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United Nations Evaluation Group

# A Comparative Analysis of the Articulation of and Commitment to National Evaluation Capacity Development by United Nations Agencies' Evaluation Policies

## **UNEG AGM 2025**

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The working group is chaired by Michala Assankpon (WFP) and Riccardo Polastro (WHO) and active members are Michael Francis Craft (UN Women), Fiona Wambui Gatere (UNHCR), Grace Igweta (WFP), Richard Jones (UNDP), Asela Kalugampitiya (UNFPA), Renata Mirulla (FAO), Simone La Rosa Monier (UNIDO), Guido Tomas Quiroga (WFP), Nicola Theunissen (WFP), Ricardo Furman Wolf (ILO).

## ACRONYMS<sup>1</sup>

CO	Country Office
CPA	Comparative Policy Analysis
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
ECB	Evaluation Capacity Building
GEI	Global Evaluation Initiative
HQ	Headquarters
IEG	Independent Evaluation Group
IEO	Independent Evaluation Office
INCE	National Evaluation Capacities Index
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NEC	National Evaluation Capacities Conference
NECD	National Evaluation Capacity Development
NECD WG	National Evaluation Capacity Development – Working Group
NES	National Evaluation Systems
RO	Regional Office
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
ToC	Theory of Change
UN	United Nations
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
VOPEs	Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation

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<sup>1</sup> For United Nations agencies' acronyms please refer to Annex 2.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Introduction and background

To achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Member States need evidence to inform their decision-making in planning, implementation, and efficient resource allocation. In that realisation, the states play a central role as a coordinator of development initiatives, hence the need for a concerted effort to develop the capacities of member states so that they can monitor, evaluate, and make decisions that result in better development outcomes. The National Evaluation Capacities Development (NECD) emerged from the realisation that some states have limited capacities to manage, commission and conduct evaluations. United Nations (UN) agencies, funds and programmes have been mandated by UN General Assembly Resolutions A/RES/77/283, A/RES/69/237 and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17 target 17.9 to support developing countries in strengthening their national evaluation capacities. This policy analysis focuses on examining the articulation of and commitment to NECD by UN agencies.

## Purpose

This policy analysis aims to identify the articulation of and commitment to supporting national evaluation capacities in selected United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) members' evaluation policies and provide recommendations concerning (strengthening) integration of, or potential to integrate, provisions to strengthen the national evaluation capacities of UN member states. The policy analysis emanates from the request that was made in January 2023, at the UNEG Annual General Meeting. The UNEG National Evaluation Capacities Development Working Group was asked to review the UNEG member policies to answer the following questions: (1) What are the UNEG members' commitments to supporting National Evaluation Capacities in their evaluation policies? (2) What are the recommendations concerning (strengthening) integration of, or potential to integrate, provisions to strengthen National Evaluation Capacities? (3) What are the summary findings of formal assessments of national evaluation systems where these exist? (4) What are the main demand and supply factors influencing engagement by UN agencies in NECD, e.g., demand, needs by countries, detailed needs assessment, donor requirements, overall policy guidance, etc.?

## Methods

A comparative policy analysis (CPA) was used as a methodological approach to collect evidence and frame the analysis. CPA is ideal as it allows the combining analysis of complexity whilst at the same time preserving cases as configurations of attributes with a systematic cross-case comparison to detect regularities. This was informed by the fact that NECD is a shared responsibility hence the need to examine individual commitments and aggregated NECD commitments of UN agencies. The policy analysis was also complemented by semi-structured interviews with UNEG members' heads or deputy heads of the evaluation function.

## Key findings

### *Commitment to NECD*

The UN agencies' commitment to NECD is clustered into the following four categories.

The first category is that of UN agencies with no NECD commitment in their policies. The policy analysis revealed that 21 UNEG members' policies have no NECD components or commitments. The main reasons for not committing to NECD are that the agencies are too small (have limited resources) and lack the necessary country presence that is required for a meaningful strengthening of national evaluation capacities.

The second category is a group of UN agencies such as ITC, ILO, GCF, UNESCO and UNHCR that have no specific commitments to NECD, however, they can incidentally contribute to NECD through joint evaluations with government departments. The wording of the policy shows that these agencies anticipate collaborating with member states on joint evaluations that can lead to developing evaluation commissioning and management capacities. Although they allude to supporting SDGs, there is no specific mention of SDG 17 target 17.9 or the United Nations General Assembly Resolutions A/RES/69/237 and A/RES/77/283.

The third category is made up of UN agencies such as UNAIDS, UNCTAD, UNECE, UNEP, UNIDO, UNITAR, UNODC, UNRWA, and WHO have a specific paragraph on NECD. The paragraphs are included as part of the UNEG members' principles in the policy. The paragraph is aligned with the UNEG Norms and Standards (2016) Norm 9. By including this in the policy, these UN agencies are classified as having a medium commitment. Although there is no evidence that these policy intentions have been translated into strategies and evaluation function portfolio of work, the agency concerned can easily implement NECD activities without revising the policy.

The fourth category consists of the following agencies UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women, WFP, and UNDP (UNV and UNCDF<sup>2</sup>) can be regarded as having a high commitment to NECD. These policies highlight the need for NECD and the agency's approach to NECD which is different from the other policies. These agencies include NECD in their evaluation theories of change and strategies. There is also evidence of implementation of NECD interventions in their annual evaluation reports.

#### *Approaches to NECD*

Four main approaches are used to strengthen national evaluation capacities. The first commonly used approach is joint evaluations with government departments. They capacitate government departments with skills and knowledge in commissioning and managing evaluations. The second approach is using partnerships to strengthen national evaluation capacities. The partnerships include partnering with other UN agencies, government departments and other development partners. The third approach is advocacy activities that are targeted at creating demand for national evaluation systems. Advocacy is used to rally support around the strengthening of national evaluation systems, and this is achieved through engagement through various platforms that include support for country-level evaluation workshops or conferences. Finally, there is also individual training to enhance evaluation skills and knowledge that features in some policies, evaluation strategies and annual reports.

#### *The level at which technical support is provided*

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<sup>2</sup> UNV and UNCDF use UNDP's Evaluation policy.

Across all the policies there are various levels at which technical support for NECD is provided. However, it seems that the common approach is for the staff at the UNEG member's central evaluation office to drive the NECD interventions. Larger UN agencies with regional and country-level presence use also their regional offices to implement NECD interventions.

### *Funding for NECD*

The policy review shows that despite the intentions to contribute towards the development of national evaluation capacities, most of the policies are not clear at strategic level on how the work on strengthening national evaluation capacities will be funded. The same trend is further reflected in the evaluation strategies. However, it is important to note that evaluation policy components such as corporate and decentralised evaluations' funding sources are explicitly explained in the policy.

### **Conclusions**

Across all the policies there is limited evidence that shows that the proposed interventions/intentions are informed by robust evidence that enables UNEG member agencies to prioritise NECD interventions. There are only few countries that have conducted a comprehensive national evaluation systems capacities assessments/diagnostic have a clear action plan on what should happen for them to reach a point where they start commissioning evaluations and generate relevant evidence that is needed for learning and decision-making. There is a limited strategy to understand the evaluation capacity gaps in member countries, hence the strategies that are employed are addressing implied not verified capacity gaps.

The policy analysis shows that the approach to NECD is fragmented in two ways. Firstly, the fragmentation is at the UNEG member level where there is limited collaboration and coordination on who is focusing on which components of the NECD, in which member state/s and at what level. This is important since NECD is a shared responsibility of the UN agencies hence the need for a systematic approach of sharing responsibilities that delivers results, currently this is not the case. Secondly, there is also fragmentation at the level of focus of the NECD interventions (Global, Country and sector). Interventions that focus on the global level are complicated in the sense that little is known about how these interventions are cascaded to the country-level NECD. The implication is that NECD is ad hoc, and this limits its effectiveness.

All the policies reviewed are silent on the issue of evaluating NECD activities. This trend is also replicated by other organisations outside the UN system – there are very limited evaluations on interventions that focus on NECD. How do UNEG members know that they are doing the right thing? Some NECD interventions have been implemented for several years however there is very limited information on what works, for whom, and in what context.

Evaluation as an area of practice or 'subdiscipline' is evolving and the new developments in evaluation should be central and be factored into the emerging national evaluation systems. Evaluation policies lack key aspects of established principles such as leaving no one behind, gender-responsive evaluation, equitable evaluation, footprint evaluation, transformative evaluation, culturally sensitive evaluation, indigenous knowledge, etc. Without factoring these into the national evaluation systems there is a possibility of these systems not responding to the current needs of the population.



What is emerging from the policy analysis is that a limited evaluation function budget impedes the response to the requests for support (country-led demand). The implication is that although there are resolutions that mandate UNEG members to support member states' request for NECD support there is limited funding for NECD work.

There are emerging arguments that say by focusing NECD interventions at the national level alone without complementing it with sector and subnational-level interventions there is a possibility of developing a system that is a shell (is not reflective of what is happening on the ground). Developing a national evaluation system using the bottom-up approach can also yield the intended results that can lead to desired outcomes. This is informed by the fact that the majority of UNEG members work mainly with specific ministries or sectors. Bottom-up approaches are effective especially for SDGs as their interventions are implemented at the sector level. It also provides an opportunity to include every development player who is working at the local level (reflective of the development space).

Among the UNEG members, there is a realisation that for member states to achieve NECD objectives the demand should be driven from within the member states. Evidence from, Benin, Chile, Costa Rica, South Africa, and Uganda shows that member states that have made significant progress in developing and strengthening their national evaluation systems did so through internal actions that were supported by development agencies. The implication is that even though external support is available it will not be effective unless there is a local ownership and drive to develop the national evaluation system.

## Recommendations

### **Recommendation 1: UNEG Members should implement their NECD policy intentions.**

- a) UNEG members with no NECD commitments should revise their policies to commit to supporting and implementing NECD interventions according to UN Resolutions A/RES/77/283, A/RES/69/237 and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17.
- b) UNEG members with NECD commitments in their policies should translate these policy intentions into real interventions through the evaluation function's strategy.

Generic statements on NECD that are not followed by specific strategies and interventions have limited effectiveness. In addition, the strategies and interventions should be specific to allow other UNEG members to understand the agency's area of contribution to NECD.

**Recommendation 2: UNEG members should support national evaluation system diagnostic/assessments that generate evidence that informs NECD interventions.** The diagnostics should be country-led and country-owned and lead to the development of country-level NECD action plans and feed into UNEG members' evaluation strategies and plans. Given that diagnostics/assessments benefit several UNEG members there is a need to pool resources and collaboratively support member states to conduct national evaluation system diagnostic/assessments.

### **Recommendation 3: NECD is a shared responsibility and UNEG members are encouraged to partner and collaborate in their delivery of NECD.**

- a) The UNEG agencies must identify platforms that enables the systemization and harmonisation of the various NECD initiatives and activity mix of UNEG members and other

entities involved in NECD. The platforms should lead to mapping NECD initiatives and provide an understanding of who is doing what and where.

- b) UNEG should set NECD standards and norms as part of the systemisation of NECD. The standards and norms must include the emerging agreed principles such as gender-responsive evaluation (except for UN Women), equitable evaluation, footprint evaluation, transformative evaluation, culturally sensitive evaluation, and indigenous knowledge.
- c) UNEG members are encouraged to use the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) platforms at the country level for NECD planning and collaboration with member states. Furthermore, UNEG agencies should explore platforms for NECD collaboration at the regional level with other development partners such as regional development banks, VOPEs and other organisations that have an interest in NECD.
- d) UNEG members must jointly evaluate their NECD initiatives to generate evidence that informs NECD strategies and interventions.

**Recommendation 4: UNEG members together with other development partners present in the region are encouraged to explore the modalities of strengthening sector-specific evaluation capacities (e.g., WHO in health), especially in sectors that align with their mandates.** This allows UN agencies to take the lead in developing evaluation capacities that contribute to their work and the national evaluation capacities. This will also ensure that the specific SDGs aligned with that sector receive adequate attention whilst at the same time contributing to developing individual and institutional evaluation capacities.

**Recommendation 5: UNEG members must ensure that NECD policy intentions are supported by financial and human resources.** The funding should be aligned with the UNEG 2022 report that recommended that at least 10 per cent of evaluation resources should be allocated to NECD.

**Recommendation 6: UNEG members that are too small, without country-level reach or are too specialised are encouraged to use partnerships as a mechanism to support NECD.** Within the partnerships, they can also advocate for their areas of interest that are aligned with their mandate. Partnering with global, regional, and country-level partners can ensure better country-level reach and enable the UNEG members to achieve their NECD goals/intentions.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

To achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Member States need evidence to inform their decision-making in planning, implementation, and efficient resource allocation. In that realisation, the states play a central role as a coordinator of development initiatives, hence the need for a concerted effort to develop the capacities of member states so that they can monitor, evaluate, and make decisions that result in better development outcomes. National Evaluation Capacities Development (NECD), an initiative that emerged from the realisation that some states have limited capacities to manage, commission and conduct evaluations. United Nations (UN) agencies, funds and programmes have been mandated by the UN General Assembly Resolutions A/RES/77/283, A/RES/69/237 and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17 target 17.9 to support developing countries in strengthening their national evaluation capacities. This policy analysis focuses on examining the articulation of and commitment to NECD by UN agencies.

## 1.1 Purpose of the Policy Analysis

This policy analysis aims to identify the articulation of and commitment to supporting national evaluation capacities in selected United Nation Evaluation Group (UNEG) members' evaluation policies and provide recommendations concerning (strengthening) integration of, or potential to integrate, provisions to strengthen the national evaluation capacities of UN member states. The policy analysis emanates from the request that was made in January 2023, at the UNEG Annual General Meeting. The UNEG National Evaluation Capacities Development Working Group was asked to review the UNEG member policies to answer the following questions:

- What are the UNEG members' commitments to supporting National Evaluation Capacities in their evaluation policies?
- What are the recommendations concerning (strengthening) integration of, or potential to integrate, provisions to strengthen National Evaluation Capacities?
- What are the summary findings of formal assessments of national evaluation systems where these exist?
- What are the main demand and supply factors influencing engagement by UN agencies in NECD, e.g., demand, needs by countries, detailed needs assessment, donor requirements, overall policy guidance, etc.?

### 1.1.1 UN Agencies' Mandates on National Evaluation Capacities Development

As stated, the policy analysis is framed around two UN resolutions on NECD and the SDGs. The Resolution A/RES/69/237 *"Invites the entities of the United Nations development system, with the collaboration of national and international stakeholders, to support, upon request, efforts to further strengthen the capacity of Member States for evaluation, in accordance with their national policies and priorities"* (UN, 2014).

The Sustainable Development Goal 17, specifically target 17.9, calls for UN members to “*enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all sustainable development goals, including through North-South, South-South, and triangular cooperation*” (UN, 2015).

Furthermore, the policy analysis is also informed by the the current United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/77/283 which establishes that United Nations agencies and their evaluation functions should continue to support the capacity development of national evaluation ecosystems, including support to the enabling environment, institutional and individual capacities. The resolution states “*Requests the United Nations agencies, within existing mandates and resources, to provide support at the request of Member States on their efforts to undertake evaluations of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and facilitate the exchange of experiences and knowledge products from those evaluations*” (UN, 2023).

The review also draws from the UNEG report titled: *United Nations' Contributions to National Evaluation Capacity Development and the Evolution of National Evaluation Systems: An Overview of the Implementation of General Assembly Resolution 69/237* (UNEG, 2022).

## 1.2 Background and Context

### 1.2.1 Importance of NECD to the achievement of development outcomes

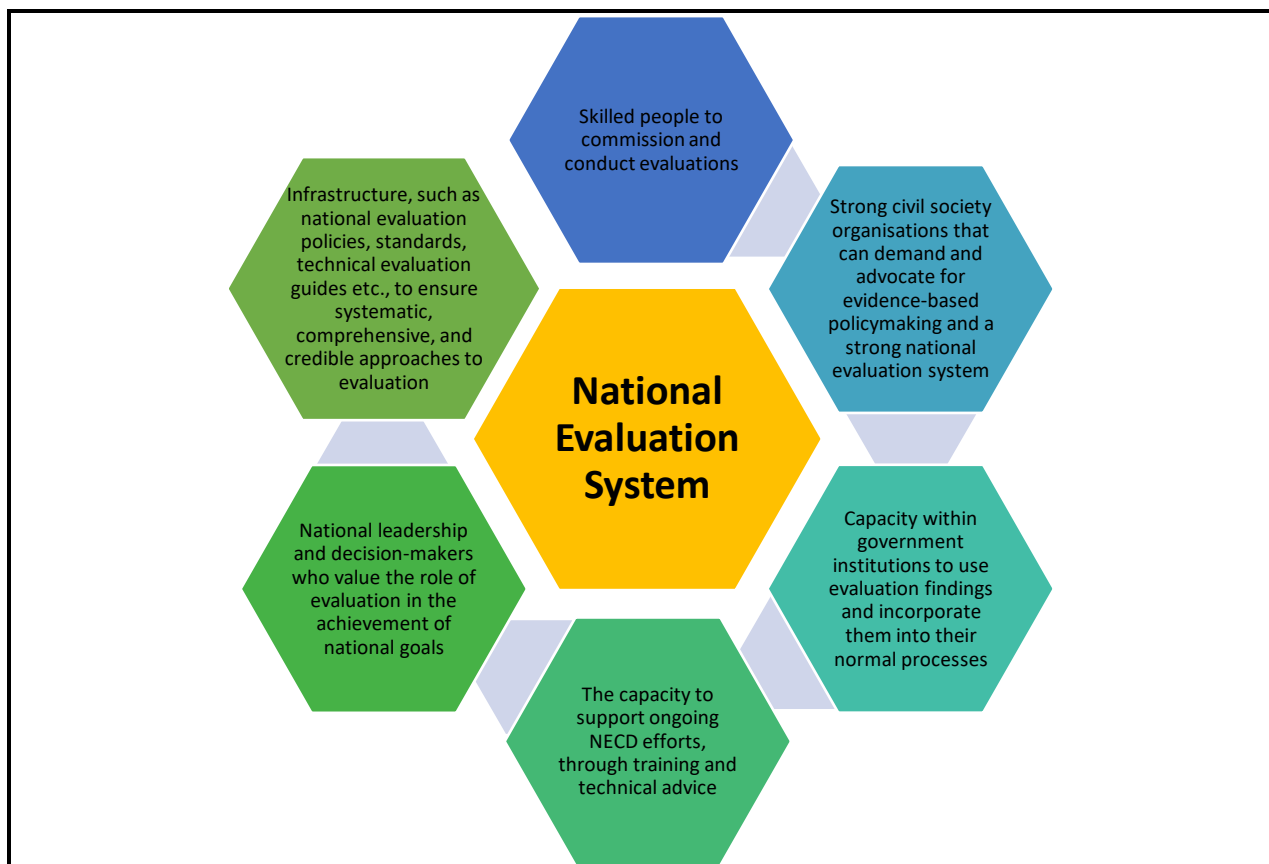
NECD is the process whereby state and non-state entities and individuals expand, reinforce, and sustain national capacity to manage, produce and use evaluation (UNEG, 2022). Capacity expresses the ability to effectively, efficiently and sustainably perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve evaluation objectives both at the individual, institutional and system<sup>3</sup> levels (UNDP, 2009). Critical to evaluation capacity strengthening is the recognition that capacity involves three interdependent levels: individual, institutional and system level (enabling environment) (Tacchi and Lennie 2014). The premise that underlies NECD is that results-based monitoring and evaluation are key public management tools that can help build and foster political and financial support for policies, programmes and projects and can help governments build a solid knowledge base. They can also produce major changes in the way governments and organisations operate, leading to improved performance, accountability, transparency, learning, and knowledge (Kusek & Rist, 2004). The development of evaluation capacities at the national level is critical to ensuring that countries have evaluation evidence to 1) facilitate the planning, decision-making and prioritization of resource allocation in budgeting processes; 2) facilitate learning and improvement of the implementation of activities at the sector, programme, or project levels (i.e., results-based management); 3) hold governments accountable for the performance on the activities they manage and conduct; and 4) demonstrate the extent to which development activities have been successful (Mackay, 2007).

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<sup>3</sup> Also referred to as Enabling environment.

The development of national evaluation capacities is directly linked to the establishment of effective national evaluation systems (NES), which have several key characteristics presented in Figure 1 below.

**Figure 1 Characteristics of National Evaluation Systems**



Source: Adapted from UNEG 2022

It is well-known that initially evaluation capacities development was focused on strengthening and enhancing the evaluation skills, knowledge, and experiences of individuals. It soon became clear however, that the most effective way to implement NECD is through a systemic approach that covers all three capacity levels, individual, institutional, and the enabling environment; as well as the demand and supply sides (AfDB, 2013). These levels of national evaluation capacities are described in Table 1 below.

**Table 1 Levels of NECD**

NECD Level	Dimensions	NECD Interventions
Enabling Environment / System Level	Evaluation policies, strategies, plans and culture of evaluation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical assistance towards the development of evaluation policies, strategies and plans.</li> <li>• Advocacy for evaluation evidence use.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting the mobilisation of evaluation resources.</li> </ul>
<b>Institutional Level</b>	Evaluation structures, processes, plans, frameworks, resources, management and governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting the development of evaluation structures and processes.</li> <li>• Technical support on evaluation governance and management</li> <li>• Provide resources for evaluation.</li> </ul>
<b>Individual level</b>	Evaluation skills and knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training, coaching, mentoring and practical experience.</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from (Masvaure and Fish, 2022; Preskill and Boyle, 2008)

There are several frameworks for developing evaluation capacities at each level. At the individual level, Preskill and Boyle (2008) have developed a multidisciplinary model of evaluation capacity building (ECB) which presents 10 strategies including training, coaching, technical assistance, involvement in evaluation, mentorship, written materials, appreciative inquiry, communities of practice, and technology. At the institutional level, there is the provision of technical assistance to develop evaluation plans, frameworks, guidelines, and processes. At the enabling environment level, capacity development should be focused on increasing political will and motivation to produce and use evaluations, but also more importantly, a favourable policy and regulatory environment will support the use of evaluation (UNEG, 2022). Lastly, NECD should be context-specific and should address both supply and demand side capacities (Segone, 2010).

**1.2.2 Summary findings of formal assessments of national evaluation systems**

Several papers conceptualise how national evaluation systems could be assessed. Currently, there are two emerging tools for national evaluation systems diagnosis; firstly, there is the Monitoring and Evaluation Systems Analysis (MESA) that was developed by the Global Evaluation Initiative (GEI) and its network. The second tool is the National Evaluation Capacities Index (INCE) developed by DEval and WFP in collaboration with wide range of actors. Although there are several tools to assess national evaluation systems, the approach of these two tools foster country leadership and ownership through letting the country lead and own the assessment process and outputs. Hence the expectation is that after the assessment the countries will lead to the development of NECD action plans/ NECD capacity development strategies. These assessments are driven by demand from countries; however, the demand is so far limited thereby constraining the NECD. It is important to note that the INCE primarily presents its country assessment in the form of data report i.e. performance of specific indicators whilst MESA presents its assessments as report with contextual analysis and interpretation of the findings. Some of the key findings from country assessments are presented in the following paragraphs.

Poor institutionalisation of evaluation is one of the key findings that is emerging from the countries that have conducted NES assessments (Stockmann et al, 2023 and Griessel et al, 2019). Countries lack evaluation policies, plans, strategies and national evaluation plans. The implication is that the countries commission or conduct very limited evaluations thereby negatively affecting the

production of evaluative evidence. It is important to note that evidence from Asia demonstrates that the institutionalisation of M&E is higher in middle-income countries as compared to fragile and low-income countries (Polastro and Prokop, 2018).

There is also the challenge of low in-country demand for evaluation evidence. This is caused by poor appreciation of the role of evaluation in decision-making and the perennial view that evaluation is a policing tool hence low interest in developing effective national evaluation systems (Stockmann et al, 2023). Consequently, the low demand causes the supply side to assume a leadership role in NECD.

The lack of evaluation technical skills and knowledge by government officials is one of the key findings emanating from the assessments. In addition, the lack of technical skills is negatively complemented by a lack of practical experience in managing, commissioning, and conducting evaluations (Tarsilla, 2014). This challenge is compounded by the high turnover of staff who leave the government after being capacitated.

Finally, there is also a challenge of lack of political will to institutionalise monitoring and evaluation. Without the political, the bureaucratic arm of the government finds itself struggling for resources and support that facilitates the institutionalisation of M&E.

### *1.2.3 Key challenges in national evaluation capacities development*

The first challenge in the NECD is the different conceptualisations of the term 'capacity'. Evaluation capacity cannot be limited to the ability to conduct evaluations, there are different types of evaluation capacities including the capacity to manage, conduct and use evaluations. Therefore, a one-size-fits-all approach to NECD is problematic. Secondly, one of the key challenges, that although there have been key shifts in the NECD paradigm, continues to some extent today, which is the reduction of evaluation capacities development to the training of individuals. Evidence shows that training people to conduct evaluations alone is not enough for the development of national evaluation systems. Individual training needs to be complemented by strengthening the institutions to which they belong and also creating an enabling environment for the individuals to practice what they have learnt (Léautier, 2012).

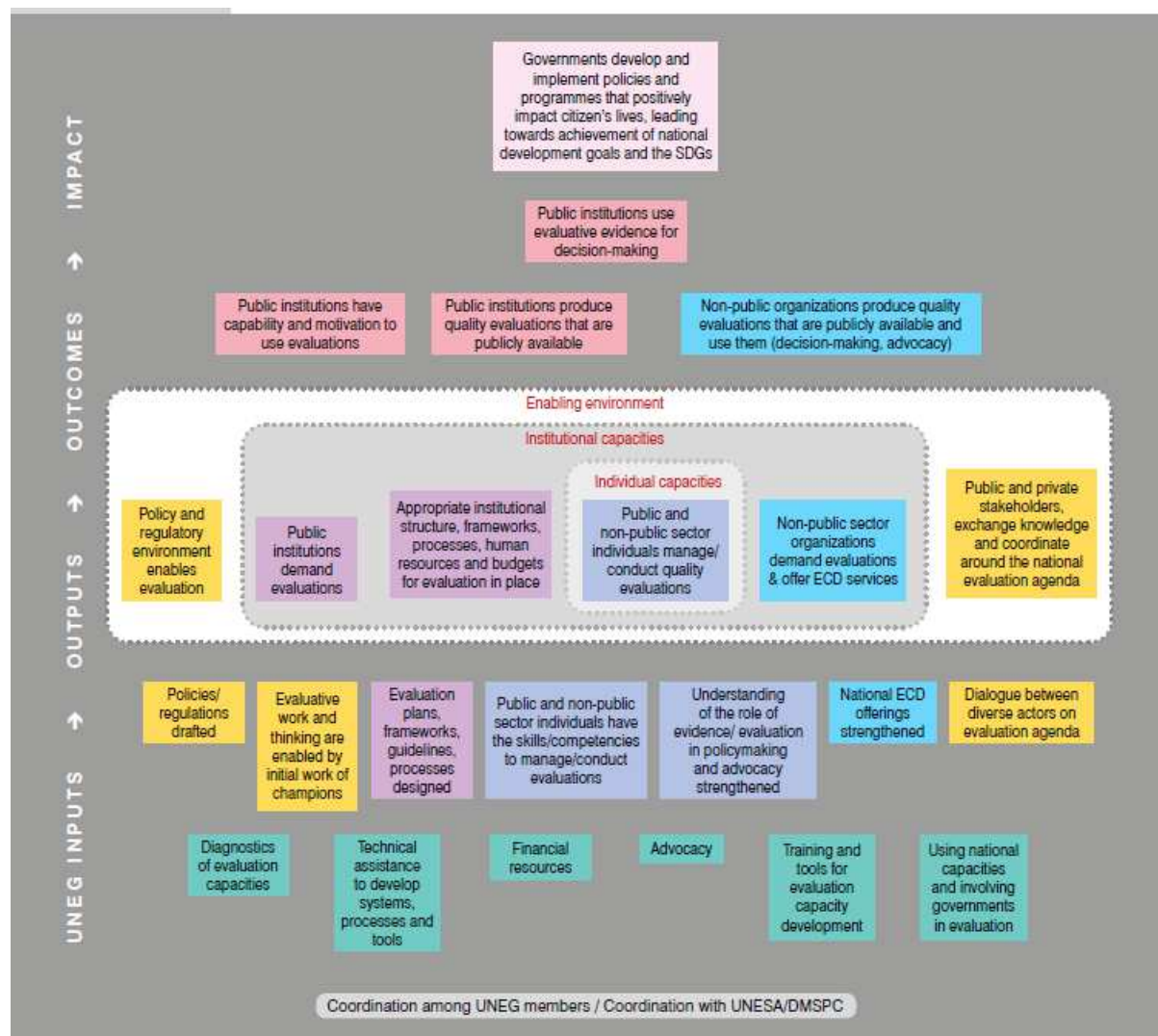
Secondly, there is a misconception that the national in 'NECD' refers to governmental evaluation capacities but in fact, national is an overarching term referring to the entire evaluation ecosystem operating at the national level, including Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), parliaments, Voluntary Organizations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs), and development partners. Although working with governments is an important component of NECD, stakeholders such as CSOs or parliaments also need the capacities to use evaluations to become informed about issues on which they could influence decision-makers, including the capacity to search for this evaluation evidence and understand it. When CSOs can use evaluations, this has the potential to improve the quality of democracy by providing citizens with information that allows them to assess government performance and influence the decision-making process (Feinstein, 2009). In this regard, EvalPartners has been working with VOPEs to promote the use of evaluation in decision-making (Kosheleva & Segone, 2013).



## 2 METHODOLOGY

A comparative policy analysis (CPA) was used as a methodological approach to collect evidence and frame the analysis. CPA is ideal as it allows combining the analysis of complexity whilst at the same time preserving cases as configurations of attributes with a systematic cross-case comparison to detect regularities (Engeli et al., 2014). In this way, the analysis will produce empirically well-grounded, context-sensitive evidence about UN members' evaluation policies and policy recommendations. In this study, policy shall mean broad guidelines or statements of goals for a course of action that should be followed in an institution (UNEG member) to address a particular issue in this case the strengthening of national evaluation capacities (Kerwin & Furlong, 2018). Policies also identify key activities and guide decision-makers on how to handle issues as they arise. This CPA focused on examining UNEG member policies to extract NECD components and explore how they relate to the UNEG NECD theory of change. The UNEG Theory of change is presented in Figure 2.

**Figure 2 UNEG NECD Theory of Change**





The methodology is based on the idea that policy outcomes can be achieved by several combinations of conditions that are either facilitated by one UNEG member or a collective of agencies. This implies that the various combinations of conditions in a policy work together to achieve specific outcomes. The analysis is at two levels; the first level examines the individual UNEG member policy (case) and its various combinations of conditions that work together to achieve the UNEG NECD theory of change outcomes. The second level examines the aggregated policy cases - UNEG member agencies' policies and how their various combinations of conditions work together to achieve the broad NECD outcomes as envisaged by the UNEG NECD theory of change outcomes. The second level is important because NECD is a UNEG member's shared responsibility as stipulated by SDG 17 specifically target 17.9 and the two United Nations General Assembly Resolutions A/RES/69/237 and A/RES/77/283.

The comparative policy analysis adopted the following steps:

### *2.1.1 Step 1: Problem or Issue Identification*

This phase defines the issue or the problem that needs to be addressed. In this case, the UNEG NECD WG seeks to understand the articulation of and commitment to supporting national evaluation capacities in selected UNEG members' evaluation policies and provide recommendations concerning (strengthening) integration of, or potential to integrate, provisions to strengthen national evaluation capacities development. The ultimate intention is to use the results of the policy analysis to strengthen UNEG members' role in NECD. The analysis focused on UN entities that are part of UNEG and have a valid Evaluation Policy that was developed or revised in or after 2015. The 2015 – 2023 cut-off date is necessary since the obligations for national evaluation capacities are associated with the UN Resolution A/RES/69/237 adopted in December 2014.

### *2.1.2 Step 2: Policy analysis*

#### **Identifying relevant documents for analysis**

- The first activity under this step was to critically review the literature on NECD and identify practices that apply to the mandates of the UNEG members.
- The second activity was to search and compile the relevant evaluation policies, strategies, annual reports and evaluation function peer-reviews for review and evaluation.

#### **Describing the various policies**

- The task was to describe each of the policies that are under review. The description was systematic and was guided by the criteria questions in the Policy Analysis Framework (Annex 1). The policies were assessed against this framework using three overarching criteria (1) Alignment with National Evaluation Capacities Development (2) National Evaluation Capacities development support and prioritisation (3) National Evaluation Capacities Funding and Implementation Modalities. Where there was no specific data, the gaps were filled through a review of the UNEG Member Agency-related documents such as evaluation strategies, annual reports, and evaluation function peer reviews.

### **2.1.3 Step 3: Policy Assessment**

- Using the criteria in Annex 1, each UNEG Member Agency's policy was assessed, and this led to the understanding of the sufficiency and deficiencies of the policy according to the criteria.
- Once the initial assessment of the policies was completed, the next step was to aggregate the findings from the process and produce a consolidated analysis and interpretation of what it means. The analysis was guided by the principle that developing NECD is a shared responsibility of the UNEG members and also the size of each UNEG member assessed.

### **2.1.4 Step 4: Semi-structured interviews with selected UNEG member Evaluation Function Heads/Directors**

- Nine semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected UNEG member heads or delegated representatives (7 men and 3 women)<sup>4</sup> of Evaluation Function to review the UNEG member's approach to meeting the requirements of SDG 17 specifically target 17.9 and the two United Nations General Assembly Resolutions A/RES/69/237 and A/RES/77/283. In addition, UNEG members' strategic approach to implementation and funding for strengthening national evaluation capacities were discussed. Furthermore, the semi-structured interviews provided insights into the main demand and supply factors influencing engagement by UN agencies in strengthening national evaluation capacities.

### **2.1.5 Step 5: Develop the full policy analysis report**

- A consolidated report was developed and captured findings for individual UNEG members and consolidated findings for all the policies reviewed.

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<sup>4</sup> One of the interviews was attended by two representatives.

### 3 FINDINGS

The presentation of findings recognises that a policy sets the strategic direction and the vision of the UN agency evaluation function whilst the agency’s evaluation implementation strategy gives details in terms of how NECD is supposed to be rolled out (noting that some agencies have developed specific NECD strategies either at global or regional level). At the same time Evaluation Function annual reports provide evidence of what was implemented on NECD. Evaluation Function Peer review reports also provide additional NECD information. The findings integrate the policy intentions and the actions of the agency as stipulated by the evaluation strategy, evaluation annual reports and peer review reports. The findings are not a comprehensive review of the UN agencies’ NECD activities but commitments to NECD as stipulated by the evaluation policies, evaluation strategies and evaluation annual reports. UN agencies might be implementing NECD-specific activities either through their programmatic or evaluation functions, however, if these are not reflected in the evaluation policies and strategies, they are not captured in this report.

The analysis is cognisant that not all UN agencies are the same, they differ in financial and human resources and member states' reach. Some are too specialised and have no country presence hence developing national evaluation capacities is not a priority. There is an expectation that larger agencies should play a bigger role, especially those that are focusing on the development space.

#### 3.1 Policy Articulation of NECD

To streamline the presentation of the findings, the UNEG members were rated and clustered into four groups that are aligned with the purpose of this study. The Table 2 below provides the rating dimensions.

**Table 2 Policy NECD rating criteria**

Level of commitment to NECD	Rating Criteria
<b>No Commitment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No evaluation policy</li> <li>No mention of NECD in policy</li> <li>Policy outdated (Developed before 2014)</li> </ul>
<b>Low (Incidental) Commitment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy only mentions joint evaluations with government departments</li> </ul>
<b>Medium commitment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy commits to NECD</li> <li>Minimal NECD strategies and interventions in policy</li> <li>No specific articulation of NECD funding</li> <li>Limited translation of policy NECD intentions into actions</li> </ul>
<b>High Commitment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed commitment to NECD in the policy</li> <li>NECD is part of the UNEG member’s Evaluation Function theory of change</li> <li>Policy’s NECD intentions are translated into an evaluation strategy (Workstream or programmatic area of work)</li> <li>Policy or strategy has NECD funding commitment</li> </ul>

The UNEG member policy search yielded 40 evaluation policies. Five out of these 40 were developed before 2015 and these were not considered for the review since they were beyond its

scope. Out of the remaining 35 policies, only 19 have NECD commitments. An in-depth analysis was focused on these 19 evaluation policies.

Although some of these policies have components of joint evaluations that might result in national evaluation capacities development if conducted in collaboration with government institutions, the wording of the joint evaluations component in these policies does not allude to or infer that the joint evaluations will be conducted in collaboration with the member states or government departments. This means that 21 UNEG members' policies have no NECD components. An additional eight UNEG members do not have published evaluation policies.

An in-depth analysis of the policies led to the clustering presented in the Table 3 below.

**Table 3 Presence of NECD in Policies**

No commitment to NECD <sup>5</sup>		Incidental commitment to NECD	Medium commitment to NECD	High commitment to NECD
CTBTO	PBSO 2022	GCF 2021	UNAIDS 2019	UN Women 2020
DGACM	PBSO 2022	ITC 2015	UNCTAD 2023	UNDP 2019 (UNV & UNCDF)
DPO	UNDESA 2021	ILO 2017	UNECE 2021	UNFPA 2019
ECLAC 2011	UNDPA	UNESCO 2022	UNEP 2022	UNICEF 2023
GEF 2019	UNECA 2014	UNHCR 2022	UNIDO 2021	WFP 2022
FAO 2010	UNESCAP 2023		UNITAR 2021	
IAEA 2011	UNESCWA 2017		UNODC 2022	
ICAO 2021	UN-Habitat 2013		UNRWA 2022	
ICC	UNICRI 2015		WHO 2018	
IFAD 2021	UNOCT 2021			
IOM 2018	UNOCT 2021			
OCHA 2012	WIPO 2016			
OHCHR (N.D)	WMO 2023			
OIOS	WTO			
OPCW 2012				
PAHO				

### 3.1.1 UNEG Members with no Commitment to NECD

This category is made up of three types of UNEG members; (1) those without an evaluation policy or policy that is not published; (2) those with policies developed before 2015; (3) those with policies but no reference or commitment to NECD. Some of these UNEG members might be implementing NECD interventions, however, if these are not reflected in the policy it means that the evaluation function of the member has no NECD commitment.

It is important to note that NECD is not uniquely a responsibility of evaluation offices, the UN resolutions refer to the agencies, hence, there might be contributions to NECD that are not necessarily part of the evaluation function. However, the expectation is that NECD should fall within the evaluation function of the agency.

<sup>5</sup> Year in front of the UNEG member's name represent the year of the policy. If no year means, there is no evaluation policy.

Several reasons were put forward on why some of these UN agencies do not commit to NECD. For example, evaluation function peer reviews of ICAO and IOM include reasons why these two agencies are not involved in NECD. For ICAO, the peer review stated that it was not feasible for the agency to be involved in NECD given the fact that it was too small and lacked the necessary country presence that is required for meaningful strengthening of national evaluation capacities (ICAO, 2020). IOM and WIPO also provided similar reasons for not engaging in NECD.

In the case of IOM, the peer review states that the agency’s decentralized evaluation function is still emerging and cannot support member states' evaluations (IOM, 2021). For the rest of the agencies in this category, the same reasons might apply, however, this is not documented in their policies.

### 3.1.2 Incidental Commitment to NECD through Joint Evaluations

UNEG members such as ITC, ILO, GCF, UNESCO and UNHCR have joint evaluation components in their policies that *may* incidentally contribute to NECD. The wording shows that these agencies anticipate collaborating with member states on joint evaluations that can lead to developing evaluation commissioning and management capacities. Although they allude to supporting SDGs, there is no specific mention of SDG 17 target 17.9 or the United Nations General Assembly Resolutions A/RES/69/237 and A/RES/77/283.

Furthermore, there are no specific implementation arrangements for the collaborative joint evaluations with member states. In addition, there is no dedicated funding for these joint evaluations. Their annual reports and evaluation strategies do not report on or include NECD.

ILO policy highlights that it strengthens the capacity of its constituents (Government, Labour, and Business), however, this is not phrased as NECD.

GCF has a unique situation where it primarily funds climate change adaption and mitigation projects. The funding is channelled towards GCF-accredited entities that are based in member states. Some of these accredited entities are government departments/institutions. As part of the accreditation process, they are expected to have put in place monitoring and evaluation systems as a precondition for receiving funding. There is also an expectation that the funded programmes will be evaluated jointly with GCF’s Independent Evaluation Unit. Incidentally, the GCF approach helps institutions develop monitoring and evaluation systems that contribute to the broad NECD. In addition, there is also a component for strengthening the evaluation capacities of accredited entities with a specific focus on the climate change sector.

The Table 4 presents specific policy texts from these five UN agencies.

**Table 4 Joint evaluations as NECD approach**

UNEG Member	Specific Policy Text on Joint Evaluations.
GCF	“It is the responsibility of Accredited Entities to demonstrate during the accreditation application process (and thereafter) that they have the capacity and systems to implement the Policy, including being able to ensure that timely and credible monitoring and (at the least) the functionally independent evaluation of project implementation and performance is feasible and undertaken for GCF investments” (GCF Evaluation Policy 2021, p10).

<b>ILO</b>	“Enhancing evaluation capacity for constituents will focus on the inclusion of <i>social partners in United Nations evaluation capacity development activities related to the SDGs</i> and enhance the involvement of constituents in the evaluation process” (ILO Evaluation Policy 2017, 43).
<b>ITC</b>	“In close collaboration with UNEG, the Evaluation Unit will assess the possibility of conducting <b>joint evaluations with</b> other UN agencies and partners on issues of common interest. In alignment with the 2014 UN Resolution on Capacity Building for the Evaluation of Development Activities in the Country Level, the Evaluation Unit will also explore ways to leverage evaluation processes at the country level to support evaluation capacity building for development results in developing countries” (ITC Evaluation Policy 2015, p4)
<b>UNESCO</b>	“Does the evaluation present an opportunity to evaluate joint activities/programmes/objectives (e.g., UNSDCF, SDGs) or contribute to a larger effort by partners (e.g., UNESCO National Commissions, National government” UNESCO Evaluation Policy 2022, p17).
<b>UNHCR</b>	“Joint evaluation initiatives, following discussions with other UN agencies and other partners (including the government);” (UNHCR Evaluation Policy 2022, p7).

Source: Evaluation policies of GCF, ILO, ITC, UNESCO and UNHCR

### 3.1.3 Medium Commitment to NECD

UNAIDS, UNCTAD, UNECE, UNEP, UNIDO, UNITAR, UNODC, UNRWA, and WHO have a specific paragraph on NECD in their evaluation policies. The paragraphs are included as part of the UNEG members’ principles in the policy. The paragraph is aligned with the UNEG Norms and Standards (2016) Norm 9:

*“The effective use of evaluation can make valuable contributions to accountability and learning and thereby justify actions to strengthen national evaluation capacities. In line with the General Assembly resolution A/RES/69/237 on building capacity for the evaluation of development activities at the country level, national evaluation capacities should be supported upon the request of Member States”.*

By including this in the policy, these UN agencies are classified as having a medium commitment. Although there is no evidence in the evaluation strategies and annual reports that these policy intentions have been translated into strategies and evaluation function portfolio of work, the agency concerned can easily implement NECD activities without revising the policy.

The specific wording of the policies shows that the policies focus on meeting the 2014 UN Resolution (A/RES/69/237) on Capacity Building for the Evaluation of Development Activities at the country level and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is important to note that these policies do not refer to the new UN Resolution A/RES/77/283, which is an expected finding as the policies were developed before the resolution was passed in April 2023.

The reference to NECD as an obligation is not complemented by proposing specific actions that the UN member will take to address NECD in other supporting documents such as evaluation strategies and annual reports.

Furthermore, the intentions of NECD are not further followed by addressing where the funding for NECD will come from and at what level of the agency (headquarters, regional offices or country offices) is NECD going to be implemented. These policies also do not state at what level of NECD (individual, institutional and enabling environment) will they focus.

In addition to stating the commitments to NECD, there is also a component of joint evaluations in these policies. There are intentions of conducting joint evaluations with other UN agencies, development stakeholders and governments. However, it must be emphasized that this is a mere mention of joint evaluations with the governments with no further elaboration on how the joint evaluations are linked to the NECD or the specific capacities to be developed with joint evaluations.

The WHO policy only mentions NECD in the background section and does not take it further to other sections of the policy or any other organisational evaluation documents.

UNITAR’s peer review highlights that although there is an intention to strengthen national evaluation capacities, the agency is prevented from doing so given its limited human and financial resources and the nature of its work (UNITAR, 2021). This is also confirmed by the UNITAR’s evaluation strategy which does not include any components of NECD.

UNAIDS, UNEP, UNESCO, UNIDO, and UNRWA do not translate the policy’s NECD intentions into their agency’s evaluation strategies or evaluation annual reports. UNODC and UNECE have limited aspects of NECD in their annual evaluation reports (but no published evaluation strategies). These are presented in the Table 5 below.

**Table 5 Articulation of NECD in Policy**

UNEG Member Policies	How does the policy articulate commitment to NECD?
UNRWA	“The effective use of evaluation can make valuable contributions to accountability and learning and thereby justify actions to strengthen national evaluation capacities. In line with General Assembly resolution A/RES/69/237 on building capacity for the evaluation of development activities at the country level, national evaluation capacities should be supported by involving UNRWA national staff in decentralized evaluation management and national consultants on commissioned teams” (UNRWA Evaluation Policy 2022, p9).
UNODC	“Seeking opportunities for collaboration with other United Nations entities in multi-stakeholder partnerships to continue contributing to national evaluation capacity in the Member States, in line with the General Assembly resolution 69/237 on building capacity for the evaluation of development activities at the country level” (UNODC Evaluation Policy 2022, p22).
UNIDO	“The Office is the focal point of evaluation know-how in UNIDO. In collaboration with the Department of Human Resources Management, it designs and carries out training for UNIDO staff and other stakeholders on subjects that are relevant to evaluation. The Office also carries



	out outreach and capacity-building activities to strengthen the national evaluation capacities of Member States and at UNIDO” (UNIDO Evaluation Policy 2021, p10).
<b>UNCTAD</b>	“Evaluation Unit and evaluators respect, promote and contribute to the goals and targets set out in the 2030 Agenda and other internationally agreed agendas. In addition, evaluations contribute to the Paris Declaration principles of country ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for development results, and mutual accountability” (UNCTAD Evaluation Policy 2023, p5).
<b>UNEP</b>	“The effective use of evaluation can make valuable contributions to accountability and learning and thereby justify actions to strengthen national evaluation capacities. In line with General Assembly resolution A/RES/69/237 on building capacity for the evaluation of development activities at the country level UNEP will, where appropriate, support the enhancement of national evaluation capacities through collaborative evaluation efforts where an evaluation of mutual interest is identified” (UNEP Evaluation Policy 2022, p7)
<b>UNITAR</b>	“As recognized by the UNEG N&S and General Assembly resolution 69/237 of 14 December 2014, building national evaluation capacities at the country level is important for development activities. PPME will contribute to such efforts upon request and by the principle of national ownership.” (UNITAR Evaluation Policy 2021, p10)
<b>UNECE</b>	“As established by UNEG, the effective use of evaluation can make valuable contributions to accountability and learning and thereby justify actions to strengthen national evaluation capacities. In line with General Assembly resolution 69/23716 on building capacity for the evaluation of development activities at the country level, national evaluation capacities should be supported upon the request of Member States”. (UNECE Evaluation Policy 2021, p5).
<b>UNAIDS</b>	“The effective use of evaluation can make valuable contributions to accountability and learning—and can thereby justify actions to strengthen national evaluation capacities. In line with General Assembly resolution A/RES/69/237 on building capacity for the evaluation of development activities at the country level, strengthening national capacities for evaluation is a priority for UNAIDS. At the UNAIDS Secretariat, the programme branch (strategic information department) is responsible for providing country support on evaluation, together with staff working on strategic information in Country Offices. The promotion of multistakeholder partnerships for national evaluation capacity development is a priority for UNAIDS but lies beyond the scope of this evaluation policy, which focuses on evaluation of the work of the Joint Programme and Secretariat” (UNAIDS Evaluation Policy 2019, p9).
<b>WHO</b>	“The external environment in which WHO operates has also considerably evolved in recent years. The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015, as well as the transformation in the humanitarian sector following the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, provides new directions for the conduct of evaluation. Thus, in a 2014 resolution, the United Nations General Assembly reiterated the importance of national evaluation capacities, as did the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for the development of the United Nations system in 2016, which also underscored the strengthening of joint and system-wide evaluations to support more effectively the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals” (WHO Evaluation Policy 2018, p2).



Source: Evaluation policies of UNAIDS, UNECE, UNITAR, UNEP, UNICTAD, UNIDO, UNODC, UNRWA.

### 3.1.4 High level of commitment to NECD

The policies of UNDP (which also covers UNV and UNCDF), UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women and WFP can be regarded as having a high commitment to NECD. These policies highlight the need for NECD and the agency's approach to NECD which is different from the other policies that either mention NECD as a UNEG norm and stop there or mention joint evaluations which is then inferred as NECD.

#### UN Women

The policy articulates the NECD commitment as follows:

*"The development of national evaluation capacities is an important vehicle to help realize gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Entity will seek to support national capacity development in relevant evaluation processes. Partnerships for evaluation capacity development may be promoted to support the capacity of Governments, national and regional evaluation associations, and networks concerning gender-responsive evaluation. The Global Evaluation Strategy incorporates principles for strengthening national evaluation capacities for gender-responsive M&E systems."* UN Women Evaluation Policy 2020, p11)

UN Women's evaluation policy and strategy show commitment to NECD objectives, outcomes, approaches and interventions. UN Women's strategy has a theory of change which shows the integration of NECD into the agency's mandate. The agency is also a partner of the Global Evaluation Initiative<sup>6</sup> – which elevates its commitment. Furthermore, UN Women's evaluation policy does not include a theory of change with specific NECD components.

#### UNDP (UNV, UNCDF)

The UNDP evaluation policy also covers UNV and UNCDF. The UNDP policy states that the NECD is a priority programme area,

*"Apart from the conduct of independent and decentralized evaluations of the work of UNDP, support to national evaluation capacity is embraced as a programmatic priority in its own right, in line with General Assembly resolution 69/237".* (UNDP Evaluation Policy 2019, p2)

This is different from other policies in the sense that it is recognized as a programmatic area. However, this doesn't mean staff time and budget is allocated. In addition, the UNDP's draft evaluation strategy is specific on how it will address NECD, and it is part of the evaluation function's theory of change.

It is also important to note that the UNDP evaluation strategy indicates that the agency's NECD work will be mainly implemented through the Global Evaluation Initiative – an initiative that was

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<sup>6</sup> GEI is a global network of organizations and experts supporting developing country governments with strengthening monitoring, evaluation, and the use of evidence in their countries. <https://www.globalevaluationinitiative.org/>

created by the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) and the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) of the World Bank.

## **UNFPA**

The UNFPA's policy has a slightly different approach to NECD, it states:

*“Evaluations are planned and conducted ensuring **national ownership and leadership** of evaluation processes by both rights holders and duty bearers. They are undertaken to strengthen national evaluation capacity and increase the participation of national counterparts, including beneficiaries, through inclusive and participatory approaches by principles of aid effectiveness, specifically the principles of national ownership and mutual accountability”.* (UNFPA Evaluation Policy 2019y, p9)

This implies that evaluations at UNFPA must ensure national ownership and leadership and that there should be an integration of national evaluation capacity strengthening in the evaluations of UNFPA.

Furthermore, the policy states:

*“In line with General Assembly Resolution A/RES/69/237, on building capacity for the evaluation of development activities at the country level, national evaluation capacities within the UNFPA mandate should be supported upon the request of Member States. They should respect, promote, and contribute to the goals and targets set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.* (UNFPA Evaluation Policy 2019, p10).

This statement is aligned with UNEG Norms and Standards (2016) Norm 9.

Similar to the UN Women and UNDP, UNFPA is also a partner of the Global Evaluation Initiative.

## **UNICEF**

UNICEF's policy also shares similar traits to the UNFPA in the sense that it seeks to foster national evaluation capacities through its decentralised evaluations. The UNICEF policy goes further to include the strengthening of national evaluation capacities in its theory of change in the policy. The policy states that:

*The UNICEF commitment to national ownership and country-level leadership of development processes extends to evaluation. It derives from General Assembly resolutions 70/1 endorsing the 2030 Agenda, 69/237 on building country-level capacity to evaluate development activities, and 77/283, encouraging countries to conduct Sustainable Development Goal evaluations to strengthen their voluntary national reviews and use evaluative evidence for their decision-making”* (UNICEF Evaluation Policy 2023, p17).

In addition, the UNICEF policy states its alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UNGA resolution A/Res/69/237.

## **WFP**

The WFP policy also includes strengthening national evaluation capacities in its theory of change. The policy states:

*“WFP will work with UNEG, the Global Evaluation Initiative and other partners to meet the commitments of the 2014 United Nations resolution on building national evaluation capacity in line*

*with the role of evaluation envisaged in the 2030 Agenda and the global evaluation agenda. OEV will support WFP regional bureaux and country offices in engaging with national governments and partners to strengthen the demand for and use of evaluation. WFP will also advocate country-led evaluations and the generation of evidence to inform national processes and reports on progress towards the achievement of the SDGs. It will further develop partnerships with national and regional evaluation institutions and experts to strengthen national evaluation systems and enhance both evaluation capacity and the pool of evaluation experts” (WFP Evaluation Policy 2022, p. 29).*

WFP envisages using partnerships with other players in the evaluation space to achieve the strengthening of the national evaluation systems. The policy introduces the term national evaluation systems instead of the commonly used NECD or national evaluation capacities. It is the only policy that alludes to the national evaluation system.

WFP is also part of the GEI. In the WFP’s evaluation strategy, NECD has a specific workstream with specific activities that are envisaged.

The common trait across all five agencies (UN Women, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP) is the insistence on the integration of NECD into the evaluation’s work, especially decentralised evaluations. In addition, the policies introduce principles of country ownership and leadership in strengthening national evaluation capacities.

## **3.2 Policy NECD Outcomes, NECD approaches and technical support**

### ***3.2.1 Policy expected outcomes on NECD***

In policymaking and development, defining the intended outcomes of the policy triggers the policy developers or makers to think about the causal pathway that shows why and how the agency will produce NECD outcomes. In this analysis outcomes are the changes that a UNEG member expects to result from their NECD programme.

The initial focus of the analysis was on examining the NECD outcomes as stipulated by the policies under review. The outcomes in the policies were complemented by a review of the evaluation strategies of the UNEG members with NECD components. This provided more details on the outcomes.

The outcomes are clearly articulated if the UNEG member has an evaluation function’s theory of change that includes NECD. Except for UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women and WFP, all the other policies have no clear articulation of the expected NECD outcomes. They only highlight the UNEG member’s obligation to the 2030 Agenda and the UNGA resolution A/RES/69/237 without defining the expected outcomes.

The UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women and WFP outcomes can be summarised as centring on achieving strengthened demand for and use of evaluations by the national governments. There is also an emphasis on providing timely evidence for decision-making to enable the attainment of development goals.

The outcome states the overarching goal for strengthening national evaluation capacities which is to improve development effectiveness/outcomes in member states. The assumption is that if

member states use evaluative evidence and other forms of evidence in decision-making, they are likely to make better decisions that will result in better development outcomes. The policies outcomes are presented in the Table 6.

**Table 6 Policy NECD outcomes**

UNEG Member	Policy NECD Outcomes
UNFPA	National evaluation capacity is strengthened through multi-stakeholder partnerships at global, regional and national levels, including with other United Nations organizations to accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 with a focus on leaving no one behind.
UNDP	Greater government capacity to coordinate, conduct and use evaluations for decision-making.
UNICEF	No explicit outcome. One overall outcome for all evaluation function interventions. <i>“Evaluation evidence is systematically used for learning and accountability, guiding the effective design and implementation of programmes in UNICEF and supporting decision-making by partners for improving child well-being.”</i>
UN Women	Strengthened national context to conduct gender-responsive evaluation for meeting gender equity commitments and SDGs.
WFP	Partnerships contribute to a strengthened environment for evaluation at global, regional, and national levels, and to UN coherence

Source: UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women and WFP - Evaluation Function Theories of Change.

### 3.2.2 Level at which NECD is targeted

The background section highlighted that there are three levels of national evaluation capacities. The first level focuses on individual-level evaluation skills and knowledge while the second level focuses on institutional/organisational including internal policies, arrangements, procedures, and frameworks. The third level is the enabling environment (policies, legislation, evaluation plans, strategies, and evaluation culture).

Pursuant to the articulation of the NECD outcomes, the policies show that there is limited articulation of the level of the NECD that is being targeted and justification why that specific level has been chosen is missing. This is also reflected across the evaluation strategies and annual reports. The policies articulate NECD at an abstract global level (NECD activities that are targeted at the global community not necessarily at the country level) with limited details on what capacities are expected to be developed, at what level and why. This is related to unclear or undefined causal pathways on how the UNEG members will achieve their intended NECD outcomes.

Some policies highlight the three levels of national evaluation capacities; however, they stop short of providing details on the dimensions targeted and the associated interventions e.g., the WFP policy highlights targeting and strengthening the national evaluation system without stating explicitly the dimensions to be targeted and why. However, the WFP’s strategy provides more details on the targeted NECD activities. UNICEF highlights that it intends to develop a pool of national consultants with the capacity to conduct evaluations. UNFPA’s annual report also highlights individual-level

training and Voluntary Organisations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs). UNDP's National Evaluation Capacities conference work can be regarded as focusing on meeting several enabling environment dimensions. The implication is that when one reads the policy together with the evaluation strategy and the annual reports one struggles to identify the agency's NECD structural focus; is the agency focusing on global, country or sector-level? In addition, one struggles to understand the level of NECD the agencies are focusing on. A clear articulation of the area of the level targeted for NECD and to some extent the targeted member states is key, especially given the fact that NECD is a shared responsibility for all UN agencies hence the need to know who is doing what where.

### ***3.2.3 Approaches to Strengthening National Evaluation Capacities***

The policy analysis revealed that there are four main approaches to NECD. These approaches cut across all the policies with NECD components. They include joint evaluations/support to country-led evaluations, partnerships, advocacy, and training.

#### ***Joint Evaluation/support to Country-led Evaluations***

Joint evaluations (working in collaboration with government departments) are listed as an approach to strengthening national evaluation capacities by 19 UN agencies. In annual reports of UNDP, UNFPA, WHO, UN Women, WFP and WHO, there are commitments to supporting country-led evaluation. Although not explicit in how the joint evaluations contribute to national evaluation capacities, evaluation annual reports and strategies highlight that joint evaluations are key to strengthening national evaluation capacities. They do so by contributing to developing skills to commission and manage evaluations whilst at the same time providing practical experiences for member state officials involved in the evaluation. It is important to note that WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women and UNICEF specifically state that joint evaluations are platforms to integrate NECD into their specific areas of work.

#### ***Partnerships***

Partnerships for strengthening national evaluation capacities are also mentioned across several policies, if not mentioned in the policies they are mentioned in strategies and annual evaluation reports. The partnerships include partnering with other UN agencies, government departments and other development partners. The partnerships are specifically for developing national evaluation capacities. WFP, UN Women, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDP specifically mention the Global Evaluation Initiative as an NECD partner. It is important to note that partnering with GEI means the UNEG members will be tapping into the GEI network<sup>7</sup> that has a sole mandate to work with member

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<sup>7</sup> GEI is a global network of organisations and experts supporting developing country governments with strengthening monitoring, evaluation, and the use of evidence in their countries. It focuses its support on country-owned efforts aligned with local needs, goals and perspectives. Its global network includes bilateral and multilateral organizations, evaluation

states to deliver on strengthening national evaluation systems. The network has a country-level reach and can provide contextualised NECD support.

UNFPA has also a strategic partnership with EvalYouth, Eval4Action, EvalPartners, EvalGender+, and the Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation. It is important to note that several UNEG members are also part of these partnerships, and that these are global partnerships that are not targeting specific member states. How the partnerships link with specific member states in developing national evaluation capacities is not specified in the evaluation policies, strategies, and annual reports. On the other hand, UNICEF is co-leading EVALSDGs and serves as an active member of the EvalPartners' Management Group. Through these partnerships and others, UNICEF is supporting the preparation of voluntary national reviews.

### ***Advocacy for national evaluation capacities development***

Advocacy for national evaluation systems is also implicit in the policies and the strategies. Advocacy is used to rally support around the strengthening of national evaluation systems, and this is achieved through engagement through various platforms that include support for country-level evaluation workshops or conferences, UNDP's National Evaluation Capacities conferences and platforms that engage decision-makers within governments. UN Women's strategy also highlights advocacy as an approach to increase demand for gender-responsive evaluation. The advocacy interventions are relevant as they are aimed at stimulating demand for evaluation evidence and fostering a culture of evaluation that is expected to trigger member states to develop a national evaluation system.

### ***Individual training***

Individual training to enhance evaluation skills and knowledge features in some policies, evaluation strategies and annual reports. In addition to training, other specific forms of training are targeted at individuals such as giving emerging evaluators work experience (WFP, UNFPA, UNICEF) and training of country-level government officials on aspects of evaluation. Some of the individual training is targeted at individuals outside the state, to build a pool of evaluators that agencies can draw on. It is important to note that most of the training occurs within the specific sectors where agencies are working and not necessarily at the national level. There might be several trainings happening at the country level, however, these are not reflected in the UNEG members' annual reports.

### ***3.2.4 NECD Technical Support***

Across all the policies there are various levels at which technical support for NECD is provided. However, it seems that the common approach is for the staff at the UNEG member's central

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capacity service providers, civil society organisations, academic institutions, associations, and monitoring and evaluation experts. <https://www.globalevaluationinitiative.org/who-we-are>

evaluation office to drive the NECD intervention. Regional offices also play a role in providing NECD technical support, however, this is limited to larger UNEG members with regional structures. WFP is already using its regional evaluation offices to provide NECD technical support, whilst UNDP is planning on including NECD technical support as part of their regional offices. UNICEF evaluation policy and strategy envisages NECD technical support to be driven by regional offices, however, the actual implementation is occurring at the country level. In addition, the WFP evaluation policy and strategy alludes to letting the regional evaluation offices lead on NECD work and providing support at the country level.

The evaluation policies also highlight that there is technical support happening at the country level. However, peer reviews of the evaluation functions highlighted the challenge of limited staff with NECD experience at the country level and financial resources to enable smaller UNEG members' presence at the country level. Despite these limitations the assumption is that NECD happens at the country level hence technical support should be mainly offered at the country level. It is also important that partnerships enable the UNEG members to reach the country level for example partnerships with Global Evaluation Initiatives facilitate access to the GEI country-level network such as the CLEAR centres. The policy review shows that despite the intentions to contribute towards the development of national evaluation capacities, most of the policies are not clear on how this work will be funded. This is despite the recommendation made in the UNEG, 2022 report: *“United Nations agencies should explicitly include NECD as part of their mandates, incorporated into their evaluation policies, and allocate time and resources at corporate, regional and country levels. At least 10 per cent of evaluation resources should be allocated to NECD”*. This also includes the five agencies with high level of commitment to NECD (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women and WFP). Although there is reference to funding for NECD in the evaluation strategies, it is important to note that across all the policies, components such as corporate evaluations, decentralized evaluations and internal capacity development have guaranteed funding that is stipulated in the policy and are costed in evaluation plans. Furthermore, the strategies show that there are well-developed strategies to enable funding for these components, however, that is not the case for NECD.

UNEG members such as UNDP, UNICEF and WFP indicated in their evaluation strategies the availability of funding for NECD activities, however, unlike the evaluations that are funded through a certain percentage of the programme budget, there is no quantification of the funding and there is limited information on how the funding is spread across regions and member states. This does not mean that there is no funding, however, predictable funding, if stated in the policy, would increase certainty about the sustainability of NECD activities. This is also required to allow longer-term strategic support instead of scattered and/or ad hoc activities.

Key informants' interviews revealed that by not clearly defining and setting aside funding for strengthening national evaluation capacities it means that UN agencies will not have financial resources to meet requests for NECD support from member states. In cases where there is a willingness to provide the requested support, it means the evaluation function must expropriate resources from other high-value work. This means that there are funds, but budgeting around NECD is subject to prioritization and/or de-prioritization which makes the engagement less visible.



### 3.3 Demand and supply factors influencing engagement by UN agencies in NECD

This section presents mostly the findings from key informant interviews with UNEG agencies' evaluation function heads or delegated representatives. It presents the factors influencing engagement by UN Agencies in NECD.

The policy analysis shows that to a larger extent, the current NECD's strategic direction is shaped by the priorities of the UN agencies. The agencies define the specific NECD interventions that are implemented.

The first factor influencing engagement by UN Agencies in NECD is how NECD requests from member states are responded to. Key informants revealed that even though the UNGA resolution specifically states that UN agencies should support NECD initiatives when requested to do so by member countries – it was revealed that it is not a straightforward but a complex process. Key informant interviews indicated that member state requests may not be responded to positively if the request does not align with the UN agency's NECD priorities. In addition, it was highlighted that there is no specific funding mechanism that is reserved for such requests. If the requests are granted, it means that NECD becomes ad hoc and piecemeal leading to limited impact.

The second factor is that there is no shared contextualised, country-led and owned common understanding of what should happen in member states to realise a fully functional national evaluation system. Consequently, the supply side implements what it deems necessary to support NECD. It was highlighted that the lack of shared common understanding between UN agencies and the member states stems from the lack of diagnostics or assessments of national evaluation systems. It is important to note that there are countries that have conducted evaluation systems diagnostic assessments using the GEI's Monitoring and Evaluation Situational Analysis, the National Evaluation Capacities Index (INCE) and other tools, however, these assessments need to be owned by the countries so that they lead to developing a country led NECD action plan.

Diagnostic/assessments are useful for identifying capacity gaps and leading to the development of an action plan or strategy which everyone with an interest in NECD can use to address the gaps. The conundrum for diagnostic/assessments of the national evaluation capacities is that who should bear the cost of the diagnostic/assessment? How is the support to member states prioritised when it comes to diagnostics/assessments given the limited resources? This is further complicated by the fact that diagnostics/assessments should be country-led and owned. Despite these challenges, there is a realisation that national evaluation system diagnostics are important in the sense that they are a source of evidence that is critical for NECD decision-making.

The third factor is the lack of systematisation of approaches to strengthen national evaluation capacities and the lack of synchronisation of UN agencies' support for NECD. There are suggestions on how to systematise the requests for NECD support so that the priorities of member states and UN agencies are synchronised. All respondents highlighted that there is a need for country-level coordinated planning, which is supposed to be convened by both the UN agencies and the member states concerned. Such coming together (through the UN resident coordinator) to plan will result in agreeing on action plans, prioritisation and sharing responsibilities on who is going to do what. It will also result in the plans being factored into the country-level United Nations



Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework<sup>8</sup> (UNSDCF) and agency specific cooperation plans, with the likelihood of being funded. Furthermore, it was highlighted that that approach will address the ad hoc nature of NECD and provide country specific NECD interventions relevant to the member state context.

The fourth factor is that national evaluation systems are designed for whole government systems. UN agencies mostly work at the sector level except for UNDP and the World Bank. Consequently, UN agencies that work at the sector level have limited priorities at the supra-sectorial level. However, despite this limitation, there is an appetite by the UN agencies to develop sector-specific evaluation capacities that can help them meet their Agenda 2030 goals. It was also highlighted that such an approach may yield better results as NECD would be closely integrated into regular UN agencies' work and can be covered within the regular agency programme and evaluation budgets. Respondents also highlighted that this presents an opportunity for specific UN agencies to lead and coordinate country-level sector-specific NECD programmes. For UN agencies that are too specialised or too small to have country presence it was suggested that since they hardly receive requests for support, they can be part of partnerships that are aimed at strengthening national evaluation systems. Within such partnerships, they can propose interventions that are aligned with their mandate. GEI was mentioned as one such platform for agencies that have limited country-level reach.

The last factor is that UN agencies respond at the behest of the member states. This limits their involvement in NECD at the country level. It was highlighted that better coordination of requests for support for NECD by member states will yield better results. There is also the realisation that the countries that have successfully built national evaluation systems have achieved it through strong internal demand as compared to supply pressure. Inherently this implies that even if UN agencies have elaborate strategies for NECD, the success depends on the level of internal demand for national evaluation systems.

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<sup>8</sup> The UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework is a core instrument for providing a coherent, strategic direction for UN development activities by all UN entities at the country level.

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

This section discusses the findings from the policy analysis and will lead to specific recommendations that can be adopted to enhance UNEG members' approaches to strengthening national evaluation systems. Central to this discussion is the main reason for developing national evaluation systems which is to strengthen the capacity of the country to demand and use evaluation evidence in decision-making leading to development effectiveness. At the centre of NECD is the realisation that certain countries, often developing countries, lack the necessary evaluation capacities to manage, commission, conduct and use evaluations hence the need to address these gaps.

Several UNEG members have included NECD components in their policies. However, the inclusion should not only be in the policy without meaningful implementation of the policy intentions. As the findings revealed, the articulation of the policies should be complemented by defining clear outcomes and interventions that should be implemented by the UNEG members. The evaluation policies and strategies have no explicit explanation of how a member state with no functional evaluation system can be transformed into a member state with a functional national evaluation system.

### 4.1 What informs policy's NECD intentions and approaches?

Across all the policies there is limited evidence that shows that the proposed interventions/intentions are informed by robust evidence that enables UNEG member agencies to prioritise NECD interventions. Literature has shown that before developing a NECD intervention there is a need to conduct diagnostics of the member states' evaluation system to ascertain capacity gaps and design interventions that address the gaps. There are very few countries that have conducted National Evaluation Systems capacities assessments/diagnostics and have a clear roadmap on what should happen for them to reach a point where they start commissioning country-led evaluations and generate the relevant evidence that is needed for learning and decision-making. There is a limited strategy to understand the evaluation capacity gaps in member countries, hence the strategies that are employed are often addressing implied not verified capacity gaps. There is also a need to understand the system gaps so that the NECD activities target those components that drive change in the system and strengthen national evaluation systems.

The limited national evaluation diagnostics/assessments may imply that UNEG member interventions might not be targeting (for support) the appropriate and the most important components of the national evaluation system. In addition, countries alone cannot figure out what their national M&E systems should look like. There is a need for UNEG members to identify platforms to discuss the support available and envision collaboratively the outcomes and impacts of that support. NECD approaches should be guided by capacity assessments that lead to a systematic approach to strengthening national evaluation capacities.

## 4.2 Country-led demand for NECD support

The findings have shown that the current NECD interventions are supply-driven, however, the UNGA resolution states that the member states should lead by requesting support for NECD. This means that policy intentions on NECD are mainly UNEG member's intentions and complexity will arise when member states request support outside these intentions. It is critical for UNEG members to have a collaborative discussion on how to address the country-led demand (where available), if not coordinated it will lead to duplications, and ad hoc approaches to NECD. This can be frustrating for member states who must approach several agencies for support. Furthermore, UNEG agencies' NECD advocacy should also be coordinated and centred on stimulating country-led demand.

The findings also highlighted the need for UNEG members to be proactive and take deliberate actions so that the member states know the support available and the agency's priorities. This can be done through country-level UNSDCF platforms where those with responsibility for the national evaluation systems are invited to discuss the capacity gaps and how the UN members can contribute to addressing some of the gaps. In return, the member states in their long-term planning should do the same. This will provide context-specific solutions for the strengthening of national evaluation capacities. UNSDCF planning should incorporate the NECD components and should invite relevant people from the state with an interest in national evaluation capacities. These are relevant platforms to balance the priorities of UN agencies and member states. This approach can also be replicated at the regional level and include other key development partners with an NECD interest such as regional development banks. UNICEF has shown that a regional approach can yield better results and effectiveness (Polastro, 2022).

Furthermore, there is a need for UNEG members to stimulate the right demand for NECD through specific approaches and activities that target Member states. Without doing so UNEG members will be responding to requests for support that may not meet broadly the needs of the national evaluation systems of the members.

## 4.3 Fragmented Approach to NECD

The policies show that the approach to NECD is fragmented in two ways. Firstly, the fragmentation is at the UNEG member level where there is limited collaboration and coordination on who is focusing on which components of the NECD, in which member state/s and at what level. This is important since NECD is a shared responsibility of the UN agencies hence the need for a systematic approach of sharing responsibilities that delivers results currently, this is not the case.

Secondly, there is also fragmentation at the level of focus for the NECD interventions (Global, Country and sector). Interventions that focus on the global level are complicated in the sense that little is known about how these interventions are cascaded to the country-level NECD.

The various UN and wider coordination platforms can be used to systemize the approach and activity mix for NECD. This ensures that the approach to NECD produces the required results and meets the dictates of the UNEG ToC. Currently, there is a limited systematic approach to developing NECD. It can be argued that although the policies allude to NECD, there is a need to

be specific on the contribution of the UNEG member to NECD. Strengthening national evaluation capacities is a shared responsibility that should be done in a systematic and coordinated manner.

#### **4.4 Evaluating and assessing NECD activities**

In the policies reviewed, there is no reference to evaluating NECD activities. This trend is also replicated by other organisations outside the UN system – there are very limited evaluations of NECD interventions. How do UNEG members know that they are doing the right thing? NECD interventions have been implemented for several years however there is very limited information on what works, for whom, and in what context. There is limited evaluative evidence that demonstrates the relevance, effectiveness, and impact of NECD interventions. How are agencies learning from their experiences? It is pertinent to note that the current practice of entities involved in NECD is to draw from the broad evaluative capacity strengthening literature on what works and tailor it to NECD. It can be argued that if the interventions were effective there could have been more emerging member states with new functional evaluation systems. The non-evaluation also means that the new NECD programmes are designed without evidence from preceding interventions.

#### **4.5 Inclusion of emerging issues in the evaluation and national evaluation systems**

Evaluation as an area of practice or ‘subdiscipline’ is evolving and the new developments in evaluation should be central and be factored into the emerging national evaluation systems. UNEG Evaluation policies lack key aspects of established principles such as leaving no one behind, gender-responsive evaluation (except for UN Women), equitable evaluation, footprint evaluation, transformative evaluation, culturally sensitive evaluation, indigenous knowledge, etc. If these are not factored there is a possibility of developing national evaluation systems that are not responsive to the current needs of the citizens and can perpetuate the same problems that the current debates and developments are trying to address. There is an opportunity for UNEG to set the NECD standards and norms, especially around these universally agreed principles.

#### **4.6 Funding for NECD**

What is emerging from the policy analysis is that a limited evaluation function budget limits the response to the requests for support (country-led demand). The implication is that although there are resolutions that mandate UNEG members to support member states’ request for NECD support, there is limited funding for NECD work. In addition, the UNEG 2022 report also recommended that at least 10 per cent of evaluation resources should be allocated to NECD. The limited funding upends the envisaged interventions and results in them being ad-hoc and tailored to meet the available budget thereby limiting the impact of the intervention. In addition, in the UNEG members’ evaluation policies, there are no provisions for the modalities of funding of the NECD work. This means that NECD activities are dictated by the available funding thereby limiting the impact and reach of the NECD work. NECD policy intentions should be complemented by allocating resources for the programmes and interventions.

#### 4.7 Top-down or bottom-up approach

Given the fact the UN agencies work at sector or specific thematic levels, it is prudent to propose a bottom-up approach to developing national evaluation systems. There are emerging claims that by focusing NECD interventions at the national level alone without complementing it with sector and subnational-level interventions there is a possibility of developing a system that is a shell (is not reflective of what is happening on the ground). Developing a national evaluation system using the bottom-up approach can also yield the intended results that can lead to desired outcomes. This is informed by the fact that the majority of UNEG members work mainly with specific ministries or sectors. Bottom-up approaches are effective especially for SDGs as their interventions are implemented at the sector level. It also provides an opportunity to include every development player who is working at the local level (reflective of the development space). Working at sectoral-level, allows specific UN agencies to take a lead in sectors that align with their mandate – this ensures that the specific SDGs aligned with that sector receive adequate attention whilst at the same time contributing to developing individual and institutional evaluation capacities.

#### 4.8 Catalyst for NECD

Among the UNEG members, there is a realisation that for member states to achieve NECD objectives the demand should be driven from within the member states. Evidence from shows that member states that have made significant progress in developing and strengthening their national evaluation systems did so through internal actions that were supported by development agencies (South Africa, Uganda, Benin, Costa Rica, etc.). The implication is that even though external support is available it will not be effective unless there is a local ownership and drive to develop the national evaluation system. Hence UNEG members need to understand how to play the role of catalysts stimulating NECD within member states. UNEG member evaluation policies and strategies should not only focus on evaluation practitioners but also target decision-makers and political leadership that can help drive the demand for evaluation evidence.

## 5 RECOMMENDATIONS

**Recommendation 1: UNEG Members should implement their NECD policy intentions.**

- a) UNEG members with no NECD commitments should revise their policies to commit to supporting and implementing NECD interventions according to UN Resolutions A/RES/77/283, A/RES/69/237 and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17.
- b) UNEG members with NECD commitments in their policies should translate these policy intentions into real interventions through the evaluation function's strategy.

Generic statements on NECD that are not followed by specific strategies and interventions have limited effectiveness. In addition, the strategies and interventions should be specific to allow other UNEG members to understand the agency's area of contribution to NECD.

**Recommendation 2: UNEG members should support national evaluation system diagnostic/assessments that generate evidence that informs NECD interventions.** The diagnostics should be country-led and country-owned and lead to the development of country-level NECD action plans and feed into UNEG members' evaluation strategies and plans. Given that diagnostics/assessments benefit several UNEG members there is a need to pool resources and collaboratively support member states to conduct national evaluation system diagnostic/assessments.

**Recommendation 3: NECD is a shared responsibility and UNEG members are encouraged to partner and collaborate in their delivery of NECD.**

- a) The UNEG agencies must identify platforms that enable the systemization and harmonisation of the various NECD initiatives and activity mix of UNEG members and other entities involved in NECD. The platforms should lead to mapping NECD initiatives and provide an understanding of who is doing what and where.
- b) UNEG should set NECD standards and norms as part of the systemisation of NECD. The standards and norms must include the emerging agreed principles such as gender-responsive evaluation (except for UN Women), equitable evaluation, footprint evaluation, transformative evaluation, culturally sensitive evaluation, and indigenous knowledge.
- c) UNEG members are encouraged to use the UNSDCF platforms at the country level for NECD planning and collaboration with member states. Furthermore, UNEG agencies should explore platforms for NECD collaboration at the regional level with other development partners such as regional development banks, VOPEs and other organisations that have an interest in NECD.
- d) UNEG members must jointly evaluate their NECD initiatives to generate evidence that informs NECD strategies and interventions.

**Recommendation 4: UNEG members together with other development partners present in the region are encouraged to explore the modalities of strengthening sector-specific evaluation capacities (e.g., WHO in health), especially in sectors that align with their mandates.** This allows UN agencies to take the lead in developing evaluation capacities that contribute to their work and the national evaluation capacities. This will also ensure that the specific SDGs aligned with that

sector receive adequate attention whilst at the same time contributing to developing individual and institutional evaluation capacities.

**Recommendation 5: UNEG members must ensure that NECD policy intentions are supported by financial and human resources.** The funding should be aligned with the UNEG 2022 report that recommended that at least 10 per cent of evaluation resources should be allocated to NECD.

**Recommendation 6: UNEG members that are too small, without country-level reach or are too specialised are encouraged to use partnerships as a mechanism to support NECD.** Within the partnerships, they can also advocate for their areas of interest that are aligned with their mandate. Partnering with global, regional, and country-level partners can ensure better country-level reach and enable the UNEG members to achieve their NECD goals/intentions.

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## 7 ANNEXURES

### Annexure 1: Policy Analysis Framework

<b>Keyframing questions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the policy's articulation and commitment to supporting National Evaluation Capacities?</li> <li>• What are the recommendations concerning (strengthening) integration of, or potential to integrate, provisions to strengthen national evaluation capacity development?</li> <li>• What are the summary findings of formal assessments of national evaluation systems where these exist?</li> <li>• What are the main demand and supply factors influencing engagement by UN agencies in NECD, e.g., demand, needs by countries, detailed needs assessment, donor requirements, overall policy guidance etc?</li> </ul>	
<b>Parameters/criteria</b>	<b>Questions</b>
<b>Alignment with National Evaluation Capacities Development dictates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does the policy articulate commitment to NECD?</li> <li>• What is the current alignment of the policy to Sustainable Development Goal 17 (specifically SDG target 17.9)?</li> <li>• In what way does the policy reference capacity/system or support commitment to other Sustainable Development Goals in evaluation policies and/or strategies plans/frameworks?</li> <li>• In what way is the policy aligned/reflective of the UNGA resolution (2014) A/RES/69/237 and (2023) A/RES/77/283?</li> </ul>
<b>National evaluation capacities support and prioritisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the policy's NECD objectives?</li> <li>• What are the policy's expected NECD results?</li> <li>• In what way does the evaluation policy prioritise and/or have an explicit outcome on NECD?</li> <li>• What level of NECD is the policy targeting? (Individual, institutional or system level/enabling environment)</li> <li>• What are the NECD approaches envisaged in the policy?</li> <li>• What are the activities that are envisaged by the policy?</li> <li>• What are other relevant aspects of national capacities that may not refer to evaluation terminology but have a bearing on a country's ability to commission, manage and use evaluations? (e.g., joint evaluations, support to national statistics capacities, support to national planning, country-led evaluations)</li> </ul>

<p><b>National Evaluation Capacities Funding and Implementation Modalities</b></p>	<p><b>Implementation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What type of technical support (envisaged by the policy) from UNEG members is available for NECD?</li> <li>• At what level is the NECD technical support offered? (Headquarters, Regional Office, or Country Office level?)</li> <li>• What are the expected outcomes or results of the technical support by UNEG members on NECD?</li> </ul> <p><b>Funding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the funding arrangement for NECD work?</li> <li>• How does the UNEG member fund the NECD work?</li> <li>• At what level is NECD work funded? (HQ, RO or CO).</li> </ul>
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## Annexure 2 - 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  
**GCF** – Green Climate Fund  
**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)

### Annexure 3: Semi-structured interview guide – UN Agency Evaluation Function Heads.

1. What is your agency's commitment to strengthening national evaluation capacities/NECD as stipulated by UNGA (2014) A/RES/69/237 and (2023) A/RES/77/283? NECD?
  - Are there any specific objectives for NECD?
  - Are there any specific outcomes expected from the NECD work?
2. At what level of national evaluation capacities is your agency targeting? (Individual, institutional or system level/enabling environment).
  - Probe systematic approach
  - What are the specific activities that are targeted at strengthening NECD?
3. At what level of your agency is NECD technical support offered? (Headquarters, Regional Office, or Country Office level?)
  - At what level are requests for NECD support by UN member states, received, approved or discussed? (*What is the process of requesting NECD support by UN member states*)
4. What are the funding arrangements for NECD work?
  - How are the ad-hoc or impromptu requests for NECD support from member states funded?
5. The 2014 UN resolution on **Building capacity for the evaluation of development activities at the country level** specifies that the demand for NECD should be country-led i.e., come from member states. In cases where the member state cannot raise the demand for NECD, what is your approach?
  - Are there any activities that your agency uses to stimulate/ capacitate member states to request demand for NECD support?
  - What happens if there is no request for NECD support from UN member states?
6. What is your agency's approach to understanding the NECD/national evaluation capacity needs of the UN member states?
  - Capacity needs assessments?
  - National Evaluation Systems assessments?
7. Departing from the understanding that strengthening national evaluation capacities is a shared responsibility of UN agencies. As a UNEG member is there a shared understanding of what each UNEG member's contribution to NECD?
  - If yes how effective is the approach
  - If not how can UNEG tackle the various aspects of NECD as a collective?
8. The recent UNGA resolution A/RES/77/283 alludes to country-led evaluations. What is your agency's understanding and the meaning of country-led evaluation?
  - Are there any specific approaches that are available to support country-led evaluations?

- Is there a specific link between joint evaluations that involve government stakeholders and country-led evaluation?
9. Are there any recommendations on how UNEG members can support the strengthening of national evaluation systems?



## Annexure 4: Updated Theory of Change

Building on the results of the comparative policy analysis and primary data collection, it is proposed to adjust the Theory of Change presented in the UNEG 2022 report and add sector level ECD activities and partnerships under the UNEG inputs.

