



Independent System-Wide Evaluation Report



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Angela Bester
Charles Lusthaus

Objectives of the workshop

- ▶ To summarize the review questions, process, and findings and recommendations.
- ▶ To discuss the future of ISWE in the UN.

Major questions of the study

- ▶ What is the demand for ISWE, and how would it be used?
- ▶ What constitutes a good ISWE and what kind of mandate and capacities would be required to do one?
- ▶ What capacity exists to manage, conduct and contribute to an ISWE?
- ▶ How could the UN system address capacity gaps in ISWE in the future building on existing mechanisms?
- ▶ What is the present institutional framework for system-wide evaluation of operational activities for development?

Addressing the questions

- ▶ **Interviews**
 - ▶ Over 50 interviews in-person in New York, Geneva, Ottawa and South Africa, covering Member States and UN entities
 - ▶ Over 20 global-phone interviews including follow up interviews
 - ▶ Used content analysis to identify major themes
- ▶ **Documents**
 - ▶ Collected and read over 100 documents related to the study
 - ▶ Used major themes in interviews to do analysis of documents
- ▶ **Case Descriptions**
 - ▶ Reviewed reports from 6 case studies and interviewed staff involved
- ▶ **Fact sheets- Human resource and financial data on entities**
 - ▶ Analysed UNEG Fact sheets from 21 UNEG member entities
- ▶ **Self Assessment Questionnaire- mandate, governance, demand, involvement, capacity**
 - ▶ Analysed 22 self assessment questionnaires
- ▶ Held 2 workshops to review direction of report and findings
- ▶ Responding to factual draft report concerns from Reference Group

Context

- ▶ Current ISWE interest – part of larger set of reforms to strengthen accountability, improve impact and value for money.
- ▶ Varying opinions about what ISWE means in the UN context:
 - ▶ JIU working across entire UN system
 - ▶ OCHA – humanitarian (sub) system that includes external organizations
 - ▶ OIOS – within the (sub) system of UN Secretariat
 - ▶ DESA – (sub) system -operational activities for development
 - ▶ UN Women – gender equality evaluations across the UN system.

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- ▶ 5 Past 5 years – hard to reach consensus on the institutional and organizational approaches to ISWF.

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Main findings-36 findings altogether

- ▶ Demand data fragmented but suggests growing interest and demand for evaluative work that has system-wide characteristics.
- ▶ Institutional components for ISWE (leadership, policies, structures, norms and values) are ad hoc and weak.
- ▶ Pockets of good capacity in UN system, but overall existing capacity (systems, financial and human resources) for ISWE is inadequate.
- ▶ Role of UNEG in building capacity in the system.
- ▶ Capacity of Member States needs to be considered and addressed.

What constitutes good ISWE

- ▶ Provides credible and useful evidence on key strategic and operational issues.
- ▶ Useful for supporting oversight bodies and useful to senior management.
- ▶ Appropriate balance between independence, credibility and use.
- ▶ Used by those who govern the system.
- ▶ Financial and human resources commensurate with scope of delivery expected. Technical and strategic competency of evaluators and evaluation managers.
- ▶ Strong system components (e.g. country capacity).

Conclusions

- ▶ ISWE occurs in variety of forms, with varying degrees of usefulness.
- ▶ ISWE is not strategic and suffers from lack of coordination at operational level.
- ▶ ISWE has been approached as a structural issue and structural changes became politicized.
- ▶ Addressing the gap between what exists and what constitutes good ISWE requires substantive discussion and dialogue in the United Nations.

Recommendation 1

- ▶ The President of the General Assembly should set up a working group to explore the specific function it wants ISWE to play within the United Nations system.

Recommendation 2

- ▶ The Secretary-General should establish a process for strengthening coordination of the existing ISWE activities in the UN system. An interim coordination mechanism in the form of a Steering Group should be tasked with managing the process.

Recommendation 3

- ▶ The JIU should be supported in its on-going efforts to improve its effectiveness and relevance as an ISWE mechanism. This support should include providing the JIU with the opportunity to test its ability to coordinate the operational work of ISWE.

Recommendation 4

- ▶ The UN system should take action to improve the quality of system-wide policy-focused evaluations such as the QCPR. As a starting point, the Secretary-General should commission an independent evaluation of the QCPR purpose, approach, credibility and usefulness.

Recommendation 5

- ▶ The Secretary-General should request UNEG to work with its members in developing specific standards, guidance and competencies associated with system-wide evaluation. The Secretary General should ensure the necessary resources are made available to UNEG to facilitate this work.

Recommendation 6

- ▶ The Secretary-General should update the evaluation guidelines for the United Nations and include special directives related to ISWE in these guidelines.

Questions

- ▶ About the assignment
- ▶ About our methodology
- ▶ About our findings
- ▶ About our conclusions and recommendations
- ▶ Other questions