

Annual
General
Meeting
2023



UNEG
United Nations Evaluation Group

UNEG Chair's Annual Report 2022

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Hosts: Global Environment Facility (GEF) Washington D.C.

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Introduction

1. The UNEG Chair's Annual Report presents an overview of UNEG activities in 2022, as well as some personal reflections.

Overview of UNEG Work and Achievements in 2022

2. The UNEG Annual General Meeting took place virtually in January. We managed to successfully review and approve work undertaken in 2021, but also to establish work groups and work areas for the upcoming year. Indeed, the 20 work groups have been very busy and productive this year and I thank all the group members, and especially the coordinators, for their dedication and hard work.

3. In addition to ongoing work areas, we introduced peacebuilding to our work plan and the Working Group has successfully established a repository of information based on members' inputs, and organised sessions and webinars for members to learn lessons on peacebuilding evaluations.

4. Other highlights of the year include: the launch and publication of the [Guidance on the Integration of Disability and UNDIS reporting](#) in March; the publication of the [UNEG Member's FAQs](#) in June; and the publication of the [UNEG Self-Assessment Maturity Matrix for UN Evaluation Functions](#) and [Maturity Checklist](#) in December.

5. Despite remaining fully virtually, the UNEG Evaluation Practice Exchange (EPE) has also been a great success. The Organising Committee received 27 proposals by members to organise an EPE session. Seven were held in 2022, and more are scheduled for January-March 2023. The sessions have been well attended and the virtual format has allowed us to invite non-UNEG participants which has further enriched the experience.

6. The EPE and other events – virtual and in person – have been an opportunity for members to promote our work. I congratulate the Ethics Working Group for the session it organized at the European Evaluation Society meeting in June to present the Ethics Guidelines, and the National Evaluation Capacity Development Working Group for all its outreach activities also at the European Evaluation Society, the National Evaluation Capacities and ReLAC conferences.

Engagement with other evaluation communities

7. The Partnership Working Group has continued to lead UNEG's efforts in engaging with other evaluation communities. Given the scope and importance of its work, it was agreed that the Working Group should come directly under the purview of the UNEG Chair. The Working Group has developed a strategy based on the UNEG Theory of Change and has facilitated interaction with MOPAN, the Global Evaluation Initiative and EvalPartners. I have enjoyed and benefitted from my interactions with the group and thank the coordinators for their work.

8. An important element of the COVID-19 Working Group's work plan has been continued engagement with the OECD-DAC COVID-19 Coalition and ALNAP, ensuring a UN coordinated evaluation agenda. Following their excellent contributions over the past year, I strongly support the Group's proposal to continue to facilitate engagement with the Coalition.

9. As Chair, I have had the opportunity to represent UNEG in numerous meetings with partners over the last year, including the DAC EvalNet and Evaluation Cooperation Group of the International Financial Institutions meetings.

Ways of Working

UNEG Executive Steering Committee

10. I have been supported this year by vice-Chairs Andrew Fyfe (UNCDF/ WFP, SO1), Anne-Claire Luzot (WFP, SO2), Adan Ruiz-Villalba (WIPO, SO3 and UNEG Treasurer) and Lori Bell (UNHCR, SO3). We have met numerous times during the year, and I have greatly benefitted from each members' knowledge and support. I take this opportunity to thank each of them for their contributions.

11. Anne-Claire Luzot and Adan Ruiz-Villalba will continue their mandates in 2023. With regret, Andrew Fyfe is stepping down following his move to WFP. During his tenure, Andrew has led the establishment of the UNEG Membership Committee which has been doing excellent work over the year (see below). He also led work to publish the UNEG Peer Review Maturity Matrix which was approved by UNEG Heads on a no objection basis in October. He has provided year-round guidance to the SO1 work groups, helping them drive forward their work plans. He has been a very active vice-Chair and I would like to thank Andrew for all he has done over the last couple of years in service to UNEG. Lori Bell reached the end of her first mandate and has chosen to stand for reelection.

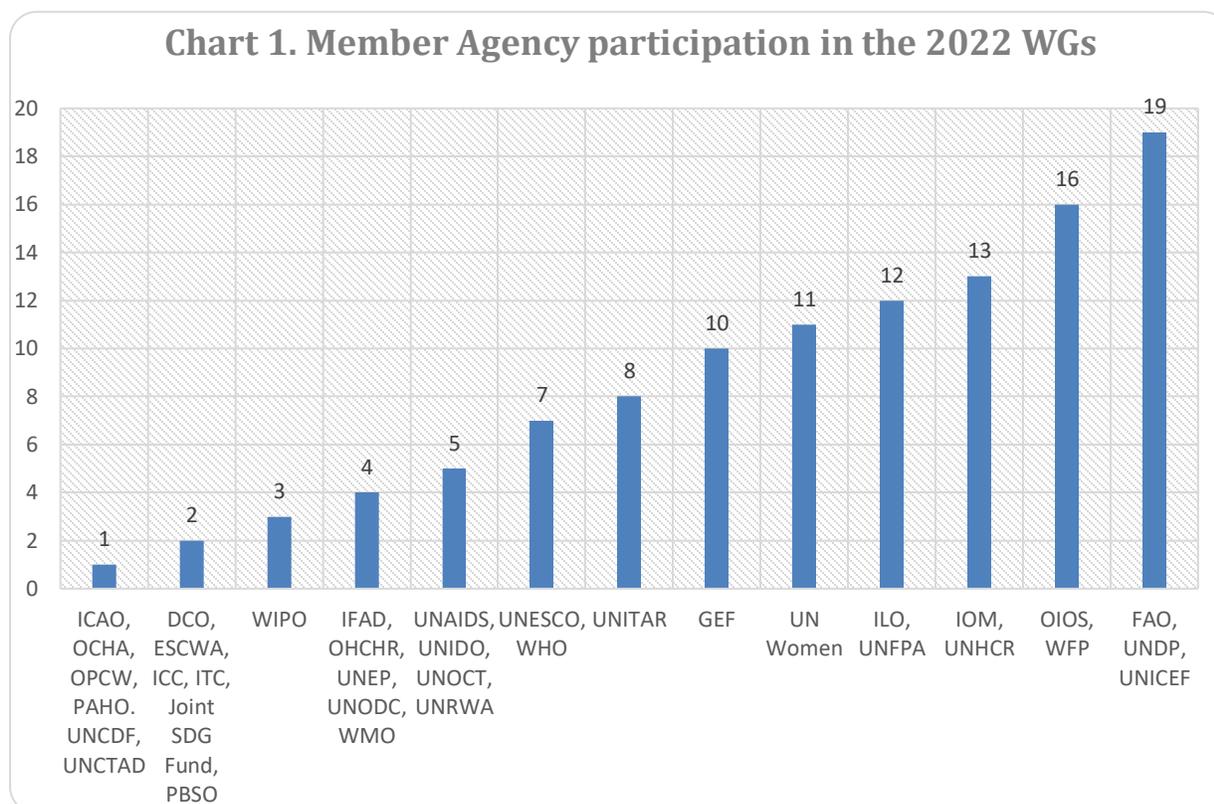
12. As per the UNEG Principles of Working Together (2022), the UNEG Secretariat circulated a call for nominations for vice-Chairs in November 2022. The elections have been conducted electronically and the results will be announced at the AGM 2023. I thank Juha Uitto (GEF) for volunteering to serve as the Election Official.

13. As indicated, the vice-Chairs have provided strong leadership and shown great commitment throughout the course of the year. However, there have been times where members have had to take a step back from UNEG for both personal and professional reasons. The ESC recognizes that these prolonged absences have caused unfortunate delays in some areas and, as such, will develop back up processes to avoid such delays next year.

14. Bo Weston continues to serve as UNEG Secretariat, supporting the ESC, WGs and members on a part-time basis. Her contract was renewed in September 2022.

UNEG Working Groups

15. 36 member agencies participated in the 2022 WGs (see Chart 1).



16. Despite moving the AGM to beginning of the year, the UNEG Work Plan 2022 was only approved in June on a no objection basis. Delays in finalizing the work plan and having it approved are caused the time it takes for WG membership to be finally determined; co-conveners to be nominated; and the final work areas to be agreed upon.

17. For this reason, at the AGM 2023, I want us to focus on making concrete decisions for the work plan 2023. We have already asked the 2022 WGs to identify the conveners/ coordinators which the majority have been able to do. The SO vice-Chairs will only organise the first meeting for those groups who have not been able to already identify someone to do so.

18. The 2022 work groups have also made concrete proposals for work areas for next year. Based on these proposals, I believe **staff can already start considering which of the groups they wish to join**. For this reason, the period for staff to sign-up to the WGs will be limited to a two-week period after the AGM.

UNEG Communications and Knowledge Management

19. The Secretariat has been actively using both Twitter and LinkedIn to post UNEG-related announcements and updates, and reposting news from UNEG members and the wider evaluation community. The [UNEG LinkedIn page](#) has been a particularly strong tool for sharing news and engaging members of the wider evaluation community and since 10th January 2022, the page has attracted 3347

followers. It has also helped promote the UNEG YouTube channel where the virtual [EPE 2022-2023 sessions](#) have been uploaded.

20. As reported at the AGM 2022, PanApps was awarded the contract to maintain the UNEG website, taking over from the developers who had managed the site for over 15 years. Over the last year they have been responsive to ad hoc requests for updates and we are now comfortable that they are familiar enough with the website that, in 2023, we envisage undertaking a total redevelopment of the UNEG website. As reported in the UNEG Treasurer's FY2022 report, the benefits of converting the current website to Drupal, the most used Content Management System (CMS) for corporate web applications include: an improved design and user experience; and enhanced site content management, databases and development for features such as Wikis and Groups. The estimated cost for this redevelopment is USD40K which I hope will be approved.

UNEG Membership

21. At the UNEG AGM 2022, we constituted a Membership Committee which, according to their mandate, acts as the first point of contact for prospective members and provides ongoing support to newly – admitted members and observers. Over the last year, the Committee, led by Andrew Fyfe (UNEG vice-Chair) and includes (Eddie) Yee Woo Guo (OIOS), Lisa Sutton (UN Women) and Josephine Mwenda (UNOCT), have met with all aspiring members to review and discuss their applications. Based on their meetings and internal discussions, the Committee have then circulated the applications and their recommendations to UNEG Heads for approval on a two-week no objection basis.

22. This new approach to reviewing membership applications has been extremely successful and the Committee have done an excellent job which has strengthened the UNEG membership application process. I would like to thank all the Committee members for their time and dedication.

UNEG Chair's Reflections

23. 2022 has been another challenging year for our institutions, functions and UNEG. The ongoing global crises have increased demands on staff, limiting their time for UNEG activities. Despite our achievements in 2022, much still needs to be done for which we need the membership's full engagement and commitment.

24. There are important trends affecting the conduct of evaluation in the UN system. These should be recognized for the evaluation function to remain relevant. These include, recognizing that we are conducting evaluation amid compounding crises affecting the world. How does the UN evaluation community react to this new reality? One of these crises is the environmental crisis. We are thankful to our host the Global Environment Facility for putting together a very significant conversation about the need to take fully into account the relationship between the natural and the social systems. Simultaneously, we are witnessing a technological revolution that risks increasing the gaps and inequalities around the world. Data scientists are influencing the narrative about what can be done for improving peoples' lives. How can the UN evaluation community make better use of technology, including of artificial intelligence, to ask the questions that trigger a transformative change?

25. Additionally, we have included in the AGM 2023 agenda a “brainstorming session” during which we want to identify ways to re-energise the group.

26. In 2024, we will need to start drafting our 2025-2029 Strategy. We can start reflections for this work during the brainstorming session. In addition to the discussions at the AGM, we may consider developing a set of key performance indicators to measure our progress against the 2020-2024 Strategy. Your engagement in this process is vital and I count on your support over the next year.

27. As advocated by my predecessors, I advocate that staff engagement in UNEG become part and parcel of their performance plans and assessments, so they can get due credit and recognition. It is only when we have staff at all levels engage productively and freely in the work of UNEG that it can live up to its vision.

28. The townhall meeting in November was an important opportunity to engage with UNEG Heads and hear their feedback on EvalWeek and the AGM agenda. In particular, we heard and supported the call for an in-person EPE. We agreed it is an excellent opportunity for staff to meet, exchange ideas and experiences, and to learn from each other. However, only two groups confirmed they would be able to hold in-person sessions meaning it was not possible. We cannot offer what you are asking for without your contributions and support.

29. We will discuss the EPE at the AGM, but I would like to start by suggesting that we **collectively agree on a theme for the EPE 2024**. We also need to consider the format and timing of the EPE. Whilst I see the value of a full UNEG EvalWeek, having the PDS, EPE and AGM running concurrently places additional heavy demands on hosts, especially when it is a single small agency. We do not yet know where the AGM 2024 will be held but, in such cases, can we consider having an in-person EPE on a separate date and venue to the AGM?

30. **At the AGM, I would like to focus our decisions on:**

- i. Developing a draft 2023 work plan;
- ii. Closure of inactive WGs and consideration of new WG depending on demand;
- iii. Approval of the tentative UNEG Secretariat budget 2023 and funding envelopes of the 2023 WGs;
- iv. Agreeing on principles for an in-person EPE 2024 including date and venue, and an overarching theme; and
- v. Preparing to revise the UNEG mid-term strategy.

31. It has been a very rewarding experience leading UNEG and thank you for your support which I hope to count on in the coming year.