the ICPE reform process, as well as the overall professionalization of the evaluation function, the IEO finalized its Charter in 2017. It will be shared with UNDP management and programme offices prior to its roll out in 2018.

To help strengthen implementation of the Evaluation Policy, the Charter details the mandate, authority and accountability of the IEO, and defines how it undertakes evaluations, at the thematic and country level, as well as how it operationalizes its independence. The Charter also outlines principles and procedures for how the IEO will engage with UNDP business units subject to evaluation.

“The IEO has found, through its country programme evaluations, that there continue to be a number of common & recurring issues & challenges in country programme development.”

chapter 3.



Advancing Global Evaluation Culture and Practice in 2017

This chapter outlines the continued work the IEO has undertaken in 2017 in contributing to the evaluation function globally. The nature and location of the IEO provides it with a strategic advantage to be influential, given its role in the United Nations and United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), and its particular evaluation mandate. The office is able to draw on substantive experience from conducting independent evaluations to generate evidence of development intervention performance across the globe, and provide its expertise to inform and advance the evaluation profession.

Development interventions, whether led by governments or development partners such as the United Nations, should be built on lessons from evaluations, and principles of transparency and accountability. The pursuit of normative goals is consistent with United Nation values and the UNEG Norms and Standards. Across the United Nations system, demand for fully independent evaluation functions is increasingly evident, illustrated by changes being made to evaluation policies in many agencies. Comments received by the IEO from the UNDP Executive Board and partner governments attest to a growing global demand for credible and independent commentary on performance, and reflect the importance placed on establishing and maintaining a culture of accountability. Development funders increasingly demand to know the level of value added when UN organizations are bestowed with funds and responsibilities.

Several evaluation thought leadership events in 2017 built upon the IEO approach of ensuring a strengthened interface between evaluation and the improvement of development results.

► National Evaluation Capacities Conference 2017

The IEO organized the National Evaluation Capacities Conference⁷ in Istanbul from 18 to 20 October 2017, bringing together more than 500 participants from over 110 countries under the banner of “People, Planet and Progress in the SDG Era.” The conference, preconference workshops and presentations offered an opportunity for government officials and development partners to share experiences and learning from their engagement with evaluation and the SDGs.

The unprecedented turnout at the event—far beyond the original target of 300—testified to the increasing interest in and progress by national governments in developing credible and comprehensive evaluation systems.

The conference was the fifth in a series of biennial conferences on national evaluation capacities, each hosted in a different region. The 2017 meeting followed the 2015 conference in Bangkok, the 2013 conference in Sao Paulo, the 2011 session in Johannesburg and the 2009 meeting in Casablanca. The 2017 conference was co-hosted by UNDP—the IEO and the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent

States (CIS)—and the Government of Turkey. Technical support came from the European Evaluation Society, and significant financial support from the Government of Finland, with additional assistance from the governments of the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. The conference was preceded by 13 technical training workshops on 16 and 17 October. An unexpectedly high demand to take part was driven particularly by the emphasis on evaluation in relation to implementation of the SDGs.

The conference opened with welcome addresses from Indran A. Naidoo, Director of the IEO; Cihan Sultanoğlu, Assistant Administrator and Director of UNDP’s Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS; and H.E. Ambassador Ahmet Yıldız, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey. An inspiring keynote speech by Michelle Gyles-McDonnough, Director of the Sustainable Development Unit in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, called on participants to identify how the evaluation community can build on the progress it has made so far to accelerate action for achievement of the SDGs, particularly in relation to measurement and evaluation approaches; strengthening national systems and capacities; improving

data collection and analysis, including at the local level and through better disaggregated data; expanding and deepening partnerships and stakeholder engagement; and ensuring funding for evaluation activities that are core to making the 2030 Agenda a reality.

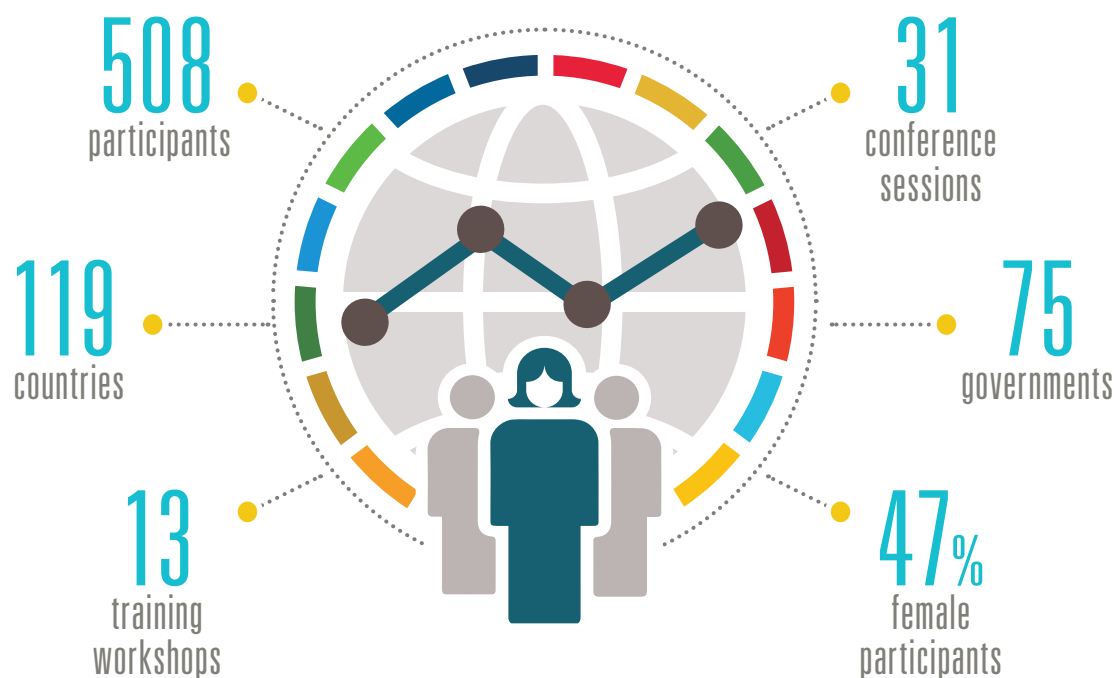
The first day highlighted progress and innovation in strengthening national evaluation systems. It began exploring the implications of the SDGs for evaluation, for example, in a session led by the UN Women Independent

Evaluation Office on “Leaving no one behind: from global commitments to national experiences in setting up frameworks to evaluate the SDGs.” The challenges in evaluating progress towards SDG 16 and effective governance and sustaining peace were debated in a session led by the Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS.

The second day brought the planet into the discussions, with an opening plenary panel that asked, “Is the environment being left

behind? What are evaluations telling us?” Juha Uitto, Director, GEF Independent Evaluation Office; Jyotsna Puri, Head, Green Climate Fund Independent Evaluation Unit; and Diann Black-Layne, Ambassador and Chief Environment Officer, Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Housing and the Environment, Government of Antigua and Barbuda, provided their answers to these questions. Another high-level panel moderated by Caroline Heider, Director General, Independent Evaluation Group of the World Bank, included the Chair of the UNEG, Susanne Frueh; the Chair of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Evaluation Network, Per Oyvind Bastoe; and Riitta Oksanen in her dual role as both a representative of the Government of Finland and the President of the European Evaluation Society. They discussed whether or not there is a need to revise DAC evaluation criteria, given the increasingly complex and interconnected backdrop for development and evaluation.

The third day continued the analysis of complexity and new directions for evaluation, opening with a keynote address by Michael Woolcock, Lead Social Development Specialist, Development Research Group,



World Bank. Participants engaged throughout the day on a range of topics from current challenges in private sector evaluation to what it takes to galvanize behavioural change.

Over the three days, more than 30 conference sessions provided multiple spaces for exchanges of experiences and lessons learned, comparisons of theory and reality by academics and evaluation and development practitioners, debates between evaluators and evaluands, and brainstorming on the guiding questions of the conference. These comprised: In the current, rapidly evolving development context and the framework of the SDGs, how do principles and practices of evaluation need to change? What are the implications for national evaluation capacities?

➤ National Evaluation Capacities Conference: participation and support

Of the conference's 500 participants, one-third were government officials from UNDP programme countries, and another third were from UNDP, including the IEO, the UNDP Regional Hub in Istanbul and UNDP country offices. Remaining participants were

from OECD/DAC countries, evaluation associations from around the world, other UN agencies and international organizations, and civil society, academia and the private sector. Forty-seven percent of the participants were women. In terms of origin, 122 participants came from the Europe and the CIS region, of whom 37 were from Turkey, the host country. Almost as many came from Africa (111), with Asia and the Pacific and the Arab States regions sending 51 and 49 participants, respectively. Latin America and

the Caribbean countries had 21 participants and were underrepresented, likely in part due to distance.

With generous contributions from the Governments of Finland, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden, the IEO was able to put in place a bursary programme to assist participants from official development assistance-eligible countries to attend the conference. Seventy-one participants were awarded a full bursary, covering their travel, subsistence and registration costs.



IEO support and engagement with the UNEG

The IEO continues to support and host the UNEG, a voluntary network of 47 units responsible for evaluation in the United Nations system, including funds, programmes, specialized agencies and affiliated organizations. In addition to the Director of the IEO serving as Vice-Chair of the UNEG in 2017, the IEO hosted the UNEG secretariat. It covered \$300,000 in secretariat staff costs, including 20 percent of the Deputy Director's time as the UNEG Executive Coordinator; 100 percent of costs for a programme specialist; contributions for an operations specialist, an IT specialist and other staff; and operating costs. UNDP contributes an annual membership fee and sponsors some UNEG work programme activities.

In 2017, the IEO Director continued to lead the UNEG's Working Group Three, "Evaluation informs system-wide initiatives and emerging demands," which saw further discussion of strengthened coordination of evaluation across the United Nations as well as the use of evaluation for the SDGs. The UNEG Chair and the IEO Director met with and worked closely with the Deputy Secretary-General, Amina Mohammed, to discuss the future of system-wide evaluation within the reform of the United Nations, towards strengthening more collective accountability and learning. UNDP and the IEO have and will continue to support system-wide evaluation capacity through the UNEG.

co-sponsored with the Latin American and the Caribbean Monitoring, Evaluation and Systematization Network and IDEAS. It examined "Evaluation for the Sustainable Development Goals." IEO staff involvement included leading a workshop on guides for evaluation of the SDGs as well as presenting papers and participating in a number of panels.

► Bishkek Global Evaluation Forum, Kyrgystan

The IEO Director and senior staff took part in the Bishkek Global Evaluation Forum organized by EvalPartners, a global partnership between the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation and the UNEG, in collaboration with the Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation, the Kyrgyz M&E Network and the Eurasian Alliance of National Evaluation Associations. The event brought together government representatives; parliamentarians; development partners, including several United Nations agencies; foundations; the private sector; universities; civil society and the evaluation community to review progress on the EvalAgenda 2016-2020, particularly in support of the SDGs.

IEO's global influence, outreach and advocacy

The IEO directorate and staff engaged across a broad range of platforms to champion the importance of evaluation around the world.

► Latin America and the Caribbean

The IEO Deputy Director participated in the Latin America and the Caribbean Evaluation Week in Mexico in June 2017, delivering sessions on measuring evaluation use and capacity. In December 2017, key staff from the IEO participated in an event in Mexico

Participants mapped future actions for strengthened partnerships and capacity development. The IEO Director joined the “Thought Leaders” panel on the second day of the conference, sharing his insights on evaluation as a profession, a practice, a democratic ignitor, a tool for advocacy and a knowledge generator for development practitioners. He also participated in a UN Country Team meeting hosted for global evaluation leaders and donors.

➤ OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation

In 2017, the IEO engaged strongly with the OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation, representing UNDP’s interests and views. At the regular meeting in February, the IEO introduced its institutional effectiveness evaluation, and discussed the experience of undertaking a joint evaluation with the UNDP Office of Audit and Investigation. Later in the year, both the IEO Director and Deputy Director participated in the final regular meeting of the network, where discussions included the use of evaluation for monitoring SDG achievements as well as possible reconsideration of the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

➤ Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation

A special invitation was made to the IEO Director by the Director of the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) Evaluation Office, Per Bastoe, in collaboration with critical political and administrative partners in Norway, to discuss and present the IEO experience in ensuring independence in evaluation. During the visit, the Director presented the findings from the IEO evaluation of UNDP’s work on anti-corruption at a seminar on “Policy, Practice and Learnings.”

➤ Evaluation association engagement

In the later part of 2017, the IEO Director was invited to present at events organized by the American Evaluation Association and the Japan Evaluation Society. In Washington, DC, the Director presented at the American Evaluation Association Presidential Strand

Plenary Panel on “Progress in the SDGs and Evaluation,” discussing the challenges faced in addressing and measuring achievement of the SDGs.

Following an invitation by the Japan Evaluation Society, the Director was a panellist and keynote speaker on evaluation and the SDGs at a number of organizations, including the Japan Securities Dealers Association’s SDGs Committee, the United Nations University, the Japan Civil Society Network on SDGs and the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies.

➤ Communications and outreach

To reach new audiences, enhance the utility of evaluation and encourage broader sharing, the IEO has continued to invest time and resources in communication. This has included the production of several reports and advocacy products, and continuous dialogue on social platforms (website, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter). Website analytics indicated over 140,000 visitors in 2017, with more than 10,000 followers on Twitter.



In 2017, the IEO further implemented its strategy to diversify and tailor its communications for different audiences and needs. It launched a revamped website with improved usability across electronic devices, greater interactivity, faster speed and better global navigation. The office also produced a range of short videos and presentations giving detailed overviews of its evaluations.

The Evaluation Resource Centre, an agency-wide repository of evaluations, continued to expand its detailed database of evaluation reports and terms of reference developed and implemented by UNDP as a whole. The centre now holds over 4,000 evaluations and terms of reference. There were over 34,500 downloads of ICPEs, thematic evaluations, decentralized evaluations and terms of reference during 2017.

Country-led evaluation in the era of the SDGs

At the National Evaluation Capacities Conference in Istanbul, the IEO launched a new initiative aimed at assisting national governments in enhancing their evaluation functions and systems in harmony with national efforts to fulfil the SDGs. The National Evaluation Diagnostics Guidance provides tools for step-by-step capacity diagnosis and action points in developing an evaluation framework for national development strategies, including for the SDGs. Cultivating national evaluation capacities in the era of the SDGs is an essential part of integrating, strengthening and connecting national systems of government, the 2030 Agenda and evaluation.

The guidance and an online self-assessment tool will be piloted in 2018 by up to 10 partner governments. Designed for use by government entities at all levels, federal, regional/state and local, they support the idea that the evaluation function is not just a central function. A flexible and practical approach helps governments systematically determine key areas, pathways and parameters for evaluating national development strategies and the SDGs. The guidance situates evaluative practices within the context of other public sector feedback mechanisms, and recognizes that evaluation is a practice built over time, rather than a set of outputs. The approach is non-prescriptive to account for institutional variations and differences in development context.

Four **modules** help unpack evaluation requirements, through a series of steps to assess key evaluation bottlenecks and specific needs, and develop context-specific evaluation parameters. The modules include:

Module 1: Understanding an enabling environment for developing national evaluation systems

Module 2: Connecting national systems and the 2030 Agenda

Module 3: Strengthening and institutionalizing evaluation capacities

Module 4: Integrating the SDGs and sustainable development specificities in evaluation processes and evaluations

chapter 4.



Oversight and Support to Decentralized Evaluation

Chapter Four presents an overview of UNDP's performance in implementing and managing decentralized evaluations across the organization.⁸ The IEO oversees this process through providing: guidance, support and capacity-building to the cohort of M&E officers, quality assessments of commissioned evaluations, and assessment of and forward-looking recommendations for evaluations at the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF).

The chapter presents an overview of decentralized evaluation plans, implementation numbers and budgets, and initial findings on the quality assessment of decentralized evaluations. It also outlines the IEO's strategy to strengthen decentralized evaluation, and address concerns about quality, utility and independence.

Investment in evaluation, 2017

In 2017, UNDP spent \$21.73 million on evaluation overall, or 0.48 percent of core and non-core UNDP fund utilization.⁹ This marks an increase from 2016, when expenditure totalled \$19.85 million.¹⁰

The IEO budget was \$9 million for evaluations, institutional activities, and staff and rental costs. Of this sum, \$8.7 million was allocated from core resources. The total amount comprised 0.2 percent of UNDP core and non-core funds.

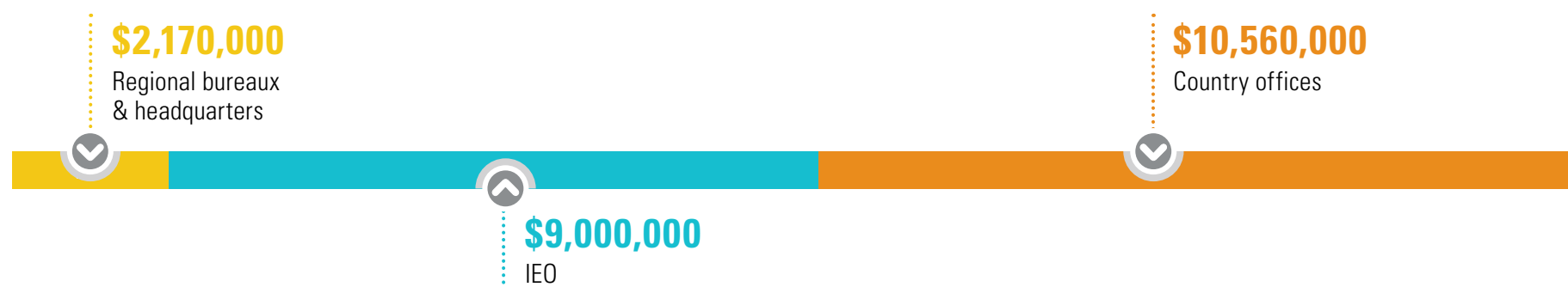
Country offices reported expenditure of \$10.56 million during the year for evaluation implementation and staff costs, according to the 2017 results-oriented annual reporting. Though the Evaluation Policy calls for clarity in the funding of evaluation, and the delineation of the evaluation and monitoring functions, the budget and resource allocation picture remains unclear at the country, regional and global levels. Funding allocations appear fungible across the organization.¹¹



At the headquarters and regional bureau levels, \$2.17 million was budgeted for evaluation, including staff and evaluation costs.¹²

Going forward, it is essential that clear guidance on financial and human resources allocations be given to regional and country offices in order to delineate M&E costs as well as to capture all evaluation-related expenses and time allocations.

Total expenditure for evaluation in UNDP



Decentralized evaluation implementation in 2017

Annually, UNDP undertakes a considerable number of decentralized evaluations in order to strengthen its own learning, and improve project and programme implementation. Existing guidelines on what should be subject to evaluation remain flexible, leading to considerable variability across implementing units in what they intend to evaluate when designing their evaluation plans. At the same time, the portfolio of evaluations being undertaken currently lacks full independence. As a result, UNDP's decentralized evaluation approach and annual portfolio of evaluations do not ensure full accountability and transparency in implementation.







Evaluation planning versus implementation

In 2017, UNDP implemented 315 evaluations out of a planned 353. This marked an increase in the number of (and budget for) decentralized evaluations implemented compared to 2016, and also suggested a high plan compliance rate.

At the time of the annual UNDP Executive Board meeting in June 2017, the IEO reported that 505 decentralized evaluations were planned for 2017 with a total budget of \$15.5 million.¹³ The office voiced its concern

about how realistic this goal was, and reiterated this concern in regional planning workshops during the year. By October, the number had increased to 562 planned evaluations with a budget of \$18.5 million.

Figure 1: Evaluation planning vs. implementation, 2017

REGIONAL BUREAU	Planned evaluations, 2017 (1 October 2017)	Planned evaluations, 2017 (31 January 2018)	Completed evaluations, 2017 (31 January 2018)	Evaluations completed against October plans
 AFRICA >	160	128	104	65%
 ASIA AND THE PACIFIC >	111	52	52	47%
 ARAB STATES >	67	30	27	40%
 EUROPE AND THE CIS >	96	68	66	69%
 LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN >	103	60	52	50%
 GLOBAL >	25	15	14	56%
TOTAL NUMBER 📈	562	353	315	56%
BUDGET (\$) 📈	18,446,986	10,964,129	9,751,129	53%

Source: Evaluation Resource Centre data as of 31 October 2017 and 31 January 2018.

“

In 2017, the number of evaluations implemented by UNDP globally increased to 315, accompanied by a rise in evaluation budgets to \$9.8 million, compared to \$8.8 million in 2016.

”

Considerable changes were made to evaluation plans, however, particularly in the last few months of the year. This reduced the number planned for 2017 by almost 40 percent.¹⁴ Figure 1 illustrates the decline in evaluations from October 2017 to January 2018 as well as the actual completion rates.

While some adjustment to plans may be justified given the exigencies of project implementation (such as delayed approval and initiation), evaluation planning and the procedures and justifications for adjustments need to be clarified. Oversight should be strengthened to ensure that evaluation commitments at the start of the country programme cycle are met.

The IEO is currently making improvements to the Evaluation Resource Centre to ensure that changes to evaluation plans are fully recorded, and can be easily overseen and identified so that evaluation commitments are realized. The office will work closely with UNDP on a revamped approach to drafting evaluation plans, and emphasize a more formal revision process instead of the ad hoc changes to plans currently happening. Going forward, the IEO will also develop more comprehensive guidance on evaluation planning.

Analysis of all evaluation plans undertaken to support regional workshops in 2017 showed considerable differences in the numbers and types of evaluations planned in country offices. There were also variations in overall and individual evaluation budget allocations across regions, countries and within the same evaluation types, even within a given country in some cases. These differences may reflect the varying levels of importance paid to evaluation and evaluation planning by management.¹⁵


The IEO can continue to support oversight through providing data as well as clarifying procedures through the revised guidelines. These issues also need to be further taken up and assured by UNDP in the daily oversight of decentralized evaluation planning, budgeting and implementation.

2017 implementation

In 2017, the number of evaluations implemented by UNDP globally increased, accompanied by a rise in evaluation budgets to \$9.8 million, compared to \$8.8 million in 2016. Mandatory evaluations, comprising GEF terminal evaluations and mid-term reviews, outcome evaluations and United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) evaluations, accounted for 50 percent of evaluations. GEF evaluations continued to account for a third of all evaluations (35 percent in 2017).

The declining trend in decentralized evaluations identified in 2016 has somewhat halted. The increase in 2017 is being followed by a further increase planned for 2018, to 460 evaluations initially planned for the year.¹⁶

Figure 2: Budgets for completed decentralized evaluations by region, 2017



	AFRICA	ARAB STATES	ASIA & THE PACIFIC	EUROPE & THE CIS	LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN	GLOBAL ¹⁷	TOTAL
Total number of evaluations completed >	104	27	52	66	52	14	315
UNDP project evaluations >	53	22	21	34	23	5	158
UNDP GEF evaluations >	22	5	25	26	27	4	109
Outcome evaluations >	13	0	4	5	1	0	23
UNDAF and other evaluations >	16	0	2	1	1	5	25

Total decentralized BUDGET (\$)

AFRICA >	3,423,935
ARAB STATES >	803,376
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC >	2,155,771
EUROPE AND THE CIS >	1,343,357
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN >	1,286,540
GLOBAL >	738,150



9,751,129

Source: Evaluation Resource Centre as of 31 January 2018.

Table 1: Number and budgets for decentralized evaluations, 2014 to 2017¹⁸

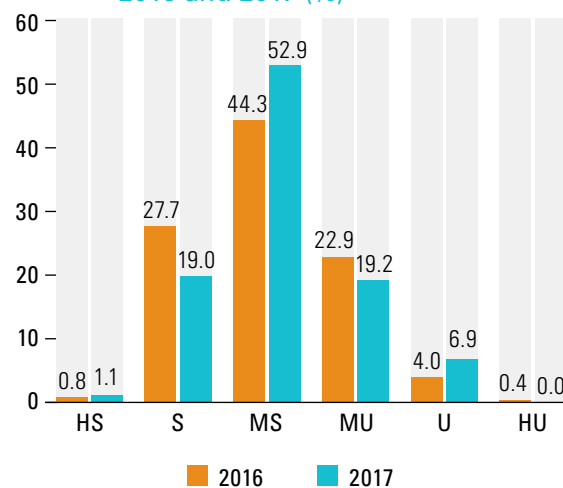
	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	No.	Budget, \$	No.	Budget, \$	No.	Budget, \$	No.	Budget, \$
UNDP project evaluations	131	3,314,229	111	3,372,309	127	3,441,516	158	4,217,576
UNDP/GEF evaluations	125	2,847,785	113	2,933,129	96	2,719,337	109	3,094,617
Outcome evaluations	25	833,281	40	1,740,338	26	1,059,482	23	1,087,444
UNDAF and other evaluations	41	1,383,118	23	1,151,096	34	1,583,500	25	1,351,492
TOTAL	322	8,378,413	287	9,196,872	283	8,803,835	315	9,751,129

Source: Evaluation Resource Centre as of 31 January 2018.

Assessing the quality of decentralized evaluations

2017 was the second year of implementing the adjusted quality assessment process in line with the Evaluation Policy.¹⁹ While the quality assessment tool stayed the same to ensure the consistency of findings, the scope of assessment has increased, covering all evaluations implemented during the year.²⁰

Figure 3: Quality assessment ratings, 2016 and 2017 (%)



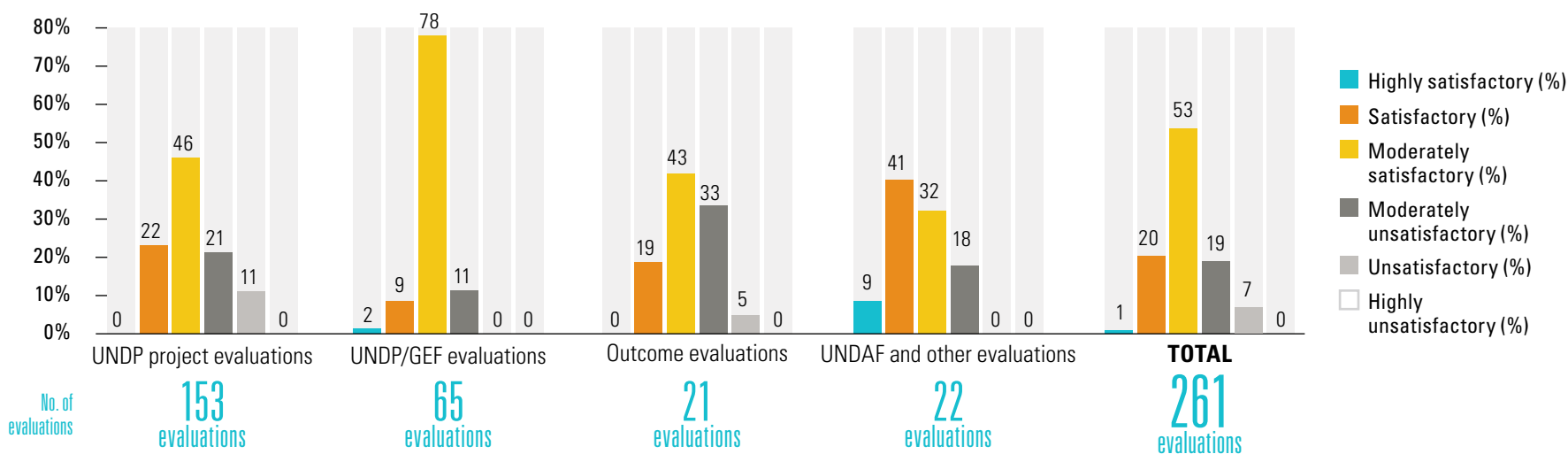
Note: HS=highly satisfactory, meets and exceeds UNDP requirements; S=satisfactory, fully meeting UNDP requirements with minor shortcomings; MS=moderately satisfactory, partially meeting UNDP requirements with a number of shortcomings; MU=moderately unsatisfactory, more than one parameter was unmet with significant shortcomings; U=unsatisfactory, most parameters were not met and there were major shortcomings; and HU=highly unsatisfactory, none of the parameters were met and there were severe shortcomings.

Quality assessment of 261 evaluations completed in 2017²¹ highlighted a decline in quality between 2016 and 2017. The percentage of evaluations with a satisfactory rating fell from 28 percent to 20 percent. In 2017, 1 percent of evaluations were highly satisfactory (3), 20 percent were satisfactory (52) and 53 percent were moderately satisfactory (138). Twenty-six percent (68 with a budget of \$2 million) were of a quality that fell far short of UNDP standards.

The picture across regions varies, with the Arab States, Europe and the CIS, and Latin America and the Caribbean showing improvement in quality compared to 2016. More details can be seen in the annexes to this report. The IEO will undertake a more detailed analysis during 2018, and incorporate suggested changes in evaluation management into updated guidelines in an attempt to improve evaluation quality and halt any further quality decline. A greater oversight, implementation and approval system will also need to be instituted by UNDP, providing clear guidance, and steering the rejection of poor terms of reference and poor-quality evaluations.

UNDAF, country programme documents and other evaluations generally had better quality, possibly reflective of their higher resources and the importance they are given by UNDP management. Outcome and UNDP programme evaluations tended to have lower

Figure 4: Quality assessment ratings, 2016 and 2017



quality, with outcome evaluations declining considerably. GEF evaluations had a higher quality, but there was a decline here also, with only 11 percent garnering highly satisfactory or satisfactory ratings compared to 37 percent in 2016.

Evaluation plan compliance

Annually, the IEO is required to report to the UNDP Executive Board on evaluation plan compliance levels for country offices with country programmes that are due for review and renewal. Evaluation Resource Centre figures suggest high compliance with evaluation plans for 2017. Of the 19 country offices where plans ended during the year, 17 showed a 100 percent completion rate,

while two completed over 75 percent of evaluations. This does not reflect the fact that during an evaluation plan's cycle the plan can be adjusted many times. While country offices may be compliant with plans at the end of the cycle, they may not be fully compliant with their original evaluation plans or the spirit thereof.

Decentralized evaluation support in 2017

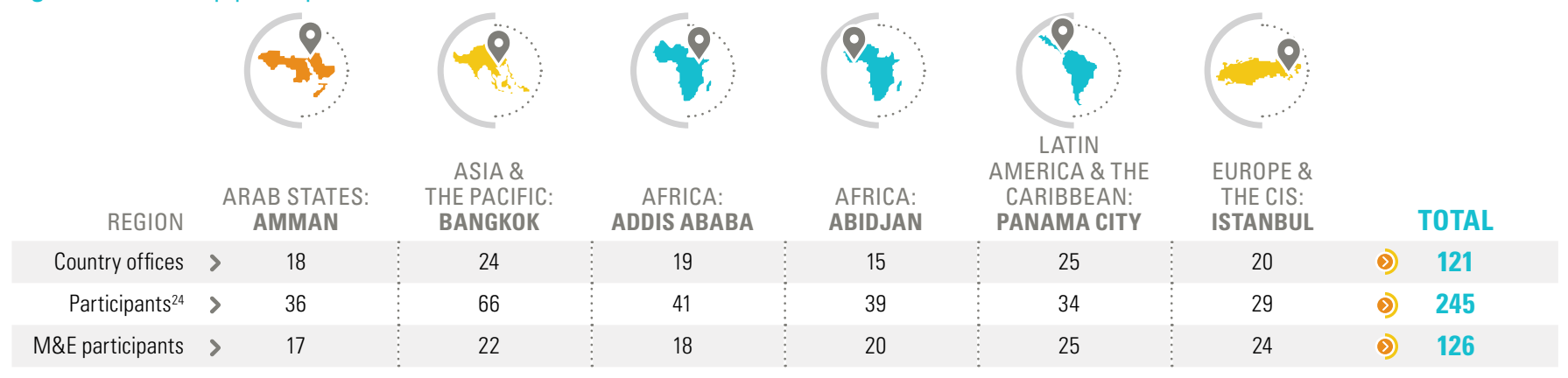
In 2017, further to requests from the Executive Board, and as outlined and agreed under the 2016 Evaluation Policy as well as previous reports to the Executive Board,²² the IEO fully committed to strengthening the evaluation

function at the decentralized level. It drove a number of initiatives forward in close collaboration with the Development Impact Group of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support and regional bureaus.

The IEO previously outlined its strategy of support to decentralized evaluation, focusing on five key areas related to implementation, as well as on strengthening the oversight of planning and implementation.

The **revised quality assessment tool** is now in its second year of implementation. It provides regional and country offices with feedback on the quality of commissioned evaluations to learn lessons and take actions to address poor quality.²³

Figure 5: Workshop participation numbers



Training and feedback workshops with regional and country offices collect feedback from M&E focal points as well as other UNDP staff on country office needs to strengthen decentralized evaluations.

Regional bureau workshops, financially supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, enabled the IEO to deliver training and guidance on evaluation planning, budgeting, implementation and use to M&E focal points as well as UNDP country office management, advisers and programme staff.

The IEO aligned evaluation support during the year with other regional planning training, including country programme document development and theories of change. It was able to fully or partially finance the inclusion of 126 country office M&E focal points from 121 countries.

The regional workshops covered a variety of evaluation issues and concerns, and were in many cases the first training in evaluation some M&E focal points and other staff had received. The workshops introduced the new Evaluation Policy, and provided detailed analysis and guidance on the current evaluation approach, and the large variances apparent in planning and budgets across countries and regions. Considerable discussion was also held on current guidance for evaluation implementation; feedback was sought for the forthcoming update of the evaluation section of the *Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results* (originally published in 2009 with some updates in 2011). The workshops were highly appreciated. There have been requests for additional sessions in 2018 to further clarify planning and budgeting for evaluation as well as other issues.

Under the **Evaluation Resource Centre**,²⁵ an **evaluation consultant database** supports country offices and regions in finding quality independent evaluators. This will be further strengthened and expanded to enable country offices and regions to access a wide range of evaluators along with links to examples of their work and quality assessments.

The **revision of the 2009 Evaluation Guidelines** has started. It will be finalized in 2018.

Development of evaluation capacity, training and certification will be based on the revised guidelines to enable all M&E focal points and programme staff to obtain the technical skills to implement evaluations.

chapter 5.



The United Nations Capital Development Fund and United Nations Volunteers

The IEO continued to support UNCDF and UNV in various capacities in 2017. This included a full quality assessment of all evaluations undertaken during the year. The office also provided detailed feedback, cooperation and guidance on the development of UNCDF's new Strategic Framework in alignment with UNDP's own Strategic Plan, with the former due for submission to the UNDP Executive Board in 2018.

Through 2018, the IEO will work closely with UNV and UNCDF to further clarify its support to the evaluation function within both organizations. It will continue to quality assess evaluations undertaken by both on an annual basis and report to the Executive Board.

UNCDF

UNCDF continued to invest heavily in its evaluation function in 2017. In line with its 2016-2017 Evaluation Plan, its Evaluation Unit completed two external mid-term and final project evaluations. The first was on the Local Finance Global Initiative, which is introducing new approaches to 'last mile' infrastructure financed by the public and private sectors in Benin, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. The second examined the global CleanStart programme, which is promoting increased financing and the development of markets for clean energy solutions for the poor in Cambodia, Ethiopia, Myanmar, Nepal and Uganda. UNCDF also

came close to finalizing a third evaluation, on the Local Climate Adaptive Living Facility, which aims to increase the amount of climate change adaptation finance available to local governments in the least developed countries. A fourth evaluation was launched in 2017. It covers the Mobile Money for the Poor programme, which assists with scaling up sustainable branchless and mobile financial services to reach the poor in developing countries.

In support of UNCDF's new 2018-2021 Strategic Framework, the Evaluation Unit commissioned an external review of UNCDF's results measurement system, funded by the IEO. It also oversaw a synthesis review exercise summarizing key evaluation results under the Strategic Framework and supported from an evaluability perspective the conceptualization and early drafting of the new 2018-2021 Integrated Results and Resources Matrix. An Evaluation Plan for UNCDF for 2018 to 2021 was prepared and

annexed to the Strategic Framework. It sets out a series of priority evaluations at the project, programme, and—resources permitting—broader strategic and thematic levels. The last category of evaluations will focus on questions such as UNCDF's performance in supporting policy and market development in the least developed countries, and in making finance work for the poor, with a specific focus on women.

In 2017, the Evaluation Unit continued to perform well under the UN System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. Reports submitted were assessed as 'exceeding requirements' by a UNEG peer review process. UNCDF also stepped up its efforts to disseminate the results of its evaluations, briefing Member States in informal meetings of the UNDP Executive Board, and keeping its website and the Evaluation Resource Centre up to date with completed evaluations and management responses.



Through **2018**, the IEO **will work closely** with **UNV** and **UNCDF** to further clarify its support to the **evaluation function** within both organizations. It will continue to quality **assess** evaluations undertaken by both on an annual basis and **report** to the Executive Board.





UNCDF benefited for the first time from a quality assessment of its evaluations by the IEO, with **five of the six evaluations** submitted receiving scores of **'highly satisfactory' or 'satisfactory'**.



UNCDF worked closely with the IEO in 2017, agreeing on a programme of cooperation for the office to extend its coverage of UNCDF results under its country and thematic evaluations, and co-finance the independent evaluation of UNCDF's Strategic Framework in 2021. UNCDF also benefited for the first time from a quality assessment of its evaluations by the IEO, with five of the six evaluations submitted receiving scores of 'highly satisfactory' or 'satisfactory'.

Total UNCDF expenditure on evaluation in 2017 was \$691,865, including \$32,000 from the IEO for the results measurement review; funding was drawn from both core and non-core resources. The total represented just over 1 percent of total UNCDF expenditure in 2017. It included the costs of evaluations and the running costs of the Evaluation Unit, which comprised the staffing costs of an Evaluation Specialist and an Evaluation Analyst.

Highlights of UNCDF evaluation results from 2014 to 2017

Results from eight evaluations looked at under a **synthesis review** confirmed that UNCDF is generally able to design and implement programmes that improve the lives of poor people and communities, that are relevant to partner government priorities and that are well positioned in terms of other development stakeholders in the least developed countries. Gender was particularly well addressed, with women's financial inclusion and engagement in decision-making a priority in programme design.

UNCDF inclusive finance partners were generally found to be making good use of new financial products and services, and technological innovations were helping them reach increased numbers of low-income clients. UNCDF support to improved public financial management by local governments typically led to greater investment in productive infrastructure as well as, where relevant, improved household food security and nutrition.

The review found that UNCDF could do better in articulating expected results beyond the level of direct implementing partners. This would help support ambitions to influence the development of the markets and policy systems that drive inclusion. The review recommended that UNCDF do more in ensuring timely programme delivery and appropriate monitoring, results reporting and knowledge management, particularly during the programme innovation stage. It also suggested that UNCDF expand its range of evaluation tools to better capture the longer term effects of its interventions, both at the individual level, and on the broader policy and market systems levels. Both of these topics have been included as proposed thematic evaluations in UNCDF's 2018-2021 Evaluation Plan.

UNV

The UNV budget for evaluation in 2017 totaled approximately \$271,000, drawn from core and non-core resources, including Special Voluntary Funds. The budget covered the cost of two corporate level evaluations, one project evaluation and the salary of one Evaluation Specialist.

In 2017, UNV concluded the first phase of a transitional Evaluation Plan by undertaking two evaluations identified in 2016 as required to address immediate organizational information needs. These included the evaluation of UNV's 2014-2017 Strategic Framework and of UNV's work on gender equality and women's empowerment, both of which involved extensive stakeholder engagement. They provided accountability for results achieved, and focused on relevant and practical recommendations to enhance the 2018-2021 Strategic Framework and UNV's organizational transformation.



UNV continued to provide technical support and quality assurance to decentralized project evaluations, completing the final evaluation of the Local Governance and Community Development Programme II in Nepal. Two project evaluations directly assessing the results of UNV work on

volunteer infrastructures are expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2018. These will provide direct and relevant information to inform future UNV work.

Implementation of the second phase of the transitional Evaluation Plan will provide opportunities to strengthen the evaluation function through the development of a systematic evaluation work-planning process. To promote effective work planning and quality assurance, and as a response to the evaluation of the 2014-2017 Strategic Framework, an evaluability assessment of the 2018-2021 Strategic Framework is being conducted. This will directly inform the next UNV evaluation workplan and improve reporting mechanisms for the new Strategic Framework. UNV-specific guidance for M&E is currently under development to back further implementation of results-based management at all levels of the organization, and specifically address M&E processes.

chapter 6.



Staffing and Finances

Independent evaluation is highly contingent on the triangulation of perspectives, methods and evidential data sets. Since 2012, the nurturing and development of cultural as well as professional disciplinary diversity has been an integral priority for the development of the IEO. This has been a foundation for recruitment and staffing as well as internal governance arrangements and methodological practices.

IEO staffing

During the previous multi-year Evaluation Plan, the office moved towards a more formal divisional structure of its work. Prior to 2017, it operated under a semi-formal committee structure covering the main elements of work, including thematic and ICPE committees.

Approval of a request for additional staff as well as a greater commitment to funding the IEO enabled establishment of a more formal sectional structure. Increased commitments to thematic and corporate evaluations, strengthened decentralized evaluations, the professionalization of evaluation and a move away from subcontracting evaluations have made this expansion essential to ensure smooth operations.

The office now has a staff of 29, encompassing 21 International Professional staff and 8 General Service staff, although 7 of these positions are temporary. The office

hopes to make these fixed in the future in order to meet its objectives. The office has full gender parity in its professional staff.

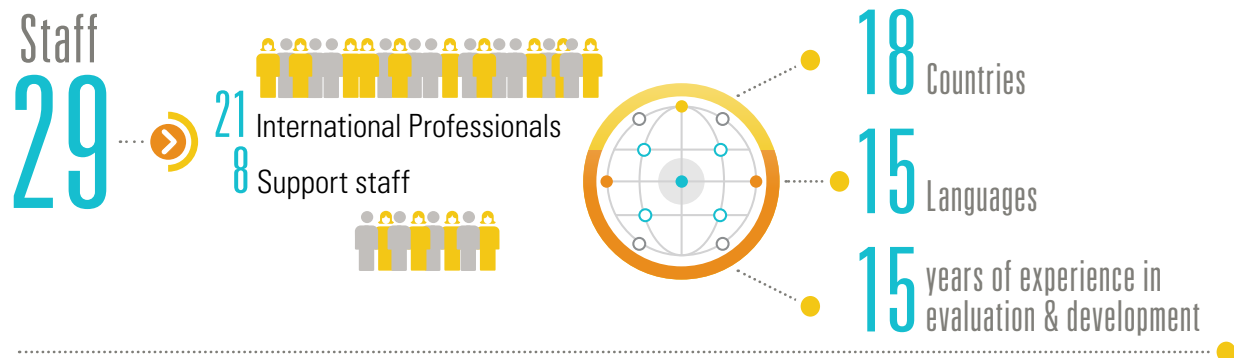
The range of evaluation experience is broad. Professional staff come from 18 countries, speak over 15 languages, and have an average of over 15 years of experience in evaluation and development. They offer a considerable range of diverse working experiences, education and membership of professional organizations across the globe, having served a wide range of multilateral, bilateral and private sector agencies, including the Asian and African Development Banks, The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and a number of United Nations entities.

A sectional structure strengthens the work of the IEO and its staff, while allowing individual evaluators to work across sections. Exposure to different evaluation types encourages professional development and results in a higher quality evaluation product.

Finances

In 2017, the IEO used \$9.03 million for evaluations and other institutional activities, including staffing and rent. A total of \$8.67 million came from core resources, with an overspend of \$360,000 that was possible due to a budget override on IEO staff salaries and entitlements. The 2017 budget represented 0.2 percent of overall UNDP core and non-core funds.²⁶

The office continues to partner strategically and selectively with external development agencies and governments in advancing the evaluation mandate and function within UNDP as well as externally. In 2017, the office continued or entered into strategic partnerships with the Governments of Finland, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. Cost-sharing agreements amounting to \$562,000 helped to support, strengthen and expand work through the National Evaluation Capacities Conference, the National Evaluation Diagnostics Guidance and decentralized evaluation support, among other areas. The conference also saw considerable in-kind and directly funded contributions from the Government of Turkey.



IEO office structure



Indran Naidoo,
Director



Arild Hauge,
Deputy Director



Fumika Ouchi,
Section Head



Alan Fox,
Section Head



Heather Bryant,
Section Head



Ximena Rios,
Section Head



Directorate

The IEO continues to be strategically led by the Director and Deputy Director. In addition to their leadership of the office, they strongly engage with the UNEG and other global evaluation bodies.



ICPE Section

The section is responsible for evaluations for country offices due to submit new country programme documents to the Executive Board, helping to strengthen accountability and learning at the country office level.



Corporate Evaluation Section

The section evaluates broader thematic interventions undertaken by UNDP on its own or in partnership with other United Nations agencies.



Capacity Development Section

In recognition of increasing work on capacity development, the section supports the IEO's global engagement in promoting and entrenching evaluation within development work. It also helps bolster the evaluation function within UNDP.



Operations Section

This section provides human resources, procurement and administrative support to the IEO.

chapter 7.



Costed Programme of Work, 2018 to 2021

This chapter details the IEO's approved 2018-2021 Evaluation Plan.²⁷ This is the first multi-year plan under the new Evaluation Policy and is in line with the office's commitments to "present to the Executive Board a multiyear evaluation plan aligned with the UNDP strategic planning cycle: the programme of work is to be adjusted annually through a costed programme of work presented to the Executive Board in the annual reports on evaluation."²⁸



Apportioned equally, **\$42.1 million** over four years provides an **annual budget** of just over **\$10.5 million.**



Indicative annual budget for the IEO from 2018 to 2021

IEO planning during 2018 as well as for the remainder of the multi-year Evaluation Plan to 2021 is based on budget projections derived from the UNDP 2018-2021 Integrated Resource Plan and Integrated Budget²⁹ presented to a special session of the UNDP Executive Board in November 2017. The budget plan establishes a resource envelope for the Evaluation Office of \$42.1 million for the 2018-2021 period.

Apportioned equally, \$42.1 million over four years provides an annual budget of just over \$10.5 million. Subtracting the annual cost of office rent and utilities, approximately \$10 million would remain for staff salaries and programme expenditures.

Figure 6: 2018 IEO budget allocations

SECTION	Annual budget (\$ millions)	Percentage of annual total budget
ICPEs >	2.9	28
Corporate and thematic >	2.8	27
Evaluation capacity >	1.7	16
Directorate >	1.6	15
Operations >	0.7	6
Premises >	0.5	5
General operating expenses >	0.2	2
Other/miscellaneous >	0.1	1
		100%



\$10.5 Total annual budget (million)

Corporate Evaluation Section

Over the next multi-year plan period, the IEO's Corporate Evaluation Section will develop an array of corporate and thematic evaluations, culminating in a further comprehensive evaluation of the UNDP Strategic Plan for presentation in 2021. Subjects for interim thematic evaluations will be aligned with the UNDP 2018-2021 Strategic Plan, with an element of flexibility, especially in the latter years of the planning cycle, to enable further deliberation with the Executive Board and UNDP management during 2018 and 2019. The preliminary set of evaluation topics includes:

Corporate and thematic evaluations, 2018 to 2021 ³⁰	
Executive Board session	Evaluation
Second regular session 2018	UNDP inter-agency pooled financing and operational services
First regular session 2019	UNDP support to least developed countries for social protection and poverty reduction
Annual session 2019	Review of the UNDP evaluation policy
Second regular session 2019	UNDP assistance to vulnerable developing countries for disaster risk reduction and climate change resilience
First regular session 2020	UNDP development support services to middle-income countries
Second regular session 2020	Leveraging private sector finance and engagement for development support
Annual session 2021	Evaluation of the UNDP 2018-2021 Strategic Plan

In addition, in line with the 'common chapter' of the UNDP Strategic Plan, the IEO will work closely with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UN Women to explore and identify areas of possible joint and collaborative evaluation, across areas of joint strategic focus and work.

ICPE Section

The move to 100 percent coverage of country programmes by the ICPEs is a considerable change for the IEO. It has been supported by

shifts in methodological approach as well as an increase in professional staff to undertake such evaluations.

The ICPEs have, in principle, moved away from consideration of two cycles to one (current) programme cycle, focusing on capturing lessons that will directly inform the process of formulating a new country programme strategy in the following cycle. Evaluations have focused on addressing three key questions, paying particular attention to unique country context and development issues:

- a. What did the UNDP country programme intend to achieve during the period under review?
- b. To what extent has the programme achieved (or is likely to achieve) its intended objectives?
- c. What factors contributed to or hindered UNDP's performance and, eventually, the sustainability of results?

The ICPEs planned for 2018 and 2019 are as follows:

Year	No. of ICPEs	Countries/territories
2018 (for the 2019 Executive Board)	15 ³¹	Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Comoros, Cuba, Guatemala, Madagascar, Mali, Paraguay, Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Venezuela, Yemen
2019 (for the 2020 Executive Board)	37	Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, China, Côte d'Ivoire, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Georgia, Guinea-Bissau, Indonesia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, ³² Lebanon, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Panama, Serbia, Seychelles, Somalia, Swaziland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Zimbabwe

The IEO will also report to the Executive Board annually from 2018 with a synthesis of results and lessons from ICPE assessments.

Capacity Development Section

Looking forward, the IEO will expand its support to evaluation capacity development within UNDP and beyond. To support decentralized evaluation, the IEO will continue to deliver guidance and training on evaluation implementation, depending on available financial resources. At the same time, the Capacity Development Section will work more closely with regional focal

points to strengthen oversight of decentralized evaluation, including in evaluation plan design and evaluation implementation. The IEO will also increasingly engage, through training and planning advice, with country offices and management to ensure increased commitment to evaluation.

The quality assessment process will continue, with detailed feedback to implementing units as well as analysis of findings to identify any continued issues.

To support national evaluation capacities, the IEO is now reviewing lessons from the five National Evaluation Capacities Conferences to develop a strategy for future support.

The strategy will include piloting the new National Evaluation Diagnostics Guidance in collaboration with UNDP programme teams. The IEO will act on the positive outcome of the 2017 conference, and is currently planning its next engagement, either regionally or globally, to continue cultivating national evaluation capacities. The section will also build on support given to evaluation and the SDGs throughout 2018 and beyond, and will ensure the IEO engages across a range of regional evaluation and SDG platforms.

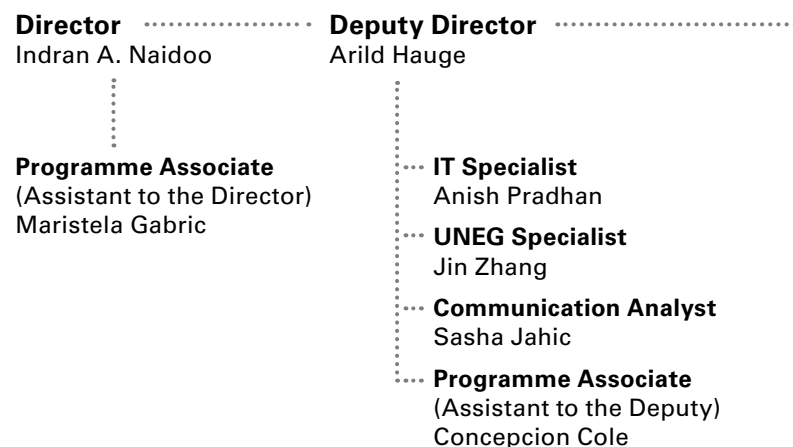
“

Looking forward, the IEO will expand its support to evaluation capacity development within UNDP & beyond.

”

Annex 1: IEO structure

Directorate



Country Programme Evaluation Section

Chief of Section Fumika Ouchi	Evaluation Advisor Ana Rosa Soares	Evaluation Specialist Natalia Acosta
	Evaluation Advisor Roberto La Rovere	Evaluation Analyst Mar Guinot Aguado
	Evaluation Specialist Deqa Ibrahim Musa	
	Evaluation Specialist Oanh Nguyen	Evaluation Specialist Youri Bless

Corporate Evaluation Section

Chief of Section Alan Fox	Evaluation Advisor Vijayalakshmi Vadivelu	Evaluation Specialist Amanuel Zerihoun
	Evaluation Specialist Yogesh Bhatt	
	Evaluation Specialist Jessica Guo	
	Programme Associate Ashley Suyeon Kim	

Capacity Development and Quality Assessment Sect

Chief of Section Heather Bryant	Evaluation Advisor Richard Jones	Evaluation Analyst Andson Nsune
	Evaluation Specialist Vacant	

Operations Section

Chief of Section Ximena Rios	Finance Associate Michelle Sy
	Administrative Associate Flora Jimenez
	Programme Assistant Antana Locs
	Programme Assistant Sonam Choetsho
	Programme Assistant Vacant

Annex 2: Submission of independent evaluations and reports to the UNDP Executive Board from 2018 to 2021

	2018			2019			2020			2021		
	FRS	AS	SRS	FRS	AS	SRS	FRS	AS	SRS	FRS	AS	SRS
Corporate and programmatic reporting												
Multi-year Evaluation Plan	●											
Annual costed programme of work	●			●			●			●		
Annual Report on Evaluation		●			●			●			●	
Revised Evaluation Policy (as necessary)								●				
Corporate and thematic evaluations												
UNDP inter-agency financial and operational services			●									
UNDP support to least developed countries for social protection and poverty reduction				●								
External review of the UNDP Evaluation Policy					●							
UNDP assistance to vulnerable developing countries for disaster risk reduction and climate change resilience						●						
UNDP development support services to middle-income countries							●					
Europe and the CIS ICPE cluster								●				
Leveraging private sector finance and engagement for development support									●			
UNDP performance and results under the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan											●	

FRS = first regular session, AS = annual session, SRS = second regular session.

Annex 3: Snapshot of global decentralized evaluations from 2014 to 2017

Table 1: Number of decentralized evaluations completed from 2014 to 2017³³

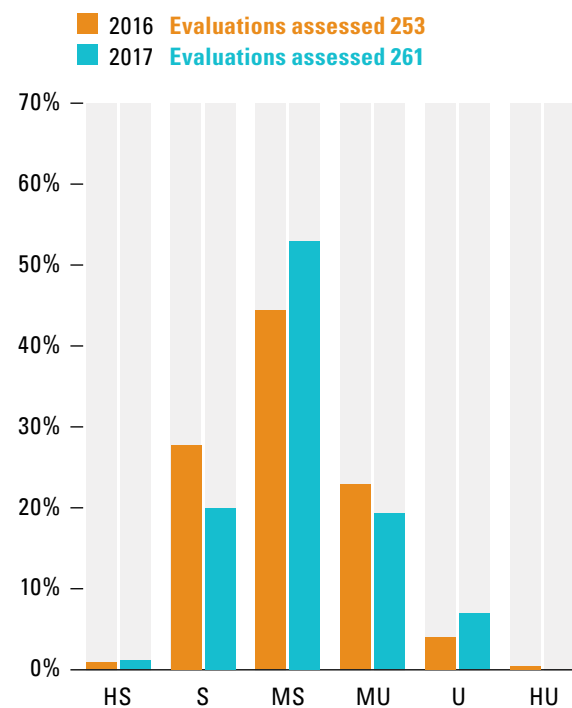
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 (planned)
UNDP project evaluations	131	111	127	158	211
UNDP/GEF evaluations	125	113	96	109	139
Outcome evaluations	25	40	26	23	72
UNDAF and other evaluations	41	23	34	25	38
Total number of evaluations	322	287	283	315	460

Source: Evaluation Resource Centre as of 31 January 2018.

Table 2: Decentralized evaluation budgets, 2014 to 2017, in dollars³⁴

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 (planned)	Average budget 2017
UNDP project evaluations	3,314,229	3,372,309	3,441,516	4,217,576	5,985,688	26,694
UNDP/GEF evaluations	2,847,785	2,933,129	2,719,337	3,094,617	4,219,095	28,391
Outcome evaluations	833,281	1,740,338	1,059,482	1,087,444	3,348,000	47,280
UNDAF and other evaluations	1,383,118	1,151,096	1,583,500	1,351,492	1,934,000	54,060
Total evaluation budget	8,378,413	9,196,872	8,803,835	9,751,129	15,486,783	30,956

Figure A1: Quality assessment of decentralized evaluations, 2016 and 2017



Highly satisfactory (HS)
 Satisfactory (S)
 Moderately satisfactory (MS)
 Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)
 Unsatisfactory (U)
 Highly unsatisfactory (HU)

Annex 4: Africa snapshot of decentralized evaluations in 2017

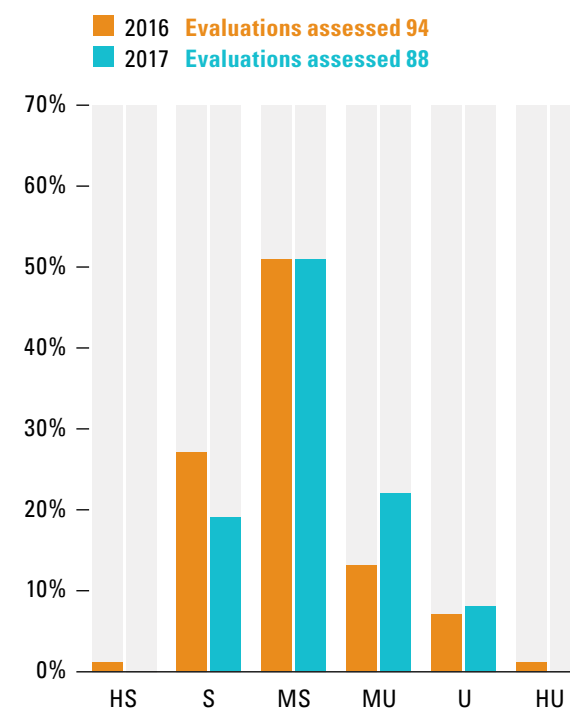
Table 1: Number of decentralized evaluations completed, 2014 to 2017

	2014	2015	2016	2017	Regional share of global total, 2017 (%)	2018 (planned)
UNDP project evaluations	35	21	44	53	33.54	42
UNDP/GEF evaluations	27	25	35	22	20.18	26
Outcome evaluations	11	19	13	13	56.52	30
UNDAF and other evaluations	18	8	16	16	64.00	11
Total number of evaluations	91	73	108	104	33.02	109

Table 2: Decentralized evaluation budgets, 2014 to 2017, in dollars

	2014	2015	2016	2017	Regional share of global budget, 2017 (%)	Average budget 2017	2018 (planned)
UNDP project evaluations	905,766	809,948	1,386,100	1,621,756	38.45	30,599	1,515,000
UNDP/GEF evaluations	683,815	751,573	1,006,707	658,439	21.28	29,929	1,015,000
Outcome evaluations	356,500	820,070	597,250	510,298	46.93	39,254	1,397,000
UNDAF and other evaluations	579,548	550,559	845,000	633,442	46.87	39,590	715,000
Total evaluation budget	2,525,629	2,932,150	3,835,057	3,423,935	35.11	32,923	4,642,000

Figure A2: Quality assessment of decentralized evaluations in 2016 and 2017



Annex 5: Arab States snapshot of decentralized evaluations in 2017

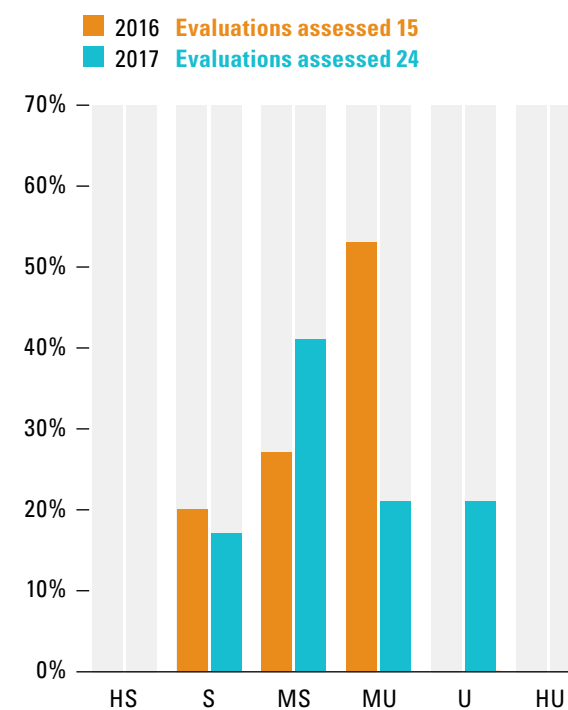
Table 1: Number of decentralized evaluations completed from 2014 to 2017

	2014	2015	2016	2017	Regional share of global total, 2017 (%)	2018 (planned)
UNDP project evaluations	22	15	10	22	13.92	39
UNDP/GEF evaluations	11	12	3	5	4.59	9
Outcome evaluations	1	5	1	-	-	5
UNDAF and other evaluations	3	1	1	-	-	4
Total number of evaluations	37	33	15	27	8.57	57

Table 2: Decentralized evaluation budgets, 2014 to 2017, in dollars

	2014	2015	2016	2017	Regional share of global budget, 2017 (%)	Average budget 2017	2018 (planned)
UNDP project evaluations	565,089	291,212	142,475	600,376	14.24	27,290	1,070,000
UNDP/GEF evaluations	204,223	357,940	46,090	203,000	6.56	40,600	242,400
Outcome evaluations	18,000	225,000	25,000	-	-	-	400,000
UNDAF and other evaluations	127,200	80,000	70,000	-	-	-	200,000
Total evaluation budget	914,512	954,152	283,565	803,376	8.24	29,755	1,912,400

Figure A3: Quality assessment of decentralized evaluations, 2016 and 2017



Annex 6: Asia and the Pacific snapshot of decentralized evaluations in 2017

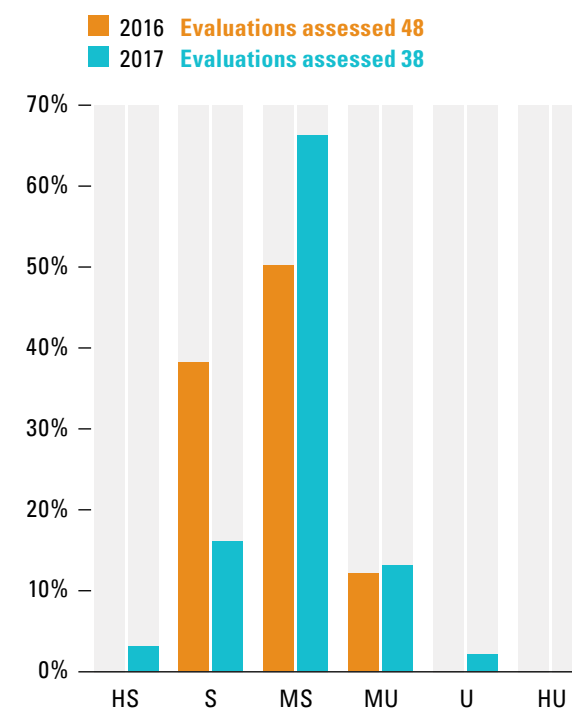
Table 1: Number of decentralized evaluations completed from 2014 to 2017

	2014	2015	2016	2017	Regional share of global total, 2017 (%)	2018 (planned)
UNDP project evaluations	31	29	19	21	13.29	48
UNDP/GEF evaluations	34	28	22	25	22.94	37
Outcome evaluations	3	5	3	4	17.39	8
UNDAF and other evaluations	4	3	9	2	8.00	9
Total number of evaluations	72	65	53	52	16.51	102

Table 2: Decentralized evaluation budgets, 2014 to 2017, in dollars

	2014	2015	2016	2017	Regional share of global budget, 2017 (%)	Average budget 2017	2018 (planned)
UNDP project evaluations	1,060,273	774,047	629,663	735,015	17.43	35,000	1,811,500
UNDP/GEF evaluations	978,311	754,379	714,155	910,756	29.43	36,430	1,249,000
Outcome evaluations	185,000	328,585	135,000	360,000	33.11	90,000	610,000
UNDAF and other evaluations	168,000	182,000	501,500	150,000	11.10	75,000	700,000
Total evaluation budget	2,391,584	2,039,011	1,980,318	2,155,771	22.11	41,457	4,370,500

Figure A4: Quality assessment of decentralized evaluations, 2016 and 2017



Annex 7: Europe and the CIS snapshot of decentralized evaluations in 2017

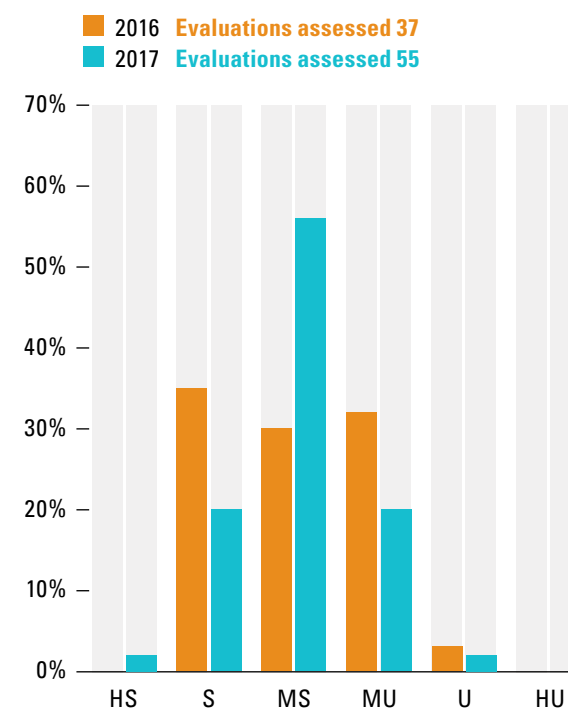
Table 1: Number of decentralized evaluations completed from 2014 to 2017

	2014	2015	2016	2017	Regional share of global total, 2017 (%)	2018 (planned)
UNDP project evaluations	22	18	20	34	21.52	29
UNDP/GEF evaluations	18	19	20	26	23.85	23
Outcome evaluations	7	7	5	5	21.74	12
UNDAF and other evaluations	7	5	2	1	4.00	3
Total number of evaluations	54	49	47	66	20.95	67

Table 2: Decentralized evaluation budgets, 2014 to 2017, in dollars

	2014	2015	2016	2017	Regional share of global budget, 2017 (%)	Average budget 2017	2018 (planned)
UNDP project evaluations	349,008	300,127	281,368	548,649	13.01	16,137	535,103
UNDP/GEF evaluations	316,997	408,793	485,100	627,562	20.28	24,137	600,595
Outcome evaluations	148,801	171,900	182,232	137,146	12.61	27,429	512,000
UNDAF and other evaluations	119,702	142,000	60,000	30,000	2.22	30,000	54,000
Total evaluation budget	934,508	1,022,820	1,008,700	1,343,357	13.78	20,354	1,701,698

Figure A5: Quality assessment of decentralized evaluations, 2016 and 2017



Annex 8: Latin America and the Caribbean snapshot of decentralized evaluations in 2017

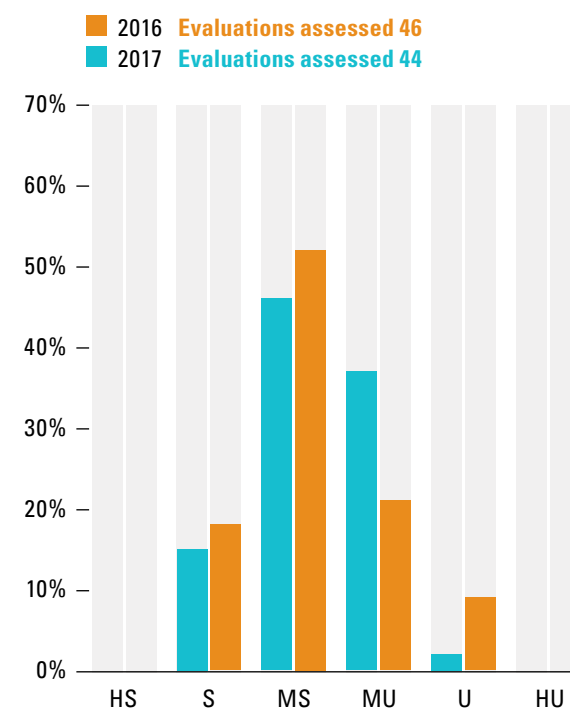
Table 1: Number of decentralized evaluations completed from 2014 to 2017

	2014	2015	2016	2017	Regional share of global total, 2017 (%)	2018 (planned)
UNDP project evaluations	18	19	26	23	14.56	50
UNDP/GEF evaluations	27	27	15	27	24.77	43
Outcome evaluations	3	4	4	1	4.35	17
UNDAF and other evaluations	7	5	6	1	4.00	11
Total number of evaluations	55	55	51	52	16.51	121

Table 2: Decentralized evaluation budgets, 2014 to 2017, in dollars

	2014	2015	2016	2017	Regional share of global budget, 2017 (%)	Average budget 2017	2018 (planned)
UNDP project evaluations	281,093	375,560	632,390	548,180	13.00	23,834	1,024,085
UNDP/GEF evaluations	495,689	605,444	437,285	593,360	19.17	21,975	1,072,100
Outcome evaluations	124,980	194,783	120,000	80,000	7.36	80,000	429,000
UNDAF and other evaluations	258,668	160,000	107,000	65,000	4.81	65,000	265,000
Total evaluation budget	1,160,430	1,335,787	1,296,675	1,286,540	13.19	24,741	2,790,185

Figure A6: Quality assessment of decentralized evaluations, 2016 and 2017



Annex 9: Snapshot of global decentralized evaluations in 2017

Table 1: Number of decentralized evaluations completed from 2014 to 2017

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 (planned)
UNDP Bureau for Policy and Programme Support evaluations	12	7	7	9	1
UNCDF evaluations	1	3	1	2	-
UNV evaluations	-	2	1	3	3
Total number of evaluations	13	12	9	14	4

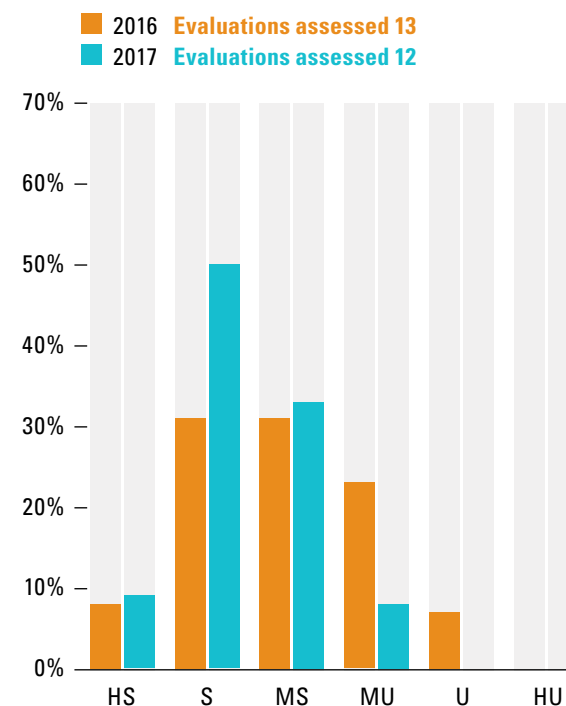
Table 2: Decentralized evaluation budgets, 2014 to 2017, in dollars

	2014	2015	2016	2017	Average budget 2017	2018 (planned)
Total evaluation budget	451,750	912,952	399,520	738,150	52,725	70,000
UNDP Bureau for Policy and Programme Support evaluations	373,750	335,000	265,800	342,500	38,056	40,000
UNCDF evaluations	78,000	521,700	100,000	217,600	108,800	-
UNV evaluations	-	56,252	33,720	178,050	59,350	30,000

Table 3: Average budgets for evaluations in 2017, in dollars³⁵

	Africa	Arab States	Asia and the Pacific	Europe and the CIS	Latin America and the Caribbean	Global average
Average cost, all evaluations	32,923	29,755	41,457	20,354	24,741	30,956
Average cost, UNDP project evaluations	30,599	27,290	35,000	16,137	23,834	26,694
Average cost, UNDP/GEF evaluations	29,929	40,600	36,430	24,137	21,975	28,391
Average cost, outcome evaluations	39,254	-	90,000	27,429	80,000	47,280
Average cost, UNDAF and other evaluations	39,590	-	75,000	30,000	65,000	54,060

Figure A7: Quality assessment of decentralized evaluations, 2016 and 2017



Annex 10: Quality assessment of decentralized evaluations in 2016 and 2017






Figure A8: Quality assessment by region, 2016 and 2017

Region	No. of evaluations	Highly satisfactory (%)	Satisfactory (%)	Moderately satisfactory (%)	Moderately unsatisfactory (%)	Unsatisfactory (%)	Highly unsatisfactory (%)
Africa	88	0	19	51	22	8	0
Arab States	24	0	17	42	21	21	0
Asia and the Pacific	38	3	16	66	13	3	0
Europe and the CIS	55	2	20	56	20	2	0
Latin America and the Caribbean	44	0	18	52	20	9	0
Global	12	8	50	33	8	0	0
Total	261	1	20	53	19	7	0.00

Figure A9: Quality assessment by evaluation type, 2016 and 2017

Region	Year	No. of evaluations	Highly satisfactory (%)	Satisfactory (%)	Moderately satisfactory (%)	Moderately unsatisfactory (%)	Unsatisfactory (%)	Highly unsatisfactory (%)
UNDP project evaluations	2016	135	0	24	45	26	5	1
	2017	153	0	22	46	21	11	0
UNDP/GEF evaluations	2016	62	2	24	47	26	1	0
	2017	65	2	9	78	11	0	0
Outcome evaluations	2016	27	0	37	59	4	0	0
	2017	21	0	19	43	33	5	0
UNDAF and other evaluations	2016	29	3	45	21	21	10	0
	2017	22	9	41	32	18	0	0

Annex 11: Global M&E capacity from 2014 to 2017

	2014	2015	2016	2017
 Number of full-time M&E specialists³⁶	105	83	76	90
 Number of regional M&E specialists	14	13	12	10
 TOTAL	119	96	88	100
 Number of country offices	135	136	136	136
 Percentage of countries with M&E capacity	60	52	56	80

Annex 12: Members and key activities of the EAP in 2017

Member	Country	Evaluations and activities supported
Michael Bamberger	United Kingdom	ICPE Congo, ICPE Bhutan, annual EAP meeting
Rachid Benmokhtar	Morocco	ICPE Togo, annual EAP meeting
Osvaldo Feinstein	Argentina	ICPE Congo, ICPE Mexico, ADR synthesis report, IEO multi-year Evaluation Plan, National Evaluation Diagnostics Guidance, annual EAP meeting
Paulo Jannuzzi	Brazil	ICPE Chile, National Evaluation Diagnostics Guidance, National Evaluation Capacities Conference resource, annual EAP meeting
Gelase Rwabyo Mutahaba	United Republic of Tanzania	ICPE Rwanda, annual EAP meeting
Zenda Ofir	South Africa	National Evaluation Diagnostics Guidance, annual EAP meeting
Ray Rist	United States of America	Strategic Plan evaluation, ICPE reforms, ICPE briefs, annual EAP meeting
Olga Schetinina	Ukraine	ICPE Kuwait, National Evaluation Capacities Conference resource, annual EAP meeting
Thomas Schwandt	United States of America	IEO multi-year Evaluation Plan, National Evaluation Diagnostics Guidance, annual EAP meeting
Elliot Stern	United Kingdom	ADR synthesis report, annual EAP meeting
Daniel Weiner	United States of America	ICPE Namibia, annual EAP meeting
Zhaoying Chen	China	ICPE Philippines, National Evaluation Capacities Conference resource

Annex 13: The EAP report, June 2017

Report from the members of the EAP to the Director of the IEO following the Fourth Annual Meeting of the EAP with the IEO Director and staff

1. The EAP appreciates the highly professional way in which the annual EAP meeting was organized, in particular:
 - Extensive and easily accessible background material circulated in advance for each session.
 - Active and well-prepared engagement of IEO staff in presenting and discussing key issues.
 - Individual sessions that were well organized with a clear definition of the questions on which the IEO sought guidance from the Panel.
 - Effective time-management such that we were able to keep to schedule throughout the 3 days.
2. It is clear from the Director's report that the independence of IEO has now been established and its functions clearly defined in the new evaluation policy. The next priority must now be to explore ways to further strengthen the methodological rigor and authority of the evaluations. The following are some, but by no means all, of the ways this can be approached:
 - Sharpening the key questions and evaluation criteria that are used to focus an evaluation report;
 - Strengthening the defensibility of findings through broadening and strengthening the evidence base;
 - Scaling up findings to assess potential for application on a larger scale.
3. The goal of achieving a hundred percent ICPE coverage of all country programs presents both a challenge and new opportunities. The challenge is for the ICPEs to maintain IEO's high methodological standards, while working under budget and time constraints (to do more with less). The essential point is that quality should not be sacrificed as IEO seeks new ways to frame and construct the ICPEs. The need to review the ICPE strategies also provides an opportunity for reflection, to assess the purpose of ICPEs and to consider ways in which the foci, reporting processes and formats can be sharpened. Shortening reports need not lead to a reduction in quality if they are supported by background documentation; and brief 'working papers' can also aid communication with stakeholders. EAP members agreed that ICPEs should not simply be regarded as cut-down versions of ADRs

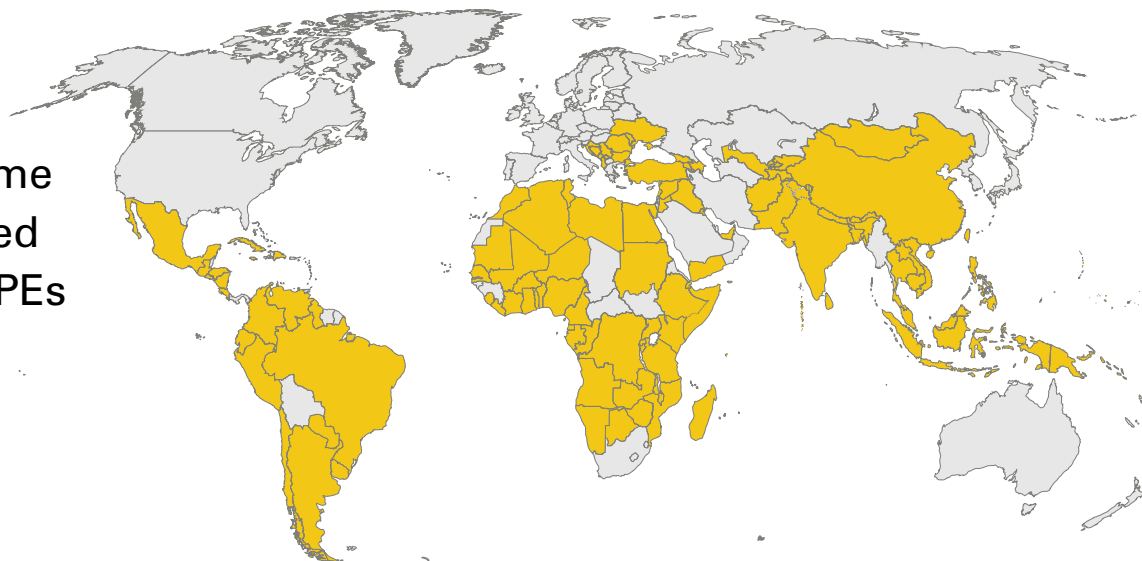
4. The IEO should focus on innovative ways to collect and analyze data and communicate results, for example by engaging with 'big data'; automating real-time data collection and analysis where possible; adopting synthesis and systematic comparative methods appropriate to IEO outputs; and considering a broader range of approaches, methodologies and tools, for disseminating and using evaluations.
5. Assessing the possibility of building on the widely used OECD-DAC evaluation criteria to reflect other UNDP and UN priorities such as governance, decentralization, gender and equity, as well as in the complex systems nature of development reflected in the 2030 agenda.
6. IEO is to be commended for its continued efforts to strengthen institutional links across UNDP and the UN system, for example:
 - Building on the successful collaboration with the Office of Audit and Investigation (OAI);
 - Exploring possibilities for cooperation with evaluation functions in other UN agencies;
 - Assessing the possibility of building on the widely used OECD-DAC evaluation criteria to reflect other UNDP and UN priorities such as governance, decentralization, gender and equity, as well as in the complex systems nature of development reflected in the 2030 agenda.
7. EAP notes IEO's evolving thinking about evaluation capacity development, which is timely given the now extensive NEC experience and the continued importance of decentralized evaluations for IEO's own reporting. Whilst we recognize that it is still to be decided how far capacity development should become part of IEO's core business, we would support approaches to capacity development that go beyond conferences, such as:
 - Identifying the specific areas and approaches where IEO may have a comparative advantage thus avoiding duplicating the efforts of other agencies that specialize in capacity development;
 - Involvement of research institutions and/or think tanks from the South in IEO's work, for example by commissioning background papers, developing long-term links and potentially 'framework' contracts. This could reduce the cost of evaluations, improve the information-base (particularly on the country context), require less travel by IEO staff (thus facilitating work-life balance) and, last, but not least, promote evaluation capacity-building through learning-by-doing.

Annex 14: Global thematic evaluations conducted by the IEO since 2012

Evaluation of the UNDP Strategic Plan and Global and Regional Programmes	2017
Joint Assessment of the Institutional Effectiveness of UNDP	2017
Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Anti-corruption and Addressing Drivers of Corruption	2016
Evaluation of UNDP support to disability-inclusive development	2016
Evaluation of the UNDP contribution to mine action	2015
Joint Evaluation of the Small Grants Programme by GEF/UNDP	2015
Evaluation of the UNDP contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment	2015
Evaluation of the Contribution of the Global and Regional Human Development Reports to Public Policy Processes	2015
Evaluation of the role of UNDP in supporting national achievement of the Millennium Development Goals	2015
Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to South-South and Triangular Cooperation (2008-2011)	2013
Evaluation of UNDP Strategic Plan 2008-2013	2013
Evaluation of UNDP Support to Conflict-Affected Countries in the Context of UN Peace Operations	2013
Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Poverty Reduction	2013
Evaluation of UNDP contribution to strengthening electoral systems and processes	2012
Evaluation of UNDP Partnership with Global Funds and Philanthropic Foundations	2012

Note: Global thematic evaluations conducted by the IEO can be found at: <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/evaluations/thematic-evaluations.shtml>.

Annex 15: UNDP programme countries covered by ADRs and ICPEs



102

UNDP country programmes
assessed by ADRs/ICPEs
since 2002

Africa

- Angola
- Benin
- Botswana
- Burkina Faso
- Cameroon
- Comoros
- Congo
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Equatorial Guinea
- Ethiopia
- Gabon
- Ghana
- Kenya
- Liberia
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Mali
- Mauritania
- Mozambique
- Namibia
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Rwanda
- Sao Tome and Principe
- Senegal
- Seychelles
- Sierra Leone
- Togo
- Uganda
- United Republic of Tanzania
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

Arab States

- Algeria
- Djibouti
- Egypt
- Iraq
- Jordan
- Kuwait
- Libya
- Morocco
- Somalia
- Sudan
- Syria
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- United Arab Emirates
- Yemen

Asia and the Pacific

- Afghanistan
- Bangladesh
- Bhutan
- Cambodia
- China
- Fiji
- India
- Indonesia
- Lao People's Democratic Republic
- Malaysia
- Maldives
- Mongolia
- Nepal
- Pakistan
- Papua New Guinea
- Philippines
- Sri Lanka
- Thailand
- Timor-Leste
- Viet Nam

Europe and the CIS

- Albania
- Armenia
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Georgia
- Kyrgyzstan
- Moldova
- Montenegro
- Serbia
- Tajikistan
- Ukraine
- Uzbekistan

Latin America and the Caribbean

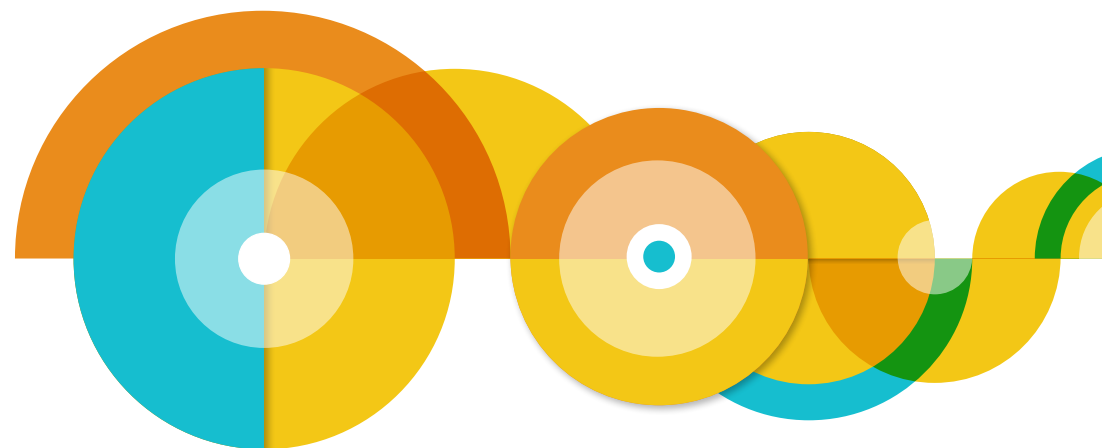
- Argentina
- Barbados
- Brazil
- Chile
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Cuba
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- El Salvador
- Guatemala
- Guyana
- Honduras
- Jamaica
- Mexico
- Nicaragua
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Uruguay
- Venezuela

Endnotes

- ¹ UNDP Evaluation Policy, DP/2016/23, paragraph 26.
- ² UNDP integrated resources plan and integrated budget estimates, 2018-2021, DP/2017/39, paragraph 22.
- ³ The evaluations of UNDP's contributions to anti-corruption and addressing drivers of corruption, and to disability-inclusive development, as well as the joint assessment of UNDP's institutional effectiveness were presented to the Executive Board in the first regular and annual sessions in 2017. They are not included in this report as they were fully detailed in the 2016 Annual Report on Evaluation.
- ⁴ See: <http://new.undp.org/>.
- ⁵ See: <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/evaluations/thematic/gender.shtml>.
- ⁶ Completed decentralized evaluations between 2014 and 2017 had 9,558 recommendations and 9,349 management responses (98 percent). These were accompanied by 10,397 key actions; 52 percent had been completed, 21 percent were initiated or ongoing without a due date, 8 percent had not yet been initiated, and 15 percent were overdue. Four percent were no longer applicable.
- ⁷ See: <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/nec2017/>.
- ⁸ Decentralized evaluations are commissioned by UNDP units at the headquarters, regional and country office levels.
- ⁹ The UNDP Administrator's 2017 report details core and non-core fund utilization of \$4.5 billion
- ¹⁰ The 2016 Annual Report on Evaluation reported \$19.85 million being spent on evaluation, 0.44 percent of total core and non-core budget expenditure of \$4.48 billion at the time the 2017 Annual Report was prepared.
- ¹¹ Overall M&E spending recorded through results-oriented annual reporting was \$56,698,292 during 2017.
- ¹² Proportional staff costs at regional and headquarters levels, and regional and headquarters evaluation costs.
- ¹³ Evaluation Resource Centre data presented to the informal UNDP Executive Board meeting on 25 May 2017.
- ¹⁴ Changes included new evaluations added to plans, evaluations deleted and completion date changes.
- ¹⁵ Variance in evaluation numbers, budgets, types and average evaluation budgets can be seen in Annexes 3 to 9.
- ¹⁶ Evaluation Resource Centre data as of 31 January 2018; the planned budget is \$15,486,783.
- ¹⁷ The Bureau for Policy and Programme Support completed nine evaluations in 2017; UNV, three evaluations; and UNCDF, two evaluations.
- ¹⁸ Figures differ from the 2016 Annual Report on Evaluation to reflect evaluations planned for 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016 that were completed or uploaded to the Evaluation Resource Centre in 2017, following the finalization of the 2016 report on 31 January 2017. The 2016 report noted 292 evaluations in 2014, 266 in 2015 and 256 in 2016.
- ¹⁹ UNDP Evaluation Policy, DP/2016/23, paragraph 31.
- ²⁰ In 2016, the quality assessment process was not undertaken for UNDAF evaluations, country programme evaluations commissioned by country offices or thematic evaluations.
- ²¹ A further 80 evaluations for 2016 were also quality assessed in 2017, taking the total number of assessed 2016 evaluations to 250.
- ²² 2015 Annual Report on Evaluation, 2016 Annual Report on Evaluation, DP/2016/13 and DP/2017/20.
- ²³ See: http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/quality-assessment/DE_QA_2016.pdf.
- ²⁴ Participant numbers include all country office staff, M&E focal points, regional participants and headquarters staff acting as facilitators.
- ²⁵ See: <https://erc.undp.org/>.
- ²⁶ The UNDP Administrators report for 2017, details core and non-core fund utilization of \$4.5 billion.
- ²⁷ Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its first regular session 2018, DP/2018/9.
- ²⁸ UNDP Evaluation Policy, DP/2016/23, paragraph 46.
- ²⁹ UNDP integrated resources plan and integrated budget estimates, 2018-2021, DP/2017/39.
- ³⁰ Annex 2 shows the full details of the corporate and thematic evaluations submitted to the Executive Board at the first regular session in January 2018.
- ³¹ Two of the 17 evaluations, on programmes in Mexico and the Republic of the Congo, have already been completed.
- ³² References to Kosovo are in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).
- ³³ Data are from the Evaluation Resource Centre as of 1 February 2018. They represent the number of evaluations planned and completed for a given year. Figures for 2014, 2015 and 2016 may differ from the 2016 Annual Report on Evaluation as additional evaluations have been completed following the finalization of that report.
- ³⁴ Data are from the Evaluation Resource Centre as of 1 February 2018. Figures represent planned budgets and not expenditure for evaluation as not all expenditure figures have been recorded.
- ³⁵ Based on evaluation numbers and budget data in the Evaluation Resource Centre as of 1 February 2018.
- ³⁶ Staff dedicated to M&E on a full-time basis as reported by country offices and regional bureaus.



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