



UNEG
United Nations Evaluation Group

Foundation
Document

UNEG Principles of Working Together (2019)

This document represents the fifth iteration of the UNEG Principles of Working Together.

They were first adopted at the UNEG Annual General Meeting in Geneva, April 2007 and subsequently revised at the AGMs in Nairobi (March 2009), Paris (April 2011), Rome (April 2012) and New York (April/May 2015).

This latest version was adopted at the UNEG AGM 2019 in Nairobi, Kenya.

1. Introduction

1. The United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) is a voluntary network that brings together the central offices responsible for evaluation in the UN system. By promoting and strengthening evaluation, UNEG helps advance the fulfilment of the SDGs and Agenda 2030, as well as other environmental and humanitarian agendas. The Group's central role has been to develop and advocate for common norms and standards for all UN evaluations, and other specific normative and technical guidance. The UNEG Norms and Standards underpin the professionalization of evaluation functions in the UN, enabling organizations to continuously learn, and improve organizational effectiveness and responsiveness.

2. Vision

2. UNEG envisions that evaluations, at all levels, produce evidence that is used to: inform relevant, efficient and effective delivery of the Agenda 2030 and other UN commitments and compacts; contribute to good governance and oversight of the UN system; and ultimately impact the lives of the people we serve.

3. Mission

3. UNEG's mission is to promote, strengthen and advocate for a robust, influential, independent and credible evaluation function throughout the UN system for decision-making, accountability and learning. UNEG aims to:
 - Set the UN evaluation normative framework to reflect emerging or innovative developments as well as good practices in evaluation.
 - Provide a forum for professional engagement, support and exchange globally and locally.
 - Advocate for the strategic use of evaluations in all UN entities and beyond to inform decision-making and enhance results.
 - Influence evaluation practices in all entities of the UN system.
 - Encourage partnerships for joint evaluation.

4. UNEG Membership

4. UNEG membership is institutional with each UN entity represented by the office responsible for the evaluation function within that entity. Where applicable, this central evaluation office also represents the decentralized evaluation functions or regional offices of the UN entity.
5. A UN system entity refers to the departments or offices of the Secretariat, UN Funds and Programmes, UN Specialized Agencies, the IAEA and organizations institutionally related to the UN.

6. Organizations, which do not enter in these categories, engage within UNEG through partnerships.
7. Ex- officio members do not have voting rights. JIU, in its capacity as a system-wide oversight body with a mandate on system-wide evaluation and oversight over evaluation function is an ex- officio member of UNEG.
8. UNEG membership is divided in two categories: **Full Members and Observers**. All UNEG Members must support, promote and play an active role in the implementation of UNEG's Vision and Strategy.
9. At the institutional level, the individual who heads the evaluation function represents each UNEG member. This individual is referred to as a UNEG Head and should have professional competence in evaluation.
10. At the operational level, all UNEG Members are expected to actively engage in UNEG work. Staff within UNEG member offices, including those from decentralized offices, may engage in UNEG's work activities through its Working Groups, Task Forces, Organizing Committees, etc. with approval from their respective UNEG Head.
11. All UNEG Members are entitled to attend, and are strongly encouraged to contribute actively to, the Evaluation Practice Exchange (EPE) seminars and Annual General Meetings (AGM) and receive free copies of UNEG publications. UNEG members are also entitled to attend seminars or other events organized by the Working Groups and Task Forces.
12. To qualify for Full Membership, the evaluation function must:
 - Have an approved evaluation policy (or another form of equivalent document) that subscribes to the UNEG Norms and Standards and to the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation;
 - Commit to represent UNEG in relevant fora;
 - Contribute financially and/or in-kind to UNEG's work.
13. Through their participation in UNEG, Full Members are entitled to:
 - Benefit from the support of UNEG and its members in evaluation-related matters;
 - Vote in UNEG elections and other specific matters; and,
 - Participate in identifying and prioritizing UNEG's strategic direction and activities.
14. A UNEG Observer is a member that agrees with and contributes to UNEG's mission, but does not yet meet the membership criteria for Full Membership. Observership is a transitional status and observers are expected to comply with full membership criteria within a two-year period.
15. Observers may participate in one or more of the various UNEG fora, in UNEG Working Groups and joint work.
16. They ideally support UNEG work through financial support or in-kind support.

17. Observers do not hold voting rights and do not participate in closed business sessions of the AGM.

5. Applications, resignation, termination and reactivation

18. Evaluation Offices wishing to apply for membership should contact the UNEG Secretariat for an application form.

19. Completed applications are reviewed by the UNEG Secretariat as per the checklist in Annex 2, based on which the UNEG Executive Steering Committee (ESC) makes a proposal for a final decision by UNEG Heads. The ESC will indicate whether the applicant fulfills the criteria for full or observer membership, or neither. UNEG Heads approve membership applications on a no objection basis.

20. Any member may withdraw from UNEG at any time via written notification to the ESC.

21. **Full Members** commit to being actively engaged in UNEG, in particular by:

- Participating in the AGMs;
- Representing UNEG in relevant fora;
- Contributing to the UNEG Work Plan by participating in the UNEG Working Groups and Task Forces;
- Depositing evaluation plans, evaluation reports, in the UNEG portal in a timely manner, subject to the member's disclosure policy in force;
- Ensuring the list of professional staff in the EO is up to date in the UNEG website;
- Paying the agreed membership contribution fee or, if unable to do so, an in-kind contribution.
- Having at least one full-time professional staff member, or equivalent, devoted to evaluation.

22. Failure to engage as per the above for more than two years may prompt a formal request from the ESC for the member to adhere to its obligations. If no active engagement is subsequently observed, full membership may be revoked and the member relegated to observer status.

23. Observers who fail to fulfill the requirements for full membership for two years may receive a formal request from the ESC to adhere to these criteria, including financial and/or in-kind contribution to UNEG's work. In the event of no active engagement, the member's observer status may be suspended.

24. Requests to reactivate membership should be submitted in writing to the UNEG Secretariat.

6. Partnerships

25. In line with the UNEG Partnership Strategy, UNEG may establish partnerships with organizations/institutions outside the UN system to work on a specific deliverable in its work programme that contributes to the overall UNEG Strategy.
26. UNEG defines a partnership as "[a] collaborative relationship and/ or a strategic alliance between UNEG and an external entity to work towards mutually agreed objectives with a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities based on the comparative advantage of each entity".
27. Partnerships can be collaborative (e.g. information and knowledge sharing, coordination); cost-sharing (e.g. technical or financial resources); or strategic (e.g. management of a programme or activity of mutual interest to achieve shared goals and respective organizational missions). The duration of a partnership can vary – short-term or long-term.
28. Partners do not hold voting rights but may be invited to participate in one or more of the various UNEG fora including the AGM and/ or Working Groups.
29. UNEG Partners include: umbrella organizations, network coalitions, regional or global evaluation associations, academia (universities)/research institutions/global think tanks, inter-governmental and other international organizations, global or regional training institutions, governments, foundations, and the private sector.
30. The procedure to engage in a partnership with UNEG is determined in the UNEG Partnership Strategy.

7. Governance

31. The AGM is the decision-making body of UNEG for decisions that require full membership agreement such as policy, normative and programmatic decisions. Decisions are, in principle, taken by consensus but may be put to a vote if requested by a minimum of five Full Members present.
32. The AGM provides the forum for UNEG Heads to discuss, adopt and review UNEG's five-year Strategy; review progress and deliverables from the previous UNEG annual work programme; endorse the UNEG Annual Report presented by the Chair; and determine and adopt the UNEG annual work programme for the upcoming year, including tentative funding envelopes for activities.
33. Only UNEG Heads or their designated representative may represent the UNEG member in any formal approval or voting capacity.
34. Between AGMs, when decisions require agreement of the full membership, the UNEG Chair can convoke a virtual Extraordinary General Meeting.
35. Elections for UNEG Chair and vice-Chairs are held at the AGM, and are presided over by a volunteer UNEG Head identified prior to the AGM. Absentee members can cast their vote electronically before the relevant session at the AGM.

36. The UNEG Chair must be a UNEG Head. UNEG vice-Chairs can be senior evaluation professionals with full institutional backing. All must be willing and able to invest the time and effort required to hold a leadership role within UNEG.
37. The UNEG Chair and vice-Chairs are elected in their personal (not institutional) capacities for a term of two years, renewable once, provided that their UN institutional tenure as an evaluator remains uninterrupted.
38. Together, the UNEG Chair and vice-Chairs constitute the ESC which is responsible for day-to-day operational decisions concerning UNEG's work programme (as mandated by the AGM), funding and quality assurance issues.
39. Specifically, the ESC keeps abreast of, and is responsible for, guiding and coordinating work being carried out by the Working Groups and Task Forces. It issues joint statements in consultation with UNEG membership, and monitors progress towards the expected results defined for each Strategic Objective.
40. The composition of the ESC reflects the diversity and balance of UNEG members in terms of: institutional type (Secretariat, Fund, Programme or Specialized/ Related Agency), gender, size and location.
41. ESC members are mutually accountable and collegial. The ESC is supported by the UNEG Secretariat.
42. The UNEG Chair is responsible for leading, coordinating and facilitating the UNEG Annual Work Programme to meet UNEG Strategic Objectives as decided by the AGM. S/he chairs the AGM and the ESC.
43. At the AGM, the UNEG Chair reports on UNEG activities and financial situation in the UNEG Annual Report and makes proposals for an indicative budget including on the necessary staffing of the UNEG Secretariat. Failure of the AGM to endorse the Annual Report necessitates the election of a new ESC.
44. The Chair provides guidance and leadership to the ESC, especially when difficult or significant decisions are required. S/he oversees the work and functioning of the UNEG Secretariat.
45. The UNEG Chair represents UNEG in external fora and, when doing so, s/he espouses UNEG's position as opposed to their entity or personal position. The Chair will report to members on these events through standard communications or the Annual Report.
46. The Chair ensures a relevant flow of information to Members and issues "Chair White Papers" in consultation with the membership without necessarily forming a common UNEG position.
47. Vice-Chairs are responsible for functional areas such as, but not limited to, treasury, communications, partnerships and knowledge management. In addition, they may be assigned oversight of a specific Strategic Objective and the relevant Working Groups. UNEG Chair assigns responsibilities within the ESC, in consultation with its members.
48. The UNEG Treasurer is responsible for ensuring sound management and reporting on the use of UNEG resources.

49. Vice-Chairs provide support to and may represent the Chair should s/he be unable to represent UNEG in external fora.
50. The UNEG Secretariat facilitates the work of UNEG, inter alia, by: maintaining a platform for communication and discussion among the members, including the UNEG website and communities of practice; serving as a focal point on members and activities, and external communication; providing operational support to facilitate UNEG activities, such as publications and meetings; assisting the Treasurer in monitoring and reporting of UNEG funds; preparing and following membership and partnership applications; monitoring and reporting on the use of evaluation; providing technical support to UNEG activities when resources are made available for such purpose; and preparing the UNEG Chair's Annual and Financial report.
51. The UNEG Secretariat may include one or several consultant(s) selected through an open recruitment process managed by the UNEG Chair, in consultation with the ESC. Staff are contracted by the entity managing the UNEG Trust Fund, in line with their recruitment processes.
52. In addition, the resources of the Secretariat may include staff secondments, internships, and joint work with larger UNEG members; linkages with partners within and outside the UN are being considered.
53. The UNEG Secretariat reports to the UNEG Chair and is funded from the UNEG Trust Fund.

8. Elections

54. The UNEG Secretariat sends a call for nominations to UNEG Heads ideally two months before the AGM. Names of nominees should be to the Secretariat.
55. Candidates for Chair must be nominated by at least one other UNEG Head. The candidate must accept the nomination and send a vision statement outlining their motivation, objectives and implementation plan at least one month prior to the AGM. These will then be circulated to UNEG Heads prior to the AGM.
56. At the AGM, the candidate voted for by the majority of voters will be elected UNEG Chair. If no candidate receives a simple majority, a run-off election shall be organized between the two candidates with the highest number of votes.
57. Candidates for vice-Chair must be nominated by at least one other UNEG member and have full support of their respective UNEG Head. The nominee must accept the nomination in writing and provide a vision statement outlining their motivation, objectives and implementation plan at least one month prior to the AGM. Nominees for vice-Chairs may indicate which functional role they wish to undertake, although the final outcome may only be decided once the ESC has been constituted. Candidates will be elected by the highest number of votes at the AGM.
58. If the Chair or a vice-Chair resigns their position, a by-election will be organized electronically within three months of the resignation.

59. If the Chair or vice-Chair is elected mid-term in a by-election, and the remaining term is less than half a year, the elected candidate can continue in the position without another election at the next AGM and the term is be extended by two years.
60. If the remaining term is more than half a year, the position will be subject to election when the original two-year term expires.

Working methods

61. UNEG's Strategic Objectives identify areas of work agreed upon by the AGM. The work under each SO is implemented by one of the following which is comprised of interested UNEG members:
 - UNEG Working Groups – Formal group with either a one or multi- year work programme. Once a Working Group has achieved its deliverables, it can be dissolved. When a Strategic Objective is no longer a priority or the objective has been achieved, the AGM can dissolve or modify the Working Group as required.
 - UNEG Task Forces – Formal group to work on a specific task or deliver a specific output within a relatively short timeframe (up to one year). In principle, Task Forces are automatically dissolved at the AGM.
 - UNEG Organizing Committees – Formal committee established to organize a particular event or series of events such as the AGM and EPE.
 - UNEG Interest Groups – Informal group established to share knowledge and experiences on a specific issue of interest rather than produce pre-identified deliverables.
62. Formal Working Groups, Task Forces and Committees may make requests for funding from UNEG funds to implement the deliverables in their agreed work plans. Informal groups do not receive funding; individual participating members can, however, decide to financially contribute to the work of their group. If funding is required from UNEG, then their status can be revised either at the AGM or in between AGMs in consultation with UNEG Heads through the ESC.
63. **Staff from UNEG member agencies may participate in the UNEG Working Groups and Task Forces.** They are provided with the required means to ensure effective participation and are held accountable for results. Participants are fully engaged in addressing the specific tasks and deliverables and contribute in a personal (rather than institutional) capacity.
64. Working Groups are led by volunteer coordinators/co-coordinators elected from the Group's membership. They are not required to be a UNEG Head.
65. Under the overall guidance and support of the ESC, the coordinators/co-coordinators are responsible for: developing and implementing the annual Work Plan of their respective Working Group/ Task Force; reviewing progress; reporting to the ESC in between AGMs; and reporting to UNEG Heads at the AGM.

66. Coordinators/ co-Coordiators establish a work plan based on the mandate and priorities as agreed by the AGM, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, outputs, expected outcomes, proposed budget and timeline.
67. The co-Coordiators, or representative, will provide written updates for presentation at the AGM. These updates will cover nature of the work; results achieved; contribution to the SO (if relevant); points for discussion or approval; financial reporting; and areas for next steps/ future work, including a tentative budget.
68. If work is complete the Group will be closed at the AGM. If further work areas have been identified and the Group wishes to continue it will be discussed and submitted for approval at the AGM.
69. **Resource allocation** - Working Groups/ Task Forces established at the AGM must submit a full work and budget plan to the ESC within two months of the AGM. Once reviewed by the ESC, the full work plan is shared with UNEG Heads for approval on a no objection basis.

Funding

70. UNEG Members commit to contributing financially or in-kind to the functioning of UNEG and towards achieving its five-year Strategy and Annual Work Plan.
71. Expected contributions are equivalent to USD1,000 per year for each professional member of staff in the evaluation office.
72. With ESC due diligence and approval, UNEG may accept funds from non-members on the understanding that they are used to benefit UNEG's overall interest.
73. UNEG funds, in line with the approved budget, are used to finance: the agreed to staffing and operational costs of the UNEG Secretariat; ESC member travel when representing UNEG (e.g. representation at other Network meetings; presentations at key UN forums); and UNEG activities as defined in the UNEG Work Programme and implemented by the UNEG Working Groups, Task Forces and/ or Organising Committees.
74. As a matter of principle, UNEG funds will only be used for purposes that benefit the membership at large.
75. UNEG Members may also make direct financial contributions to the work of specific Groups, or to specific deliverables or events. In such a case, the contributing member can either make an earmarked contribution to the general UNEG fund or contribute directly by, for example, organizing and paying for consultant travel.
76. All contributions, whether in-kind, into the general fund or in parallel via the entity's own budget, will be reflected in the Annual Financial Report.
77. Members are encouraged to advance payments from their own resources and solicit reimbursement from the UNEG Trust Fund so as to reduce the administrative burden on the Secretariat.