

## BUILDING AND STRENGTHENING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT (GEWE)



Photo: UN Women

### Lessons from the following evaluations:

(all evaluations available at <https://gate.unwomen.org/>)

**2015**

Evaluation of the UNJPG in Uganda.



**2017**

Final Evaluation of the Wanawake Wanaweza project phase I, Tanzania.



**2017**

Country Portfolio Evaluation of Sudan.



**2017**

Country Portfolio Evaluation of Malawi.



**2018**

Country Portfolio Evaluation of Rwanda.



**2015**

Country Portfolio Evaluation of Mozambique.



**2015**

Mid Term Evaluation of Gender and Agriculture Programme, Malawi.



**2017**

Mid Term Evaluation of UN Women Strategic Note, Kenya.



**2017**

Final Project Evaluation - Engaging Women in Preventing and Countering Extremist Violence in Kenya.



**2018**

Country Portfolio Evaluation of Rwanda.



**2016**

Country Portfolio Evaluation of Tanzania.



**2018**

Country Portfolio Evaluation of South Sudan.



**2018**

Final Evaluation of JP "Advancing and Sustaining Gender Equality Gains" in Rwanda.



**2016**

Country Portfolio Evaluation of Ethiopia.



## 1. WHY ARE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IMPORTANT?



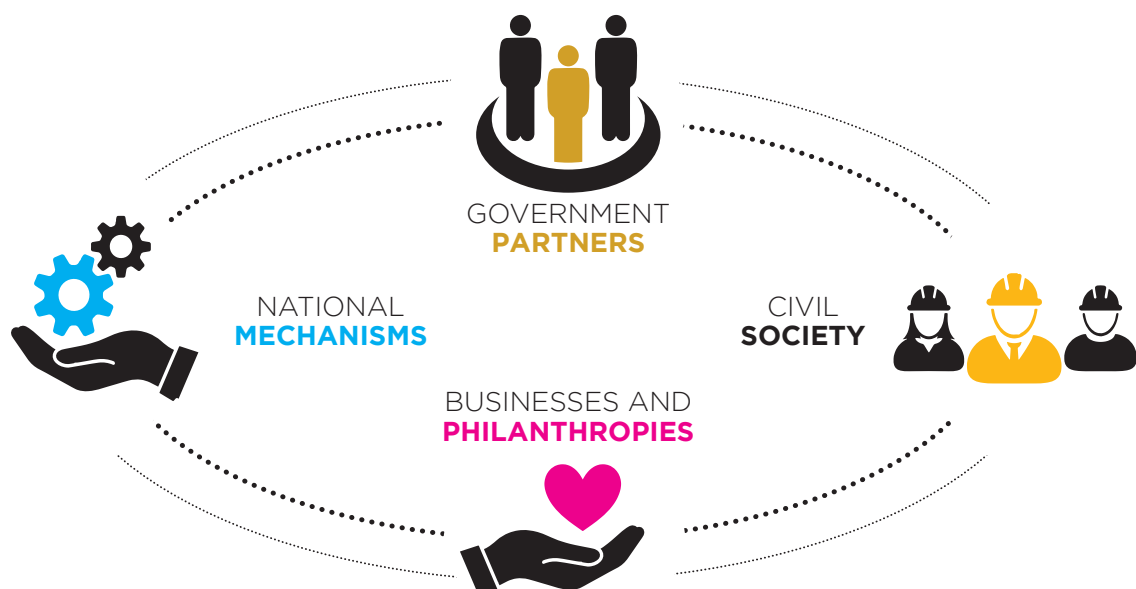
Photo: UN Women/ Faith Bwibo

UN Women envisions a world where societies are free of gender discrimination, and women and girls are empowered to lead the change they want to see. But given the massive challenges surrounding GEWE UN Women cannot make it happen alone. It is imperative to form strategic alliances within and outside the UN family, to jointly advocate with Governments, Civil Society Organizations, and the private sector to improve GEWE.

It is necessary to strengthen collaboration across sectors of governments, the UN, donors, and critical

components of civil society, including women themselves. Bringing strong government sectors like health, education, and finance together with gender and social welfare needs to be done to leverage their strength, expertise, and funding. Evaluations reveal that UN Women's programmatic work and its partnerships with a wide range of duty-bearers have led to positive outcomes and enhanced its strategic positioning as the UN agency with expertise and authority to convene a wide range of partners around GEWE issues.

### UN Women key partners include the following



## 2. WHICH APPROACHES HAVE PROVEN EFFECTIVE FOR BUILDING AND STRENGTHENING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR GEWE?



Photo: UN Women/ Carlos Ngeleka

**A mapping of partner mandates and portfolios in the area of GEWE is the starting point for understanding the partnership landscape. UN Women should leverage its coordination mandate and convene partners who engage on similar themes to plan and strategize on how all stakeholders fit into their programmatic work. This approach will enable UN Women to establish and support platforms rather than taking the lead or doing direct implementation. Fostering and building these relationships and networks would also help increase UN Women's visibility in the region.**

The evidence from UN Women evaluations strongly supports the fact that UN Women has the requisite

technical gender expertise and partner relationship to advocate and promote changes to advance gender equality. The agency is uniquely positioned to convene, and influence key actors to push forward GEWE efforts in East and Southern Africa.

This comparative advantage is a result of the extensive work that country offices have consistently carried out to establish effective partnerships with significant stakeholders, including the national government, women's machinery, academia, and other relevant organizations.

As partners need to be equipped to deliver on GEWE, training and capacity building are key to building long term competencies (skills, attitudes, and behaviors). This should be accompanied by providing ongoing support through guidance, mentoring, and networking. UN Women needs to work with Implementing Partners to reduce their dependency, while broadening and enlarging its partnership base to obtain a stronger voice and better access its target groups. Partnerships with civil society organizations, in particular, are essential to better reach not only smaller women's networks but also individual women at the grassroots levels.

Results from the capacity assessments that are done for each selected partner need to be addressed adequately during implementation. UN Women should ensure to include activities for addressing identified capacity gaps from the start of the programmes to avoid issues piling up towards the end of the interventions.

### Key steps for partnership development:



CLARIFY -  
PARTNERSHIPS ARE  
ABOUT CREATING  
VALUE BUT REQUIRE  
RESOURCES



IDENTIFY AND MAP  
PARTNER MANDATES  
AND PORTFOLIOS  
AROUND GEWE



BUILD RELATIONSHIP  
AND TRUST, IDENTIFY  
JOINT PROBLEMS



MANAGE AND  
MAINTAIN  
PARTNERSHIPS



### 3. HOW CAN UN WOMEN IMPROVE BUILDING AND STRENGTHENING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR GEWE?

**UN Women needs to streamline its partnership involvement, as having many partners appeared to lead to high transaction costs, especially in the case of CSOs with low capacity. Before signing agreements with any prospective CSO partners, UN Women offices should uniformly use the Capacity Assessment Checklist Tool and identify the best-qualified partners with the most relevant existing potential and expertise to guarantee effective programme implementation.**

Evaluations have confirmed the importance for UN Women to broaden partnerships and build strategic alliances with organizations from various backgrounds and improve coordination and joint advocacy work. This will help in both obtaining a stronger voice and reaching the ‘furthest first’ in the spirit of *Leaving No One Behind*. Other lessons include the need for ongoing partner capacity building and awareness-raising, improved focus on few selected intervention areas, and increased complementarity with interventions of other cooperating partners.

Lastly, UN Women should continue strengthening its role in the UN Family to increase its effectiveness in gender mainstreaming and coordination of GEWE

work across the UN system. The new generation of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks requires UN agencies to put gender equality at the heart of programming. This provides a unique opportunity for UN Women to systematically lead GEWE initiatives including the work of Gender Thematic Groups.



Photo: UN Women/ Tumaini Ochieng

#### “Leaving No One Behind”



Independent Evaluation and Audit Services (IEAS) Independent Evaluation Service (IES)