



Stock-Taking Exercise on Policies and Guidance of UN Agencies in Support of Evaluation of Social and Environmental Considerations

Vol I Main Report

This stock-taking exercise was undertaken by the UNEG Working Group on Integrating Environmental and Social Impact into Evaluations in 2020. It was approved as a UNEG Task Force publication as follow up to the UNEG AGM 2020.

The report was prepared by David Todd, consultant, under the guidance of the Working Group.

See also: Stock-taking exercise on policies and guidance of UN agencies in support of evaluation of social and environmental considerations - Vol II Annex

Table of contents

Vol I Main Report

UNEG Member Agencies	3
Acronyms.....	5
Executive Summary	6
1 Introduction and Methodology.....	8
2 Coverage of Social and Environmental Considerations in Evaluation Policy Documents	9
3 Coverage of Social and Environmental Considerations in Documents Providing Evaluation Guidance.....	22
4 Findings from a Survey of UNEG Member Agency Evaluation Offices.....	34
5 Initial Suggestions for Potential UNEG Guidance.....	40

Vol II: Annex Source Material from Evaluation Guidance Documents

UNEG Member Agencies

CTBTO	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization Preparatory Commission
DGACM	United Nations Department for General Assembly and Conference Management
DGC	United Nations Department of Global Communications
DPO	United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICC	International Criminal Court
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ITC	International Trade Centre
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OIOS	United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services
OPCW	Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
PAHO	Pan-American Health Organisation
PBSO	United Nations Peace Building Support Office - Financing for Peacebuilding
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDPA	United Nations Department of Political Affairs
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNECLAC	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESCWA	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNICRI	United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UNOCT	United Nations Counter-Terrorism Office

UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization
Observers	
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
SDG-Fund	SDG Achievement Fund
World Bank	World Bank Independent Evaluation Group (IEG)

Acronyms¹

EO	Evaluation Office
GE	Gender Equality
HR	Human Rights
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
WG	(UNEG) Working Group

¹ Acronyms of UN agencies have been provided separately in the list of UNEG member agencies.

Executive Summary

1. This review was conducted through analysis of United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) member agencies' documents on evaluation policy and guidance, and administration of a survey to agency Evaluation Offices (EOs). It is considered that these sources produced sufficient data to construct a sound overview of the current situation with regard to availability of guidance on social and environmental considerations and to indicate where additional support could be useful. The evidence base also enabled an assessment of the extent to which UNEG member agency EOs themselves express the need for additional guidance documentation.

2. The following bullet points summarise findings and areas for initial recommendations arising from the evidence assembled and suggest a potential path forward, subject to inputs of members.

Findings

- In existing guidance, social considerations are more widely covered than environmental.
- Despite this, social considerations are only partially covered. Gender receives the strongest attention. Human Rights (HR) tend to be bundled with gender in documents and are often not addressed in as much detail.
- Other social considerations have received little attention.
- Guidance on environmental considerations is extremely limited.
- A broad range of agencies increasingly realise that their activities may have unanticipated environmental effects.
- There is heightened awareness of the interactions between social and environmental factors, driven in part by the need to interpret and respond to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Individual agencies have not been able to produce guidance on all of the social and environmental considerations that they need to address.
- Where detailed guidance has been produced by individual agencies, this is often focused on their own mandates and institutional systems and does not meet the needs of the broader UN evaluation community.
- UNEG advice on gender and human rights has been widely consulted and used and is highly regarded.
- The advantages of such UNEG guidance over that developed by individual agencies include:
 - Institutional neutrality – evaluation advice is not embedded in a specific institutional context
 - Can be more detailed than most agencies will produce

- Can address needs identified by a broad range of agencies.

Areas for potential recommendations for the Working Group to advance its work

3. Most agency EOs feel the need for more guidance – particularly on environmental aspects, but also on social considerations (notably outside of areas covered by gender and human rights documents).
4. There are specific social issues, which could be addressed by future UNEG guidance, such as:
 - Disability
 - Vulnerability
 - Poverty
 - Indigenous People.
 - Guidance on environmental considerations is regarded by UN EOs (and assessed by independent document review) as inadequate for current and emerging needs.
 - There are specific environmental issues that could be addressed by UNEG Guidance, such as:
 - Climate Change
 - Environmental impacts of development projects
 - How to minimise environmental footprints of interventions
 - Environmental risks.
5. Overall, although there are specific issues (listed above) for which UNEG could prepare guidance documents, the over-arching need emerging from documentary analysis and survey responses of UNEG member agencies is for a comprehensive document providing advice on how to evaluate the interactions among social and environmental considerations within the framework of UN activities in support the SDGs.
6. This would be a complex and demanding exercise, particularly since UNEG is dependent on voluntary inputs of its evaluation professionals, usually above and beyond their regular duties. Further, it would require additional funding and human resources in order to deliver a high-quality product within a reasonable timeframe.
7. Pending such an exercise, some smaller, more focussed guidance documents could also be supported and produced to meet some of the specific needs identified above. These could be embedded as sections of the larger document as this is developed, to avoid duplication and wasted human and financial resources.

1 Introduction and Methodology

8. The UNEG Working Group (WG) on Integrating Environmental and Social Impact into Evaluations was established during the 2019 UNEG Annual General Meeting in Nairobi, Kenya. In line with the UN system-wide effort to move towards a common approach to environmental and social standards for UN programming, the objective of this WG is to establish a common UN-wide approach, norms and standards for incorporating environmental and social considerations into all evaluations (whether or not the evaluand is an environmental program). To achieve this end, the WG will develop a system-wide guidance on this topic to guide the evaluations of interested UNEG member organizations. This stock-taking exercise is the first step towards this objective. It looks at the extent to which UN agencies reflect environmental and social considerations in their policies and guidance for evaluation and at the potential demand for additional guidance in these fields.

9. This review was conducted through analysis of UNEG member agencies' documents on evaluation policy and guidance, and administration of a survey to agency EOs. It is considered that these sources produced sufficient data to construct a sound overview of the current situation with regard to availability of guidance on social and environmental considerations and to indicate where additional support could be useful. The evidence base also enabled an assessment of the extent to which UNEG member agency EOs themselves express the need for additional guidance documentation.

10. Section 2 of the report explores evaluation policy documents, Section 3 covers guidance documents, manuals and, to a limited extent, web-based advisory notes. Section 4 summarises responses to the survey from 29 EOs. Section 5 provides an overview of key findings. Source material from evaluation guidance documents has been collated in a separate Annex document.

2 Coverage of Social and Environmental Considerations in Evaluation Policy Documents

2.1 Introduction

11. This section analyses the scope and distribution of coverage of social and environmental considerations in UNEG member agency evaluation policy documents. The documents were located by a web search commencing at each agency’s Evaluation Office site. A total of 40 documents was analysed. These referred to 39 out of the 42 UNEG member agencies reviewed. UNEG was excluded and two agencies had no publicly available evaluation policy. Two relevant documents were found for one agency.

12. A scoping review of the policy documents showed that they cover “social and environmental considerations” at varying levels of detail. To take account of this, a scale was developed, which assesses coverage of each area for each agency. This scale is shown in Table 1 below. For consistency, the same scale is used to assess coverage in UNEG agency evaluation guidance documents in Section 3 below.

Table 1: Level of Coverage of Social and Environmental Considerations In UNEG Agency Evaluation Policy Documents	
Level	Definition
Nil	Consideration is not mentioned at all, or only in passing phrases, with no follow-up.
Low	Consideration is mentioned, with limited follow-up, such as reference to external documents.
Medium	Consideration is mentioned, and some explanation is given of appropriate evaluation methods to address it.
High	Consideration is mentioned and detailed explanation is given of appropriate evaluation methods to address it – to such an extent that the document could serve as a “standalone guide” on the topic addressed.

2.2 Overview of Coverage of Social and Environmental Considerations

13. Using the scale of coverage levels presented in Table 1 above, the following overview analysis has been prepared for the total of 40 documents.

Table 2: Coverage of Social and Environmental Considerations in UNEG Agency Evaluation Policy Documents					
Level of Coverage	Nil	Low	Medium	High	Total
Social Considerations	23	15	2	0	40
Environmental Considerations	36	3	1	0	40
Total	59	18	3	0	80

14. As shown in Table 2 above, there is more coverage of social than of environmental considerations. However, even for social aspects, there is no coverage or only a low level in the great

majority of evaluation policy documents. Environmental considerations are rarely mentioned at all in these important resources.

2.3 Analysis of Social Considerations Mentioned in Evaluation Policy Documents

15. This review did not define in advance exactly what should be included as “social considerations.” This has been empirically determined on the basis of detailed examination of the 40 documents. An overview of this analysis is shown in Table 3 below. Overall, gender is the topic, which receives by far the most references in evaluation policy documents. Human Rights is the topic receiving the second highest level of attention. Few other issues achieve more than one mention.

Table 3: Specific Social Considerations Mentioned in Evaluation Policy Documents				
Level of Coverage of Social Considerations	High (0)	Medium (2)	Low (15)	Total
Specific Social Consideration		Gender 2 <i>Of which:</i> Gender Equality (GE) (1) Empowerment (1)	Gender² 17 <i>Of which:</i> GE(12) Empowerment (2) Gender disaggregated data (2) Mainstreaming (1)	Gender 19 <i>Of which:</i> GE (13) Empowerment (3) Gender disaggregated data (2) Mainstreaming (1)
			HR 6	HR 6
			Reduced inequality/equity/exclusion (3)	
			Diversity/non-discrimination (3)	
			Health and well-being (2)	
			Peace and justice (2)	
			Socio-economic benefits (1)	
			HIV AIDS (1)	
			Youth (1)	
			Age (1)	
			Children (1)	
			Social Protection (1)	

16. Table 3 above shows that, with the exception of Gender and HR, advice on social considerations is limited in evaluation policy documents. Even where these two main topics are mentioned, this is at a low level. Other topics appearing in policy documents are often related to the organization’s specific mandate. Analysis of the content of policy documents shows that they are primarily concerned with how the Evaluation Office can help deliver on the institution’s mandate, with particular attention to internal structures, roles and responsibilities. Overall, they have limited focus on the technical aspects of evaluation or on what areas will be evaluated.






2.4 Analysis of Environmental Considerations Mentioned in Evaluation Policy Documents




² In some policy documents, several social considerations are mentioned, including sub-divisions of gender-based approaches. So, the number of mentions can be greater than the number of reports in a column.







17. As shown in Table 2 above, environmental considerations are addressed in only four evaluation policy documents. Furthermore, even in these documents, the coverage is generally at a low level of detail. In the three policies with a low level of coverage, topics mentioned are environmental sustainability/long term effects (2), and the use of geographic coordinates and remote sensing as evaluation methods (1). The one policy document, which provides a medium level of detail, mentions the gathering of information concerning climate adaptation and risk management, and more generally results contributing towards raising the capacity for environmental prediction.



2.5 Overall Scoping of Extent of Coverage of Social and Environmental Considerations in UN Agency evaluation policy documents






18. Table 4 below provides an overall scoping of the coverage of social and environmental considerations in evaluation policy documents of UNEG member agencies. It includes those agencies, for which no relevant documents were found, which could enable updating at a later stage.

Table 4: Scoping of extent of mentions of social and environmental considerations in evaluation policies							
Organisation	Main Field of operation	Evaluation Document	Type of Document	Extent of Coverage of Social Consideration	Social Aspects Covered	Extent of Coverage of Environmental Consideration	Environmental Aspects Covered
1: CTBTO		No Evaluation Policy found.					
2: DPKO	Peace Keeping	https://research.un.org/en/peacekeeping-community	Evaluation Policy only as web page	Nil	-	Nil	-
3: Economic Commission for Africa	Economic support	 UNECA Evaluation Policy 2014.pdf	Evaluation Policy	Low	GE listed as one of Performance Management criteria	Low	Environmental sustainability listed as one of Performance Management criteria
4: ECLAC	Economic support	 S1700819_en CEPAL.pdf	Evaluation Policy and Strategy, October 2017	Nil	-	Nil	-
5: ESCAP	Economic and Social Policy	 ESCAP-Monitoring-and-Evaluation--Pol	M&E Policy and Guidelines 2017	Low	References and Annexes ESCAP Tool 9 Mainstreaming gender and human rights in evaluation. Gender and human rights mainstreaming to be included in Evaluation ToR.	Nil	-
6: ESCWA. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and Pacific	Economic and Social Policy	 escwa-evaluation_policy_online.pdf	Evaluation Policy 2017	Nil	-	Nil	-
7: FAO	Food and Agriculture	 Charter for the FAO office of evaluation_	Charter document	Nil	-	Nil	-


8: GEF	Global Environment	 gef-me-policy-2019_2.pdf	M&E Policy	Low	Under: Minimum Requirement 1: Design of Monitoring and Evaluation Plans - SMART indicators for results and implementation linked appropriately to the GEF results frameworks, and including the following: — Socioeconomic co-benefits and sex-disaggregated / gender-sensitive indicators (where relevant) . Evaluation specifics largely responsibility of agencies.	Low	Refers to use of geographic coordinates as indicators and use of remote sensing as data source. Applicable GEF indicators on global environmental benefits identified at each replenishment cycle
9: IAEA -OIOS	Atomic Energy	 oios_evaluation_policy.pdf	Evaluation Policy. 2011 version.	Nil	-	Nil	-
10: ICAO	Civil Aviation	Policy as web document only	Evaluation Policy	Nil	-	Nil	-
11: IFAD	Agriculture	 EB-2011-102-R-7-Rev-3 IFAD.pdf	Revised Evaluation Policy	Nil	-	Nil	-
12: ILO	Labour and employment issues	 wcms_603265 ILO.pdf	Evaluation Policy 2017	Low	For <i>Gender equality and non-discrimination</i> . Evaluations will ensure that there is appropriate consideration of gender and non-discrimination issues in their design, analyses and reporting, while also addressing UNEG gender-related norms and standards. (P38)	Nil	-
13: IMO	Maritime issues	Website says Policy and Manual under development.					





14: IOM	Migration	 iom_evaluation_policy_in_266_external_	Evaluation Policy 2018	Nil	-	Nil	-
15: ITC	Trade	 ITC-Evaluation-Policy-2015-Final.pdf	Evaluation Policy 2015	Nil	-	Nil	-
16: JIU	Inspection	Mandate summarised on website only.	Mandate	Nil	-	Nil	-
17: MDGF Achievement Fund	Support country progress towards MDGs	 ME policy and strategy edited Aug1	M&E Policy and Strategy. 2012 update	Nil	-	Nil	-
18: OCHA	Humanitarian Affairs	 Evaluation Policy OCHA.pdf	Policy Instruction Evaluations. Revised 2012	Low	Mention of evaluation outcome of: Greater understanding of the effects of humanitarian intervention on the lives of women, men, girls and boys affected by disasters. P2.	Nil	-
19: OHCHR	HR	OHCHR EVALUATION FUNCTION STRATEGIC VISION AND EVALUATION POLICY. No date.	Vision and Policy Document	Low	Mentions: Human rights-based development: Gender equality and protection and promotion of women's human rights as Guiding Principles	Nil	-
20: OIOS - DESA	Internal Oversight	 2012 Aug1 - OIOS Evaluation Policy Jul	Evaluation Policy. 2012	Nil	-	Nil	-
21: OPCW	Chemical Weapons	 OPCW Evaluation Policy (2012).pdf	Evaluation Policy	Nil	-	Nil	-

22: UNAIDS	Aids	 UNAIDS_PCB44_UN AIDS-Evaluation-Pol	Evaluation Policy. 2019	Low	Guiding principles of evaluation in UNAIDS are based on: ▪ <i>The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.</i> Five SDGs are most relevant to the AIDS response: good health and wellbeing (SDG 3); reduced inequalities (SDG 10); gender equality (SDG 5); peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16); and partnerships for the goals (SDG 17). Greater meaningful engagement of communities, civil society and people living with HIV, women and youth groups and key populations to realize their right to participation in decision-making processes that affect their lives, is strongly promoted. Human rights and gender equality	Nil	-
23: UNCDF	Capital Development	Included in UNDP Evaluation Policy	Included in UNDP Evaluation Policy	Low	Governed by UNDP Evaluation Policy, which mentions that evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality.	Nil	-
24: UNCTAD	Trade and Development	 osg_EvaluationPolic y2011_enUNCTAD.p	Evaluation Policy 2011	Low	Women's Empowerment and gender equality	Nil	-

25: UNDP	Development. Policy includes UNOPS, UNV, UNCDF and Population Fund	 UNDP_2019_29_ Eval policy.pdf	Evaluation Policy 2019	Low	Mentions: evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality, within a human rights-based approach.	Nil	-
26: UNECE	Economics	 UNECE_Evaluation_Policy_October_2014	Evaluation Policy 2014	Nil	-	Nil	-
27: UNEG							
28: UNEP	Environment	 UNEP Evaluation Policy 2016.pdf	Evaluation Policy	Nil	-	Nil	-
29: UNESCO	Education, Science and Culture	 UNESCO253907eng.pdf	Evaluation Policy	Low	Human rights, gender equality and equity listed as evaluation principles and standards.	Nil	-
30: UNFPA	Population	 Eval_Policy_FINAL_WEB UNFPA.pdf	Evaluation Policy 2019	Low	It reports that: Evaluations abide by universally shared values of equity, justice, gender equality and respect for diversity . The UNEG Guidelines on Integration of HR and GE in Evaluation are also part of this guiding principle. Also: evaluation teams must demonstrate relevant expertise and should have gender and geographical balance.	Nil	-

31: UN Habitat	Human settlements	 UN-Habitat-evaluation-policy-2013.pdf	Evaluation Policy	Low	States: <i>Impact evaluations</i> attempt to determine changes that are attributable to the intervention. They determine a range of effects of programmes/project activities including long-term effects as well as effects on people or environment outside immediate target group/area.	Low.	States: <i>Impact evaluations</i> attempt to determine changes that are attributable to the intervention. They determine a range of effects of programmes/project activities including long-term effects as well as effects on people or environment outside immediate target group/area.
32: UNHCR	Refugees	https://www.unhcr.org/3d99a0f74	Evaluation Policy	Low	Evaluation teams shall also demonstrate the required mix of evaluation specific competencies, professional background and expertise, and adequate knowledge, inter alia, of forced displacement; protection; rights based programming; and age, gender and diversity approaches and accountability to persons of concern; (iii) Evaluation Managers shall ensure that the views of all Relevant stakeholders, including refugees, stateless persons and other persons of concern, are taken into account in evaluation methodologies and related data collection and analysis approaches and tools. This should be done	Nil	-

					as systematically as possible throughout an evaluation, and in a manner as sensitive as possible to age, gender and diversity		
33: UNICEF	Children	 Revised Evaluation Policy of UNICEF.pdf	Evaluation Policy	Low	<p>The evaluation policy is also aligned with the Charter of the UN and humanitarian principles, with a commitment to human rights and gender equality. Evaluation practice follows UNEG guidance on integrating human rights and gender equality. Key stakeholders, including girls and boys (when appropriate), women, marginalized groups, national partners and Governments, are engaged at relevant stages of the evaluation. Evaluation methodology explicitly addresses issues of gender equality and the empowerment of women.</p> <p>Key stakeholders, including excluded groups and, as appropriate, children and young people, should be engaged at relevant points, starting with the design phase.</p> <p>Using gender and human rights- responsive methods in all evaluations to</p>	Nil	-

					understand impacts on all, including the most disadvantaged.		
34: UNIDO	Industrial Development	 Evaluation_Policy_D GB-2018-08 UNIDO.	Evaluation Policy 2018	Nil	-	Nil	-
35: UNODC	Drugs and Crime	 UNODC_Evaluation _Policy.pdf	Evaluation Policy 2015	Nil	-	Nil	-
36: UNRWA	Palestinian Refugees	 UNRWA Evaluation Policy 2016.pdf	Evaluation Policy Document	Nil	-	Nil	-
37: UNV		Evaluation Policy is under UNDP	UNDP Policy	Nil	-	Nil	-
38: UNW	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)	 UNW_2012_12_E.pd f	Evaluation Policy 2012	Medium. High on one specific area. On Gender.	Evaluation in the Entity is defined as a systematic and impartial assessment that provides credible and reliable evidence-based information about the extent to which an intervention has resulted in progress (or the lack thereof) towards intended and/or unintended results regarding gender equality and the empowerment of women. Para 7 details what UNW evaluation should cover for gender equality and power of women. Also: at the global level, system-wide evaluation will be used to	Nil	-

					address accountability gaps identified with respect to gender equality and the empowerment of women in the UN system. Refers to another UNW document: <i>A Manager's Guide to GE and HR Responsive Evaluation.</i>		
39: WFP	Food	 WFP-0000003989 POLICY 2016-2021.pdf	Evaluation Policy	Nil	-	Nil	-
39: WFP	Food	 WFP-0000024368 POLICY ISSUES.pdf	Board document on evaluation policy issues	Low	Evaluation should address: gender, protection and accountability to affected populations UNEG guidance is applied in all WFP's evaluations.	Nil	-
40: WHO	Health	 WHO Evaluation Policy 2018.pdf	Evaluation Policy	Low	The universally recognized values and principles of human rights and gender equality need to be integrated into all stages of an evaluation.	Nil	-
41: WIPO	Intellectual Property	 evaluation_policy_2010 WIPO.pdf	Revised Evaluation Policy	Nil	-	Nil	-
42: WMO	Meteorology	M&E Manual 2012	M&E Manual	Medium	Detailed presentation and discussion of Key Performance Indicators for use in both Monitoring and Evaluation. Key Performance indicators include:	Medium	Detailed presentation and discussion of Key Performance Indicators for use in both Monitoring and Evaluation. Key Performance indicators include:

				<p>Enhanced capabilities of members to deliver and improve access to high quality weather, climate, water and related environmental predictions, information and services in response to users' needs and to enable their use in decision-making by relevant societal sectors.</p> <p>Key Outcome 1.1: Improved access to seamless weather, climate, water and related-environmental products and services (e.g., warnings, forecasts and supporting information).</p> <p>KPI 1.1.1: Analyses showing the social and economic benefits of the improved services</p> <p>Key Outcome 3.2: Climate information and prediction products for climate adaptation and risk management are improved</p>	<p>Enhanced capabilities of members to deliver and improve access to high quality weather, climate, water and related environmental predictions, information and services in response to users' needs and to enable their use in decision-making by relevant societal sectors.</p> <p>Key Outcome 1.1: Improved access to seamless weather, climate, water and related-environmental products and services (e.g., warnings, forecasts and supporting information).</p> <p>KPI 1.1.1: Analyses showing the social and economic benefits of the improved services</p> <p>Key Outcome 3.2: Climate information and prediction products for climate adaptation and risk management are improved</p>
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3 Coverage of Social and Environmental Considerations in Documents Providing Evaluation Guidance

3.1 Introduction

19. This section analyses the scope and distribution of coverage of social and environmental considerations in a broad range of UNEG member agency documents offering evaluation guidance directly or indirectly (e.g., through reporting on assessments of agency evaluation practices). The documents were located by a web search commencing at each agency’s Evaluation Office. A total of 59 documents was located and analysed. These have been produced by 35 out of the 42 UNEG member agencies reviewed. No relevant documents were found for seven agencies, so it was not possible to assess the approach adopted by those agencies towards social and environmental considerations. Many of the remaining 35 agencies have produced more than one document, which looked potentially relevant. Although it is probable that some relevant documents have not been accessed, the range of documents reviewed is believed to offer a sound basis to develop a preliminary understanding of the topic under review.

20. A scoping review of documents showed that they cover “social and environmental considerations” at varying levels of detail. To take account of this, a scale was developed, which assesses coverage of each area for each agency³. This scale is shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Level of Coverage of Social and Environmental Considerations In UNEG Agency Guidance Documents	
Level	Definition
Nil	Consideration is not mentioned at all, or only in passing phrases, with no follow-up.
Low	Consideration is mentioned, with limited follow-up, such as reference to external documents.
Medium	Consideration is mentioned, and some explanation is given of appropriate evaluation methods to address it.
High	Consideration is mentioned and detailed explanation is given of appropriate evaluation methods to address it – to such an extent that the document could serve as a “standalone guide” on the topic addressed.

3.2 Overview of Coverage of Social and Environmental Considerations

21. Using the scale of coverage levels presented in Table 5 above, the following overview analysis (Table 6) has been prepared for the total of 59 documents reviewed.

³ For consistency, the same scale was adopted as that used to assess evaluation policy documents.

Table 6: Coverage of Social and Environmental Considerations in in UNEG Agency Guidance Documents

Level of Coverage	Nil	Low	Medium	High	Total
Social Considerations	18	13	16	12	59
Environmental Considerations	43	11	3	2	59
<i>Total</i>	61	24	19	14	118

22. As shown in Table 6 above, there is much more coverage of social than of environmental considerations. Broadly speaking, about two thirds of documents address social considerations to some extent, as against one third for those of the environment. Further, amongst documents addressing social issues the level of coverage is fairly evenly distributed amongst the three categories. This is not the case with regard to environmental considerations, for which coverage is heavily concentrated at a low level, with few outliers at medium or high level.

3.3 Analysis of Social Considerations Mentioned in Evaluation Guidance Documents

23. This review did not define in advance exactly what should be included as “social considerations.” This has been empirically determined on the basis of detailed examination of the 59 documents. An overview of this analysis is shown in Table 7 below. Overall, gender is the topic, which receives by far the most guidance. Human Rights is the topic receiving the second most attention. However, it should be noted that GE and HR are commonly “bundled” in UN guidance documents and that, in the case of evaluation advice, the coverage in these documents of HR often proves to be superficial compared with that of gender. Naturally, this is not the case for those agencies, which have a specific HR mandate, where guidance is more extensive.

Table 7: Specific Social Considerations Mentioned in Guidance Documents

Level of Coverage of Social Considerations	High (12)	Medium (16)	Low (13)	Total
Specific Social Consideration	Gender 14 <i>Of which:</i> GE (8) Mainstreaming (4) Empowerment (2)	Gender 16 <i>Of which:</i> GE (15) Mainstreaming (1)	Gender 8 <i>Of which:</i> GE (6) Mainstreaming (1) Empowerment (1)	Gender 36 <i>Of which:</i> GE (27) Mainstreaming (1) Empowerment (3)
	HR 5	HR 11	HR 4	HR 20
	Vulnerability 3	Social Safeguards 4	Poverty 4	
	Poverty 1	Youth 3	Vulnerability 2	
	HIV AIDS 1	Vulnerability 2	Youth 1	
		Equity 1	Equity 1	
		Socio-economic status 1	Education 1	
		Poverty 1	Cash Based Transfers 1	
		Social Justice 1	Socio-Economic Status 1	
		Decent Work 1	Sustainable livelihoods 1	
		Diversity 1	Social well-being 1	

		Disability 1	Discrimination 2	
From columns above, social considerations discussed in more than one document				
Gender 38	HR 20	Vulnerability 7	Poverty 6	Social Safeguards 4
Youth 4	Equity 2	Socio-Economic Status 2	Discrimination 2	

24. Table 7 above shows that, with the exception of Gender and HR, advice on social considerations remains limited in evaluation guidance documents. For example, specific guidance on the evaluation of poverty effects is available in only 6 of the 59 documents. In the case of Gender and HR, UNEG guidance documents have made an important contribution, being specifically referenced in 14 out of the 59 documents.

3.4 Analysis of Environmental Considerations Mentioned in Evaluation Guidance Documents

25. As shown in Table 6 above, environmental considerations are addressed in far fewer evaluation guidance documents than are social considerations. Furthermore, even in these documents, the coverage is generally at a low level of detail, in contrast to that of social considerations (particularly on gender) in many documents. Finally, as compared with the social sector, there is little coherence in the range of issues covered, with most only appearing in one document. Table 8 below shows the range of coverage.

Table 8: Specific Environmental Considerations Mentioned in Guidance Documents				
Level of Coverage of Environmental Considerations	High (2)	Medium (3)	Low (11)	
	Natural Resource Management 1	Minimise environmental footprint 2	Climate Change 3	
	Stress Reduction 1	Environmental safeguards 1	Environmental safeguards 3	
	Environmental safeguards 1	Align to different scales of environmental priority 1	Environmental change/impact 2	
	Environmental impacts 1	Climate Change 1	Follow GEF evaluation procedures 2	
	Adaptation 1		Natural Resource Management 1	
			Environmental sustainability 1	
			Resilience 1	
			Sustainable urban development 1	
			Environmental risks 1	
Number of topics addressed	5	4	9	

26. As shown in Table 8 above, there is minimal level of formal support for environmental considerations in UN agency evaluation guidance documents. This might be considered a weakness in the UN evaluation system, particularly given the prevalence of incorporation of climate change into the activities and mandate (formally or informally) of many agencies. As reported above, specific advice on evaluating Climate Change is provided in only 4 out of the 59 documents covered. There is only one specific mention of adaptation. A positive introduction by one agency, which might be considered of broader interest, is the requirement to assess under efficiency whether implementation was conducted in a manner, which minimised the environmental footprint of the intervention.

3.5 Overall Scoping of Extent of Coverage of Social and Environmental Considerations in UN Agency Guidance Documents

27. Table 9 (below) provides an overall scoping of the coverage of social and environmental considerations in guidance documents of UNEG member agencies. It includes those agencies, for which no relevant documents were found, which could enable updating as required.

Table 9: Extent of mentions of social and environmental considerations in evaluation guidance and related documents								
Organization	Main Field of operation	Eval Doc No.	Type of Document	Extent of Coverage of Social Consideration	Social Aspects Covered	Extent of Coverage of Environmental Consideration	Environmental Aspects Covered	UNEG Guidance cited
1: CTBTO	Nuclear Test Ban Treaty	1	Summary of evaluation activities during year	Nil	-	Nil	-	-
1: CTBTO	Nuclear Test Ban Treaty	2	Organization's Annual Report (mentions evaluation in passing)	Nil	-	Nil	-	-
2: DPKO	Peace Keeping		No documents specifically discussing evaluation found.	-	-	-	-	-
3: ECA	Economic Commission		No documents specifically discussing evaluation found.	-	-	-	-	Yes
4: ECLAC	Economic support	3	ECLAC Guidelines -preparing and conducting evaluations	Nil	-	Nil	-	-
5: ESCAP	Economic and Social support	4	M&E Policy and Guidelines in one document	Medium	The document provides substantial information on how to conduct evaluations, which appropriately address gender and human rights considerations. Gender receives more explicit and detailed attention than do human rights and it is not clear that the document provides sufficient information on the evaluation of human rights issues to be regarded as a "standalone" source in this area.	Nil	-	-
6: ESCWA	Economic and social support		No documents specifically discussing evaluation found.	-	-	-	-	-
7: FAO	Food and Agriculture	5	OED project evaluation manual for decentralized offices	Low	Mentions compliance with codes for vulnerable groups.	Low	This document cross-references (unpublished) procedures required for the evaluation of GEF projects.	-
7: FAO	Food and Agriculture	6	Guidelines for the assessment of gender mainstreaming	High	The document provides guidance on how to approach the evaluation of gender equality and mainstreaming issues in FAO's programmes and projects. It includes detailed questions to be	Nil	-	-

					asked, assessment frameworks, etc. Guidance is embedded in FAO evaluation procedures and could serve as a “standalone” source for evaluation in this specific area.			
7: FAO	Food and Agriculture	7	OED Capacity Development Evaluation Framework	Medium	The document offers guidance on evaluating the results of capacity development activities, which can be regarded as a “social consideration”. Gender and youth approaches and results form a particular focus. The guidance is not sufficiently detailed to constitute a “standalone” source on evaluation of the areas it covers.	Low	Some of the capacity areas (e.g., Natural Resource Management) focus on or include environmental aspects.	-
7: FAO	Food and Agriculture	8	Evaluation Manual	Nil	-	Nil	-	-
7: FAO	Food and Agriculture	9	Management Responses.	Nil	-	Nil	-	-
8: GEF	Global environment	10	Guidelines for TEs	Medium	The guidelines outline social considerations, which need to be addressed in GEF TEs. These are broader than in most documents reviewed. As well as gender, issues such as changes in socio-economic status, whether positive or negative are highlighted. Assessment of adherence to social safeguards is also to be addressed. The document does not provide sufficient information on how to evaluate these to be regarded as stand-alone in this area.	High	The guidelines outline evidence required through qualitative and quantitative methods in such areas as stress reduction, environmental status change, observance of environmental safeguards and environmental impacts. Guidance is sufficiently detailed in this area to be seen as a standalone source.	-
9: IAEA - OIOS	Atomic Energy	11	Charter	Nil	-	Nil	-	-
10: ICAO	Civil Aviation		Nothing found	-	-	-	-	-
11: IFAD	Agriculture	12	Evaluation Manual	High	A broad range of issues are included within evaluation topics, including rural poverty impact, gender equality and women’s empowerment. Detailed listing of issues and questions to be explored. Guidance is sufficiently detailed in this area to be seen as a standalone source.	High	Environment and natural resource management, adaptation to climate change. Detailed listing of issues and questions to be explored. Guidance is sufficiently detailed in this area to be seen as a standalone source.	-

11: IFAD	Agriculture	13	Corporate level evaluation brief	Nil	-	Nil	-	-
11: IFAD	Agriculture	14	Evaluation Synthesis Brief	Nil	-	Nil	-	-
11: IFAD	Agriculture	15	Impact Evaluation Brief	Low	For impact evaluation, rural poverty is identified as a major focus. No further details are provided.	Nil	-	-
11: IFAD	Agriculture	16	Project Performance Evaluations Brief	Nil	-	Nil	-	-
11: IFAD	Agriculture	17	Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation Brief	Low	Rural poverty eradication identified as major focus of country strategy and programme evaluations. No further details provided.	Nil	-	-
12: ILO	Labour	18	Policy Guidelines for evaluation.	Medium	ILO principles for evaluation are outlined, to include gender equality and non-discrimination, social justice, decent work, diversity, disability. Further discussion of how these issues can be assessed. Insufficient detail to suggest that this could be used as a standalone document.	Nil	-	-
13: IMO	Maritime		Nothing found	-	-	-	-	-
14: IOM	Migration	19	Guidance for Addressing Gender in Evaluations	High	Gender equality and mainstreaming are explored in some detail and this document could be used on a standalone basis for this specific area.	Nil	-	Yes
14: IOM	Migration	20	Gender and Evaluation Tip Sheet	Medium	Covers approaches to evaluate gender equality and mainstreaming and refers to UN Gender SWAP. As a tip sheet, presents medium level of information on how to evaluate these issues, but would not work as a self-standing document.	Nil	-	-
14: IOM	Migration	21	IOM Evaluation Guidelines	Nil	-	Nil	-	-
14: IOM	Migration	22	Evaluation and Monitoring Strategy	Nil	-	Nil	-	-
15: ITC	Trade	23	Evaluation Guidelines	Medium	Human rights and gender equality identified as cross cutting evaluation issues. Medium level of	Low	Environment and climate change identified as cross cutting evaluation issues.	Yes

					guidance, not at self-standing level. Cross-references UNEG guidelines for further information.			
16: JIU	Inspection	24	Norms and Standards for Inspection, Norms and Standards for Evaluation and General Principles and Guidelines for Investigations	Nil	-	Nil	-	-
16: JIU	Inspection	25	Standards and Guidelines	Nil	-	Nil	-	-
17: MDGF Achieve ment Fund	Millennium Development Goals	26	Guidance for Final Evaluations	Low	Each evaluation should address gender mainstreaming and inequalities. No further information.	Nil	-	-
18: OCHA	Humanitarian Affairs	27	Strategic Plan, including for evaluation	Nil	-	Nil	-	-
19: OHCHR	HR	28	Detailed handbook on one specific social consideration - evaluating HR Training Activities	High	Detailed handbook on specific social consideration, evaluating human rights training activities. Includes evaluation of gender effects and impacts. Standalone document on specific evaluation area.	Nil	-	-
20: OIOS - DESA	Internal Oversight	29	Inspection and Evaluation Manual. 2014	Medium	Includes extensive guidance on evaluation processes to ensure coverage of human rights and gender aspects of projects and activities. Not standalone but cross-referenced more detailed documents.	Nil	Nil	Yes
21: OPCW	Chemical Weapons	30	STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR EVALUATION OF THE RESULTS OF OPCW PROFICIENCY TESTS	Nil	-	Nil	-	-
22: UNAIDS	AIDS	31	M&E System Strengthening Tool	High	Detailed and standalone document to evaluate national HIV AIDS programmes.	Nil	-	-
23: UNCDF	Capital Development	32	Evaluation Plan 2018 - 2021	Low*	Thematic evaluations will include effects on poor, vulnerable, underserved, gender equality, women and youth. No details of methods. *UNDP evaluation guidelines could also be applied in UNCDF evaluations, in which case this	Nil*	*UNDP evaluation guidelines could also be applied in UNCDF evaluations, in which case this rating would follow that for UNDP in entry 25 below.	-

					rating would follow that for UNDP in entry 25 below.			
24: UNCTAD	Trade and Development	33	Guide to Participatory Self Evaluation.	Low	Outlines requirements for evaluation to cover gender equality, women's empowerment, human rights, equity and for participation in evaluation processes. Little detail.	Low	Evaluation should consider environmental sustainability, mainstreaming environmental protection and sustainable natural resource management. Little detail.	-
25: UNDP	Development	34	Evaluation Guidelines	High	Evaluations need to integrate gender equality, mainstreaming, women's empowerment, human rights, including vulnerable, excluded, etc. Detailed questions provided and evaluation quality assessment questions on these issues. Standalone on these issues.	Low	Procedures for validation of GEF Terminal Evaluations described. Little detail.	Yes
26: UNECE	Economics		Nothing found	-	-	-	-	-
27: UNEG	Evaluation Group of UN Agencies	35	Competency Framework 2016	Medium	Competency framework for evaluators intending to conduct evaluations relevant to gender and human rights. Informative for specific purpose.	Nil	-	-
27: UNEG	Evaluation Group of UN Agencies	36	Norms and standards	Medium	Norms and standards for evaluations of human rights and gender equality. Cover standards, guidelines, responsibilities, TORs, evaluation design, team selection. Medium detail, not standalone.	Nil	-	-
27: UNEG	Evaluation Group of UN Agencies	37	UNEG Guidance on Evaluating Institutional Gender Mainstreaming	High	Detailed guidance on institutional gender mainstreaming. Standalone.	Nil	-	-
27: UNEG	Evaluation Group of UN Agencies	38	Integrating HR and GE in Evaluations	High	Addresses interconnections between HR and GE approaches ("social considerations) and offers substantial advice on how to address these issues in evaluations. Looks at broad context and gives examples of good practice. A detailed "how to" manual for activities where HR and GE are the primary focus, as well as for those where they make an underlying contribution. Standalone source document.	Nil	-	-

28: UNEP	Environment	39	Evaluation Tools and Templates webpage.	Medium	Aspects to be covered by evaluation include relevance to poverty reduction strategies, responsiveness to HR and GE issues and vulnerability. Sustainability includes socio-political.	Medium	Efficiency includes extent to which project implementation minimized UNEP's environmental footprint.	-
28: UNEP	Environment	40	Possible Evaluation Questions	Medium	Evaluation analysis to include social impacts, especially on most vulnerable groups	Low	Analysis to include environmental impacts.	-
28: UNEP	UNEP	41	Evaluation Criteria and Ratings	Medium	Human rights and gender effects to be evaluated. Adherence to social safeguards.	Medium	Alignment to UN environment, GEF, donor regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities. Adherence to environmental safeguards. Minimizing environmental footprint.	-
29: UNESCO	Education, Science and Culture	42	Evaluation Handbook	Nil	-	Nil	-	-
29: UNESCO	Education, Science and Culture	43	Evaluation Insights	Low	Meta synthesis of evaluations relevant to SDG4 on quality education for all. Specialized area: some recommendations on how best to evaluate it.	Nil	-	-
30: UNFPA	Population	44	Assessing the quality of developmental evaluations at UNFPA	Low	Refers to UNEG guidance for evaluation of gender equality and human rights. No detailed explanation.	Nil	-	Yes
31: UN Habitat	Human Settlements	45	RBM Handbook	Medium	Evaluations should include focus on gender, human rights and youth. Some specific guidance and example questions. Not standalone.	Low	Environmental scan in evaluation includes "sustainable urban development issues." Limited guidance and questions.	Yes
31: UN Habitat	Human Settlements	46	Evaluation Manual	Medium	Evaluation should include gender equality, human rights, youth participation and safeguards. Some detail on specific areas to be covered, but not sufficient to be standalone.	Low	Evaluation should include Climate Change and environmental safeguards.	Yes
32: UNHCR	Refugees	47	Quick Guide to Evaluation in UNHCR	Nil	-	Nil	-	-
33: UNICEF	Children	48	GEROS Handbook	High	Handbook for assessing the quality of UNICEF evaluations. Gender,	Nil	-	Yes

					exclusion and human rights to be included in evaluations. Detailed guidance provided on HR and gender aspects, focused on how to assess the quality of these elements in evaluations, referencing the UN SWAP (GEEW) standards and indicators.			
33: UNICEF	Children	<u>49</u>	PROCEDURE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2018 UNICEF EVALUATION POLICY	Nil	-	Nil	-	-
34: UNIDO	Industry	<u>50</u>	Evaluation Manual	High	Detailed guidance, including sample questions, particularly on gender. Social inclusiveness and vulnerability also addressed.	Low	Some coverage of environmental risks and safeguarding the environment.	Yes
35: UNODC <i>Good Practice example on HR/GE</i>	Drugs and Crime	<u>51</u>	Evaluation Handbook. 2017	High	Evaluations should address how well UNODC interventions have addressed the principles of human rights and gender equality and identify and analyse specific results at these levels. Detailed guidance and examples given, cross-referencing other UN and UNEG documents.	Nil	-	Yes
36: UNRWA	Palestine		No documents found	-	-	-	-	-
37: UNV	Volunteers	<u>52</u>	Evaluation Plan 2018 - 2021	Nil	-	Nil	-	-
38: UNW	Women	<u>53</u>	UNW How to Manage Gender-Responsive Evaluation Handbook	High	Detailed and extensive guidelines on “gender responsive evaluation,” specifically targeting evaluations by UN Women. No specific coverage of HR.	Nil	-	Yes
39: WFP	Food	<u>54</u>	Impact Evaluation Strategy	Low	One evaluation to cover cash-based transfers and gender.	Low	One evaluation to cover climate change and resilience.	-
40: WHO	Health	<u>55</u>	Evaluation Practice Handbook	Medium	Gender, equity, and human rights are corporate cross-cutting strategies to be covered by evaluations. UNEG guidance on integrating gender, equity and human rights into evaluation work should be adopted in evaluation processes. Handbook gives	Nil	-	Yes

					overview of how to approach these issues.			
41: WIPO	Intellectual Property	<u>56</u>	WIPO Evaluation Manual	Medium	Draws mainly on UN GEEW principles and both UNEG guidance documents on HR and Gender to outline expected approach to these aspects in WIPO evaluations.	Nil	-	Yes
42: WMO	Maritime	<u>57</u>	Monitoring and Evaluation System	Low	Evaluations should cover poverty alleviation, sustained livelihoods and economic growth (in connection with the Millennium Development Goals) including improved health and social well-being of citizens (related to weather, climate, water and environmental events and influence).	Low	Evaluations should cover the extent to which delivery of weather, climate, water and related environmental products and services to users' communities has been improved	-
42: WMO	Maritime	<u>58</u>	Monitoring and Evaluation Manual	Low	Some monitoring indicators, for use by evaluations, cover "key socio-economic sectors." These are mainly tracked by a large questionnaire. No guidance on how to evaluate them.	Medium	Extensive monitoring indicators, mainly relevant to climate within a broader environmental context. Other than questionnaire, no guidance on how to evaluate these.	-
42: WMO	Maritime	<u>59</u>	Monitoring and Evaluation Guide	Nil	-	Nil	-	-

4 Findings from a Survey of UNEG Member Agency Evaluation Offices

28. A survey was circulated to all UNEG member agencies and received 29 completed response sets. This is regarded as an acceptable response rate for such a survey and represents around half of the UNEG membership. However, this number means that opportunities to sub-divide responses for comparison purposes are limited. Wherever possible and useful, this has been done, with the understanding that comparisons have no statistical significance and are provided to give an impression of any differences, which may exist between sub-sets of member agencies.

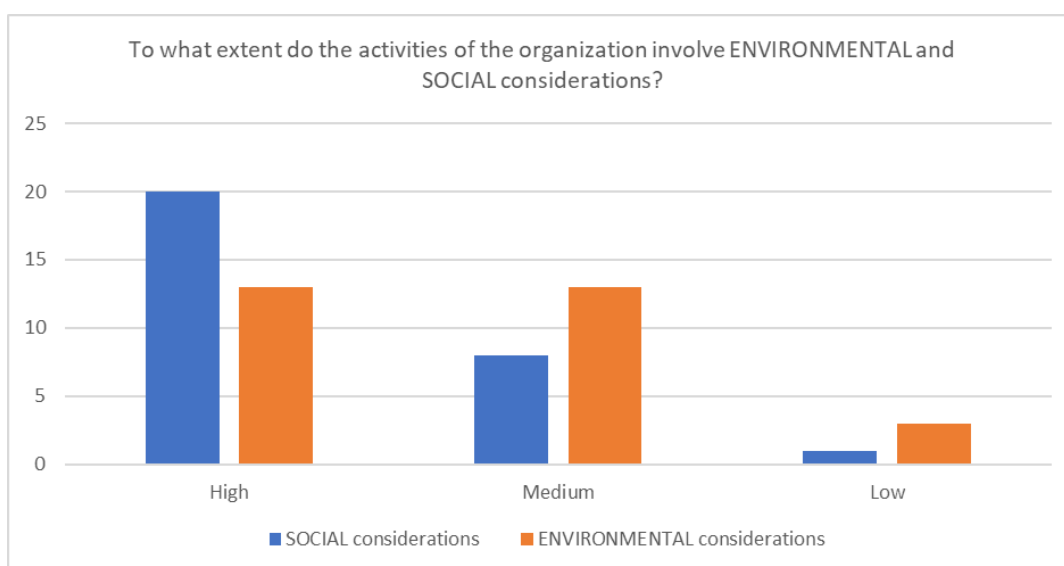
4.1 Scale and Scope of Evaluation Offices and Their Work

29. Central EOs responding to the survey showed a broad range in terms of their staffing and the number of evaluations they conduct in a year. The number of professional evaluation staff in these offices ranged from 1 to 34. Reflecting this variation, the number of evaluations managed and produced centrally in 2019 ranged from 0 (described as an exceptional year) to 44. The role and responsibility of central EOs for decentralised evaluations varies among agencies, with some providing advice and quality control, while others are more distanced from this evaluation segment. Ten agencies reported some decentralized evaluation staffing positions, ranging from two to 22. However, respondents cautioned that some of these listed “positions” are part-time and reflect a responsibility towards evaluation matters rather than a proactive focus on them. The number of decentralized evaluations conducted by agencies shows a substantial range. This category stretches from small-scale country-level evaluations of individual projects to regional thematic evaluations, which may be major exercises. The majority of EOs did not report any decentralised evaluations for their agency in 2019; while for those that did, there was a huge range in the number completed, between 2 and 290. Overall, the survey shows that the category “Evaluation Office” incorporates major differences in terms of staffing, number of central evaluations conducted, responsibility and scope of engagement in decentralized evaluations and availability of internal evaluation guidance documents. This suggests that a nuanced approach is needed to the coverage and scope of UNEG Guidance Documents, since EOs will have widely varying capacity to make use of such resources. Advice, which may be invaluable to an office with 20 evaluators, may be unusable by an EO with 2 staff.

4.2 Importance of Social and Environmental Considerations for Agencies’ Work

30. The importance of guidance on social and environmental considerations depends on the extent to which agencies define their mandates to cover these areas, either as a primary focus or as part of the institutional environment of their main work. Agencies were therefore asked to assess this factor and their responses are shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Extent to which agency activities involve environmental and social considerations

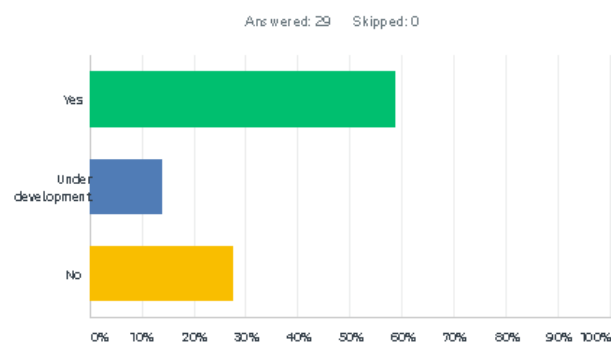


31. Both areas are important to agencies. Only 1 out of 29 agencies (3%) indicated low involvement with social considerations and 3 (10%) with the environment. On the other hand, 70% feel that their work is highly engaged with social aspects and 45% with the environment. Overall, social considerations have a higher profile than those of the environment, but almost all agencies also report medium or high scale engagement with the latter.

32. In keeping with the importance of these considerations, almost 60% of agencies reported environmental or social safeguard policies, which need to be applied during the preparation of projects or programmes, as shown in Figure 2 below. However, in some cases the safeguards referred to are those devised and published by other agencies within the UN system, so the number of agencies with their own specific safeguards procedures will be less than 60%.

Figure 2: Prevalence of Environmental and/or Social Safeguard Policies

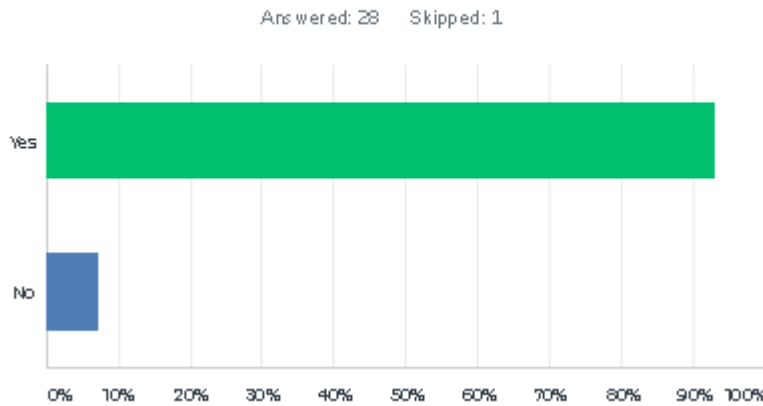
Q7 Does your organization have specific environmental and or social safeguard procedures to be met during the preparation of projects or programmes?



33. UN agency evaluation activities have several layers of complexity. Evaluation methods must be technically appropriate and, in many cases, have to assess achievements in areas, which are highly specialised. For these areas, generic sources on evaluation methods and practices are not sufficient. To meet this need, almost all agencies have developed their own evaluation guidelines, tailored to the specifics of the work they undertake, as shown in Figure 3 below.

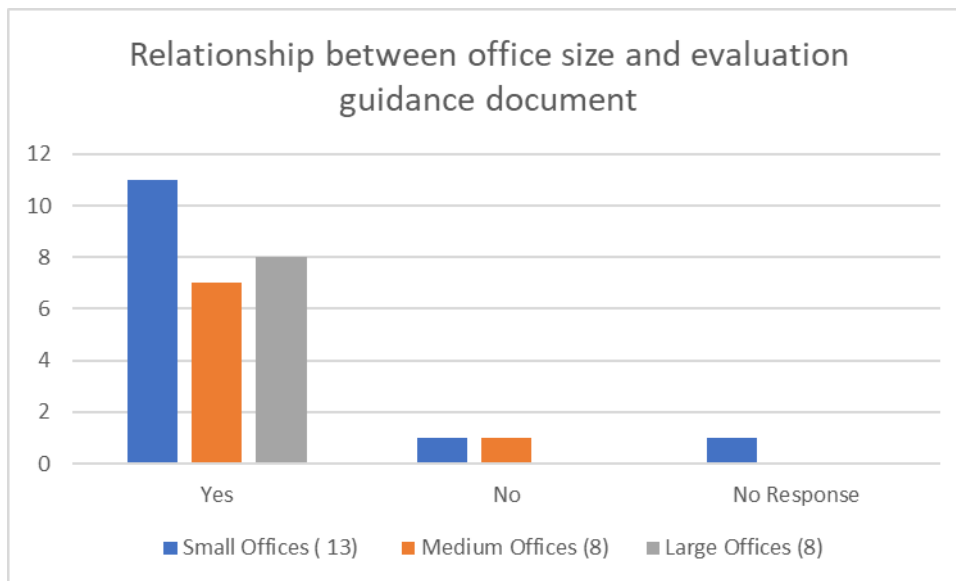
Figure 3: Agency documents providing evaluation guidance.

Q16 Does the organization have any specific evaluation guidance documents for corporate, regional and/or country level evaluations?



34. Within this overall picture, there is little difference between the production of guidance documents for EOs of different scale (See Figure 4 below).

Figure 4: Existence of evaluation guidance documents for different size Offices.

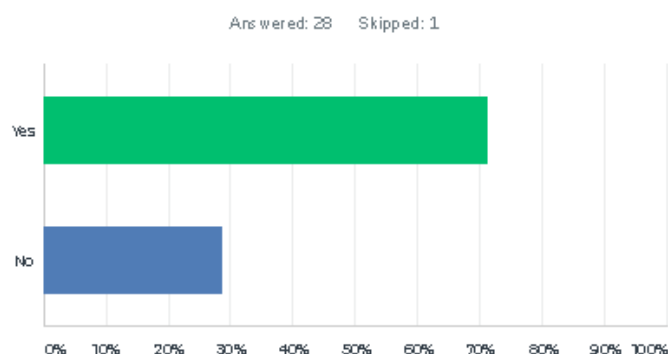


35. Whilst all large EOs refer to at least one guidance document, one medium and one small EO do not benefit from such a document (although most do). Although these responses suggest that guidance is widely available, detailed examination of these guidance documents (reported in Section 3 above) shows that, in many cases, they primarily cover details of institutional requirements and processes, with less attention to evaluation methods. As a result of this focus, their advice on methods is often quite generic and adds little to mainstream evaluation documents.

36. In addition to specific evaluation guidance, about 70% of agencies have broader Results Based Management or programme management documents, which include coverage of evaluation, as shown in Figure 5 below.

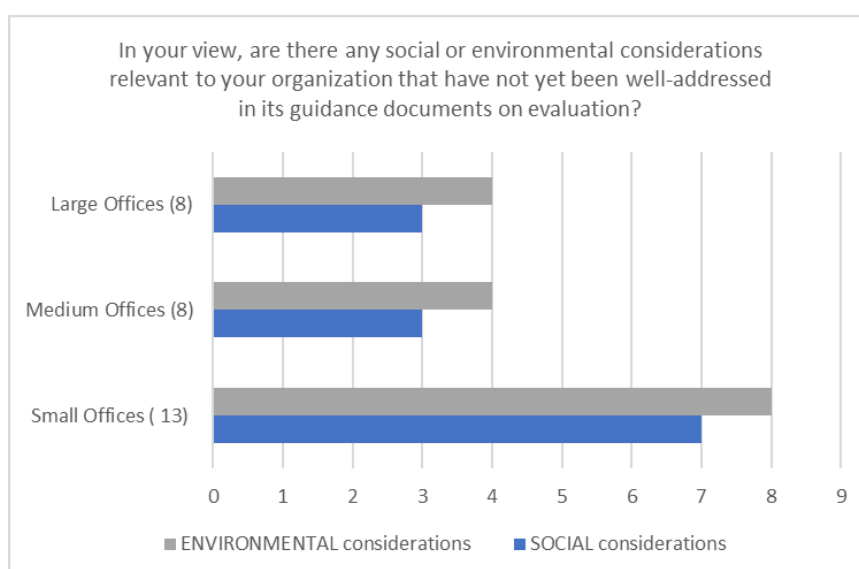
Figure 5: Existence of additional advice on evaluation in other agency guidelines

Q17 Does the organization have any other guidance documents concerning the assessment of results, which include sections specifically on evaluation? (e.g. results based management or programme management guidelines with sections on evaluation)



37. In view of the high prevalence of documents providing guidance on evaluation among UN agencies, it might be assumed that social and environmental considerations have been adequately addressed. However, this is not the perception of the professional staff who comprise the central EOs (or of the document review reported in Section 3 above). In fact, 68% of Offices responding feel that social considerations have not yet been well-addressed, while 84% feel this to be the case for environmental aspects. It was hypothesised that larger EOs might feel that these issues have been better addressed than smaller offices, in view of their greater resources in terms of evaluation expertise. As shown in Figure 6, this was not reported to be the case, since the distribution of responses is similar across different EO sizes.

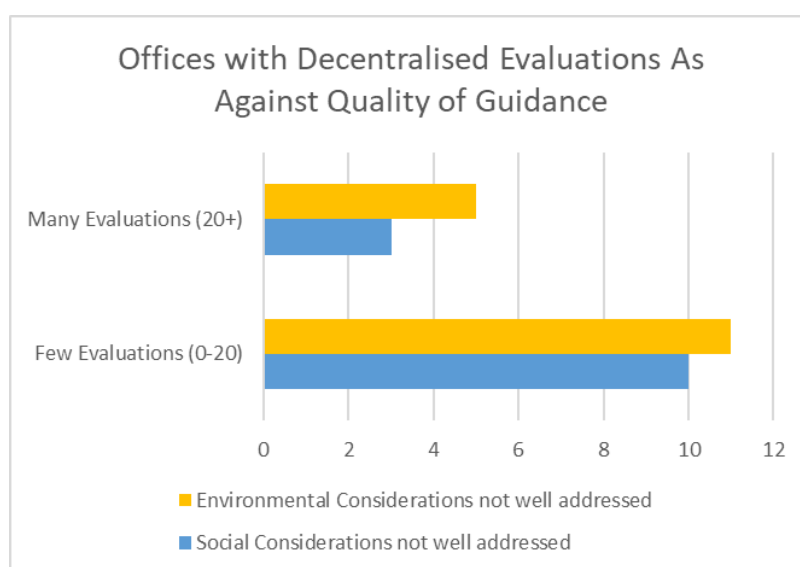
Figure 6: Unmet needs for guidance on social or environmental considerations by size of Evaluation Office



38. It has been noted in Section 4.1 above, that there is substantial variation in the extent to which agencies conduct decentralized evaluations and in the role played by central EOs in these. The majority of EOs (18) did not report any decentralised evaluations for their agency in 2019; while for those that did, there was a huge range in the number completed, between 2 and 290. It was hypothesized that

agencies, which conduct a higher number of decentralized evaluations, would already have in place comprehensive evaluation guidance, to enable agency units with less in-house expertise to conduct satisfactory evaluations. Only 6 out of 29 agencies reported that they conducted many (more than 20) decentralized evaluations in 2019. As shown in Figure 7 below, the shape of distribution between guidance needs that have been well-addressed and not well-addressed is similar for agencies conducting many or few decentralized evaluations; with similar levels of reservation about current social and environmental guidance documents, but particularly the latter. This underpins a high level of support for the view that more guidance documents from UNEG on social and environmental considerations would be useful. Overall, virtually all agencies (92%) were in favour of this, with only two agencies (both of which conduct few decentralised evaluations) not feeling any need for such additional support.

Figure 7: Extent to which social and environmental considerations are well-addressed by number of decentralized evaluations conducted



39. The survey results show a highly consistent perception among UNEG agency EOs that there is a need for additional guidance; particularly in the area of environmental considerations, but also for social considerations. However, in terms of the precise nature of areas, which should be included, a less clear picture emerges. Table 10 below shows the specific topics identified as not yet well-addressed and therefore needing such guidance.

Table 10: Social and environmental considerations identified as not yet well-addressed	
Social Considerations not yet well-addressed	Environmental Considerations not yet well-addressed
Disability (6 mentions)	Climate Change (4 mentions)
Marginalized groups	Minimise negative environmental impacts of interventions (2 mentions)
Indigenous People	Safeguards (currently just checklists)
Inequality	Risks
	Biodiversity

40. It can be seen that there are relatively few issues, which have been identified by more than one respondent agency. On the social side, disability emerges as an area where several EOs feel inadequately informed. With regard to environment, Climate Change stands out as needing more guidance. Mention is also made of the need to evaluate the extent to which any environmental disbenefits have occurred as a result of UN activities.

41. With regards to potential opportunities for UNEG support, there was a similar lack of specificity, but with some overlap with the areas identified as lacking guidance among agencies, as shown in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Specific areas cited for UNEG Guidance	
Social Considerations	Environmental Considerations
Indigenous people (2)	Climate Change (2)
Disability (2)	What environmental issues should agencies with a social mandate consider?
Equity/inequality	Water and land
Migration	Lack of assessments of environmental impacts of many UN activities means UN agencies may actually be harming the environment.
How do gender equity and equality relate to environmental considerations?	
Children	
Minorities	
Vulnerable groups	

42. Disability was again identified as an important social consideration (2 mentions), with indigenous people (2) also raised. On the environment side, Climate Change is the main area specified (by 2 respondents).

5 Initial Suggestions for Potential UNEG Guidance

43. When triangulated, the key data sources (review of policy documents, review of guidance documents and survey of agency EOs) show strong coherence and complementarity. On the basis of the evidence assembled the following initial suggestions on potential UNEG guidance covering social and environmental considerations are provided. Together with the evidence on which they are based, they can provide a strong platform for discussion among the WG members as to the most appropriate steps to take and the sequencing of these. The following bullet points summarise key issues arising from the evidence assembled and suggest a potential path forward, for discussion by WG members.

- In existing guidance, social considerations are more widely covered than environmental.
- Despite this, social considerations are only partially covered. Gender receives the strongest attention. Human Rights tend to be bundled with gender in documents and are often not addressed in as much detail.
- Other social considerations have received little attention.
- Guidance on environmental considerations is extremely limited.
- A broad range of agencies increasingly realize that their activities may have unanticipated environmental effects.
- There is heightened awareness of the interactions between social and environmental factors, driven in part by the need to interpret and respond to the SDGs.
- Individual agencies have not been able to produce guidance on all of the social and environmental considerations that they need to address.
- Where detailed guidance has been produced by individual agencies, this is often focussed on their own mandates and institutional systems and does not meet the needs of the broader UN evaluation community.
- UNEG advice on Gender and HR has been widely consulted and used and is highly regarded.
- The advantages of such UNEG guidance over that developed by individual agencies include:
 - Institutional neutrality – evaluation advice is not embedded in a specific institutional context;
 - Can be more detailed than most agencies will produce; and
 - Can address needs identified by a broad range of agencies.
- Most agency EOs feel the need for more guidance – particularly on environmental aspects, but also on social considerations (notably outside of areas covered by Gender and HR documents).

- There are specific social issues, which could be addressed by future UNEG guidance, such as:
 - Disability;
 - Vulnerability;
 - Poverty; and
 - Indigenous People.
- Guidance on environmental considerations is regarded by UN EOs (and assessed by independent document review) as inadequate for current and emerging needs.
- There are specific environmental issues that could be addressed by UNEG Guidance, such as:
 - Climate Change;
 - Environmental impacts of development projects;
 - How to minimize environmental footprints of interventions; and
 - Environmental risks.

44. Overall, although there are specific issues (listed above) for which UNEG could prepare guidance documents, the over-arching need emerging from documentary analysis and survey responses of UNEG member agencies is for a comprehensive document providing advice on how to evaluate the interactions among social and environmental considerations within the framework of UN activities in support the SDGs.

45. This would be a complex and demanding exercise, particularly since UNEG is dependent on voluntary inputs of its evaluation professionals, usually above and beyond their regular duties. Further, it would require additional funding and human resources in order to deliver a high-quality product within a reasonable timeframe.

46. Pending such an exercise smaller, more focused guidance documents could also be supported and produced to meet some of the specific needs identified above. These could be embedded as sections of the larger document as this is developed, to avoid duplication and wasted human and financial resources.