



# Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

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**Organizational matters**

## **Annual Report of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director on the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2018- 2021**

### *Summary*

This report provides an overview of results achieved by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) in 2018, the first year of implementation of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021. The report addresses progress on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the UN system (QCPR); and an update on the waivers granted lowering the agreed cost-recovery rates. Committed to collaboration and coherence, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UN-Women started implementing the common chapter of their strategic plans in 2018. The results and progress in the six areas of collaboration are summarized in the joint report on the implementation of the common chapter.

Based on the analysis of each indicator, UN-Women has achieved most of the objectives set for 2018 in its results frameworks. An analysis to inform the remaining years of implementation of the Strategic Plan is also included.

A draft decision is included in section V.

## I. Introduction

1. The year 2018 was the first year of implementation of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021, showing overall positive results in UN-Women's performance. The Entity provided support to 107 countries and territories, including high-income countries. In total, 75 per cent of all indicators in the Strategic Plan have reached their expected milestone (Figure 1 below). Eighty-six per cent of development results milestones at the output level have been achieved.

2. This good performance took place in an increasingly complex environment for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment and rights of women and girls. Prevailing economic policies continue to deepen inequality and push people further behind. Climate change and environmental degradation are undermining the livelihoods of millions, in particular in the developing world. In some contexts, exclusionary and fear-based politics are gaining ground, breeding conflict and instability, and sometimes directly targeting women's rights. Millions are being forcibly displaced owing to violent conflict and humanitarian catastrophes.

3. At the same time, social mobilization and political support for women's rights continued to be high in many contexts. Millions marched in the streets, took on social media, or engaged in other forms of activism to demand an end to gender-based discrimination and violence, including sexual harassment. Women continued to make important strides in politics with several countries achieving gender balance in parliaments and executive cabinets. The New York Stock Exchange appointed its first female president and the Prime Minister of New Zealand became the first world leader to take maternity leave while in public office.

4. 2018 was also a year of profound change for the UN system. UN-Women has been fully engaged in the repositioning of the UN Development System (UNDS) and other reforms to ensure that ongoing changes further strengthen systemwide accountability and action for gender equality and women's empowerment. At the same time, UN-Women initiated a series of adjustments to ensure it is well positioned to deliver on its mandate in a repositioned UNDS and fully leverage its normative support, UN coordination and operational activities in an integrated manner to achieve results. In addition to adapting to ongoing reforms, these changes also take into account lessons learned for UN-Women, after seven years of operations.

5. In 2018, the Entity recorded its highest income and highest level of programme delivery since inception. These achievements, paired with the seventh consecutive unqualified audit opinion, demonstrate UN-Women's institutional strengths. The box below outlines some of UN-Women's key results in 2018.

**In 2018, UN-Women, in collaboration with partners, contributed to the following results:**

**Global norms and standards**

- 100 per cent of recommendations in the Secretary-General's report on the priority theme included in the agreed conclusions of the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)
- Participation of over 4,400 civil society representatives from 600 organizations, including youth activists, facilitated at CSW
- 83 per cent of UN country team reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women coordinated/led by UN-Women

**Leadership and governance**

- 44 laws adopted or reformed to strengthen women's rights in 25 countries
- More than 10,000 aspiring women leaders with increased skills for effective political campaigns
- 21 national women's machineries and 211 women's organizations better equipped to advocate for and monitor gender-responsive plans and budgets
- HIV-coordinating bodies in 23 countries with skills and knowledge to address gender inequalities in HIV strategies and programmes
- Over 18,000 justice personnel in 54 countries trained on women's human rights standards
- Almost 25,000 data producers and users with improved skills to collect and use gender data

**Economic empowerment**

- Over 50,000 women producers, workers and entrepreneurs in 26 countries with increased access to, use of and control over productive resources
- Over 23,000 women entrepreneurs in 25 countries with better access to financial services
- 273 government entities, companies and international organizations developed and/or implemented procurement policies to prioritize women-owned and women-led businesses

**Ending violence against women and girls**

- 48 countries adopted the Essential Services Package, providing better and more coordinated support for women and girl survivors of violence from the health, police and justice, social services sectors
- Over 2.2 million practitioners accessed the Virtual Knowledge Centre to end violence against women and girls
- Eight new cities started initiatives to prevent and respond to sexual harassment against women in public spaces

**Women, peace and security, humanitarian action and disaster risk reduction**

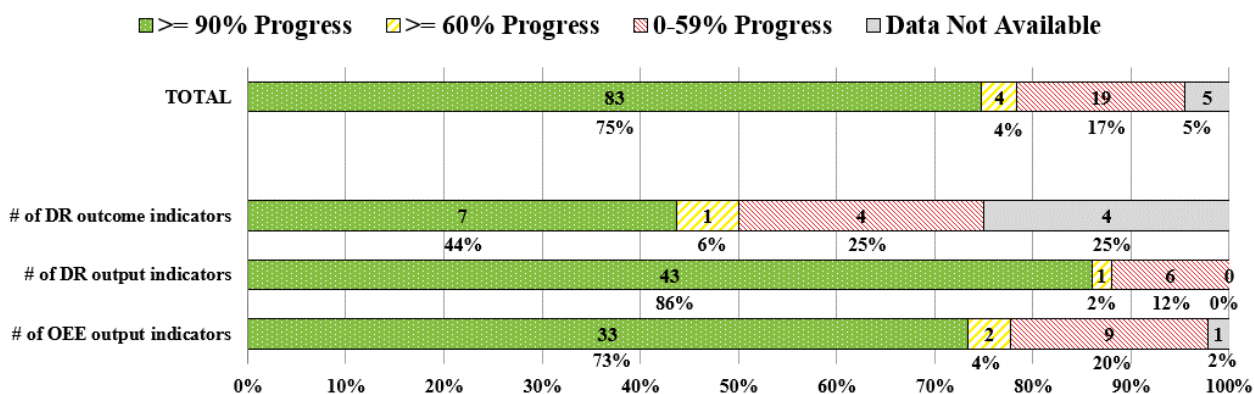
- 76.5 per cent of resolutions and other key documents issued by the UN Security Council included references to women, peace and security
- Survivors of sexual violence in 12 conflict-affected countries have better access to justice through the deployment of 31 experts to investigations and accountability mechanisms

- 325,500 women and girls received humanitarian assistance and benefitted from disaster risk reduction and resilience work in 48 countries
- 77 million people live in 16 countries where disaster risk reduction better identifies and addresses the needs and inclusion of women and girls

## II. UN-Women's performance in 2018

6. Overall performance against 2018 milestones has been good, with milestones of most output indicators achieved or exceeded<sup>1</sup>. Although no annual milestones were set at the outcome level, progress is generally in the right direction for most outcome indicators with sufficient data.<sup>2</sup>

**Figure 1: Progress under 2018 Milestones**



Note: this figure excludes 9 indicators that are only monitored at component or disaggregated levels, 5 indicators which are not assigned annual milestones, and an additional 7 SDG indicators which are not assigned annual milestones.

7. The first year of implementation of the Strategic Plan provides useful lessons to improve performance. A variety of factors explain lesser performance. In some cases, this can be attributed to technical issues, such as an imprecise formulation of indicators. Some areas of work have not been selected as priorities as had been expected at country level, either by UN-Women field offices or national partners. Funding gaps for some areas also resulted in lower-than-expected results.

8. UN-Women undertook a comprehensive validation exercise of its Integrated Results and Resources Framework at the start of the Strategic Plan cycle and updated 64 indicators<sup>3</sup>.

9. Over the next three years, to address performance issues, UN-Women will correct indicators, improve data collection, enhance resource mobilization efforts for

<sup>1</sup> Data based on availability at 22 April 2019.

<sup>2</sup> This assumes a linear trajectory of 25 per cent progress per year against the 2021 target. Several outcome indicators do not yet have sufficient data to measure progress, mostly in the case of SDG indicators.

<sup>3</sup> The revised IRRF is available on the Strategic Plan Results Portal (<http://www.unwomen.org/en/executive-board/strategic-plan>).

underfunded areas and resource allocations where possible. The Entity will also focus on leveraging partnerships across all thematic areas to scale up results.

**A. Outcome 1: A comprehensive and dynamic set of global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls is strengthened and implemented**

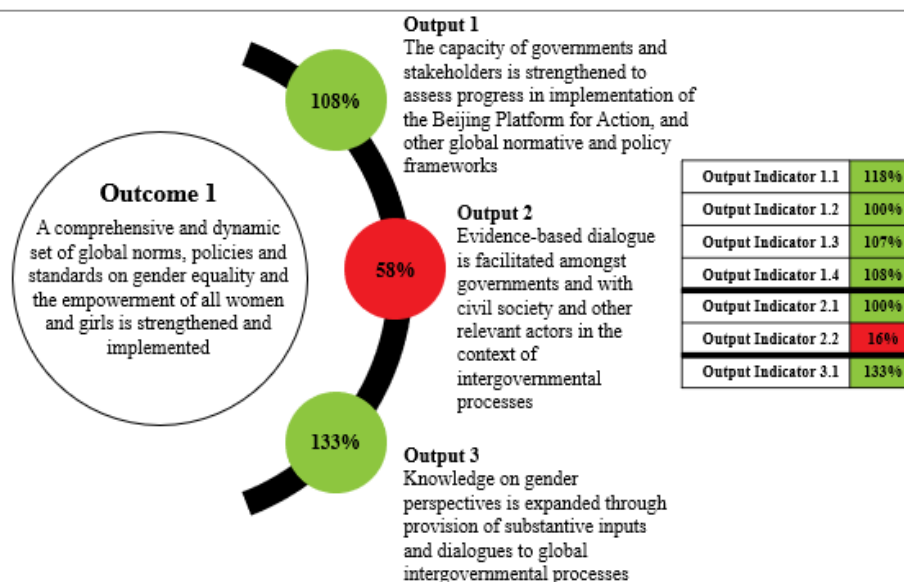
<b>Number of countries and territories covered: 54</b>	<b>Total expenditure 2018: \$16.26 M</b>
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Contributes to achieving all the SDGs



10. UN-Women assists Member States in strengthening and applying global norms, policies and standards by building capacity, facilitating dialogue amongst stakeholders and providing substantive inputs. In 2018, UN-Women significantly contributed to strengthening global frameworks, achieving almost all 2018 milestones (Figure 2)<sup>4</sup>.

**FIGURE 2: OUTCOME 1**



<sup>4</sup> Additional information on the normative aspects of the work of UN-Women can be found here.

11. The 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women agreed on a comprehensive roadmap to realize gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls living in rural areas in its agreed conclusions. All recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report prepared by UN-Women were reflected in the outcome. The Commission attracted the participation of over 4,400 civil society representatives from 600 organizations. UN-Women facilitated discussions on accountability mechanisms to ensure that rural women and girls are not left behind.

12. Twenty-nine intergovernmental processes saw an enhanced focus on gender equality and women's empowerment with UN-Women's inputs. The 14<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity recognized gender-responsiveness as a stand-alone principle for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. UN-Women, in partnership with the Convention's secretariat, helped strengthen attention to gender perspectives among the Parties to the Convention by identifying and advocating for entry points for gender mainstreaming.

13. UN-Women supported Member States and other stakeholders with policy advice and dialogue opportunities on the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including for the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. This included technical support to governments to prepare voluntary national reviews, presentation of evidence and data in regional forums, and dissemination of knowledge products. Eighty-one per cent of national reports integrated a gender perspective. To support the gender-responsive implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, UN-Women developed a guide with governments and UN partners.

14. As part of its capacity-building activities, UN-Women supported States parties in reporting to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and in following up to its concluding observations. It coordinated and supported the preparation of 83 per cent of all UNCT reports. Ukraine adopted an action plan for the implementation of concluding observations based on a participatory process with sectoral ministries, women's groups and civil society organizations. In Albania, UN-Women and UNFPA supported the development of an online platform and tracking mechanism for the implementation of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the Human Rights Council and CEDAW Committee recommendations.

15. UN-Women also promoted the reflection of gender perspectives in the UPR by providing technical advice, supporting the preparation of reports, intervening at Council meetings and supporting the implementation of recommendations. UN-Women supported country visits of the Council's Special Procedures mandate holders. Council resolutions addressing the protection of civic space were shaped by recommendations from events co-hosted by UN-Women.

16. In 2018, UN-Women and the regional commissions issued a Guidance Note for comprehensive national-level reviews of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Sixteen countries initiated such reviews last year. UN-Women helped organize consultative forums by bringing together national gender equality mechanisms, other institutions and civil society. It is anticipated that at least 85 countries will receive UN-Women's support to undertake national reviews in 2019.

*Progress and challenges in monitoring SDG data*

*The Strategic Plan outlines how UN-Women supports the gender-responsive implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Integrated Results and Resources Framework includes 11 SDG indicators, including those adopted by other agencies in the common chapter. While milestones have not been set for SDG indicators, progress is in the intended direction for those that have sufficient data available. Unfortunately, most of these indicators (nine in total) do not have sufficient data available as of 2018 to assess the direction of progress<sup>1</sup>.*

*UN-Women has a co-custodian role at the global level for five SDG indicators. In 2018, new data was collected from 53 countries for SDG indicator 5.1.1 on legal frameworks that advance gender equality; and from more than 70 countries and areas for SDG indicator 5.c.1 on gender budget allocations. Data collection started in more than 80 countries for SDG indicator 5.5.1.b on women's participation in local governments. Data availability increased for SDG 5.2.1 on intimate partner violence and for SDG 5.4.1 on unpaid care work.*

*UN-Women also supported capacity-building for data collection and analysis. Georgia, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, and Uganda improved gender data production and use for SDGs with UN-Women's support.*

**Figure 3: Turning promises into action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**



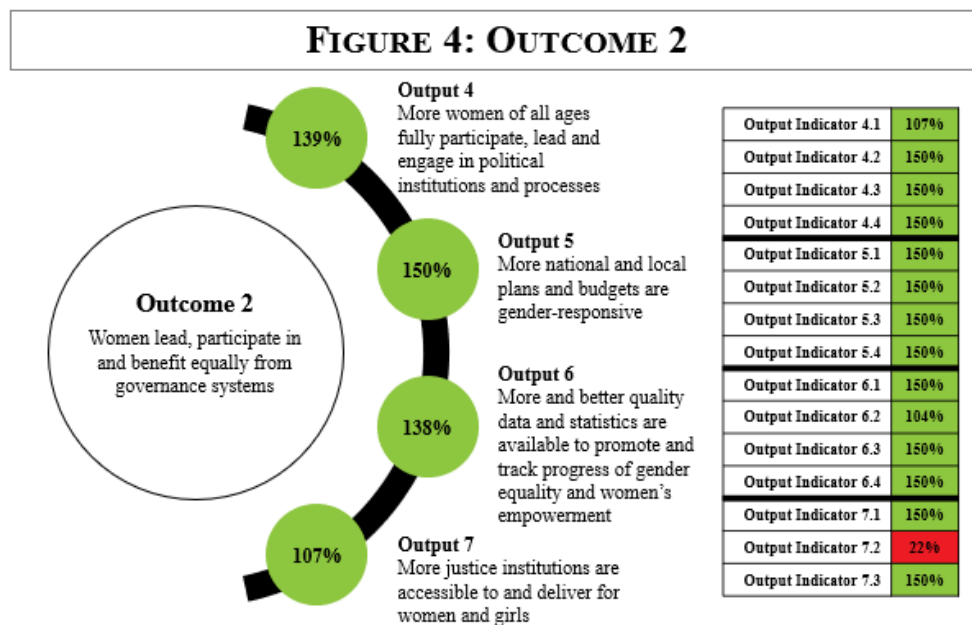
*The 2018 global monitoring report, Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, provided the first comprehensive assessment of progress and challenges in the implementation of the SDGs from a gender perspective (figure 3). It presents global and regional trends and provides guidance for the implementation of gender-responsive policies, focusing on multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.*

## B. Outcome 2: Women lead, participate in, and benefit equally from governance systems



17. Enabling governance systems with the full participation of women are essential for the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment. In 2018, UN-Women reached and even surpassed almost all milestones in this area. The Entity promoted gender-responsive governance in 81 countries by supporting women's

political participation, national planning and budgeting, capacity-building for data collection and analysis and women's access to justice (Figure 4).



18. Forty-four bills on gender equality and women's empowerment were passed into law in 2018 with UN-Women's support. Twenty-two of these addressed discrimination in law. Egypt passed three laws resulting in stricter sanctions on violations of the principle of equality in inheritance, comprehensive rights for persons with disabilities and an elevation of the President of the Council for Women to a Minister-level post while the Council also has the leverage to conduct wider policy reviews.

19. Progress was made in advancing women's participation and leadership in political decision-making. The capacity of parliaments to legislate, reform laws, conduct oversight on gender equality measures, and support women's leadership was strengthened through over 70 initiatives. In Tunisia, a new women's caucus that UN-Women helped establish provides a forum for women to debate and agree on policy priorities.

20. More than 11,000 women aspiring for leadership positions gained skills to run effective campaigns thanks to UN-Women's efforts to enhance their skills in public speaking, campaign management, resource mobilization and voters' engagement. A new UN-Women coaching tool for aspiring women leaders was piloted in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Moldova, Nigeria and Turkey.

21. Violence against women in politics was addressed through 46 new initiatives, including laws, policies and innovative tools. In Mexico, UN-Women supported the Special Prosecutor on Electoral Crimes to develop guidance to handle such cases. In Sierra Leone, evidence of violence against women in politics was documented during the 2018 elections and enabled policy responses for mitigating violence in future elections.



22. Through 16 reforms, electoral stakeholders improved capacity to deliver inclusive electoral processes and reduce barriers for women voters and candidates. UN-Women in collaboration with UNDP, the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and other partners provided guidance and training to electoral bodies on gender mainstreaming. New strategies and action plans were developed in Bangladesh and Uganda to enhance the ability of electoral commissions to promote women's political participation in electoral processes.

23. Increased uptake of gender-responsive national planning and budgeting has been a key feature in 2018. 16 countries adopted, implemented and/or costed national action plans. North Macedonia's National Action Plan on Gender Equality includes gender-responsive budgeting as a central priority. The implementation of the action plan includes requirements for gender policy analysis and gender impact assessments of sectoral plans.

24. Fourteen Ministries of Finance strengthened capacities to conduct gender analysis, develop sector-specific gender-responsive plans and budgets and assess gender impacts of budget allocations. In Albania, allocations of the total government budget to gender equality work increased by 163 per cent after a multi-sectoral gender-responsive budgeting exercise.

25. Capacities of 21 national women's machineries and 211 women's organizations were strengthened in monitoring the implementation of gender-responsive budgeting with UN-Women's support. In Ethiopia, the machinery's capacities to advocate for gender-responsive budgeting in budget committees and parliamentary debates were strengthened. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, allocations for economic and psychological support for women survivors of violence were made for the first time based on gender budget analysis conducted by civil society and survivors.

26. In nine countries, government institutions coordinating the HIV response strengthened their capacity to integrate gender perspectives into HIV strategies and programmes with UN-Women's guidance. This resulted in better tracking of gender-responsive indicators, evidence-based community initiatives to prevent HIV and violence against women, stronger evidence of the impact of unequal gender norms on HIV epidemic, and inclusion of gender-specific recommendations into national HIV prevention programmes. The Tanzania Commission for AIDS prioritized actions addressing unequal gender norms, gender-based violence and discrimination against young women in its HIV prevention strategy.

27. Progress has also been made to improve gender statistics. Five countries strengthened institutional mechanisms governing the production and use of gender statistics and 11 countries strengthened intersectoral coordination mechanisms with UN-Women's support. Uganda's Bureau of Statistics integrated a gender perspective in the national statistical strategy; 22 sectoral ministries and 16 local government entities developed and implemented plans to increase the production and use of gender data. These efforts mean that gender equality is taken into consideration in all phases of statistical planning, contributing significantly to the monitoring of Uganda's gender equality commitments and the achievement of the SDGs.

28. Almost 25,000 people, including government officials and civil society, improved their skills to collect and use gender data with UN-Women's support. In Malawi, training of enumerators contributed to the generation of data on women and girls during the 2018 census. Capacities of data producers and users were enhanced,

and new data was collected in many areas, including time-use, violence and the SDG indicators for which UN-Women is the custodian.

29. National statistical offices and other key data producers and users from 33 countries enhanced their capacities to measure and report on Tier II SDG indicator 5.5.1b on women's representation in local government in collaboration with UN regional commissions. More than 35 ministries of finance and national women's machineries enhanced their capacities in tracking resource allocations for gender equality to measure and report on Tier II SDG indicator 5.c.1 on systems to track and make public gender budget allocations through on-demand technical support and multi-stakeholder coordination.

30. UN-Women supported justice institutions in being more accessible and delivering better for women and girls. Over 18,000 justice personnel received knowledge on applying human rights standards in their work to increase women's access to justice with UN-Women's support in partnership with judicial training institutions and bar associations. In Haiti, where over 350 women remain in prolonged pretrial detention, gender-responsive prison guidelines were developed as a result of enhanced capacity of penal justice actors. Through a joint initiative of UN-Women and the International Commission of Jurists, judges of superior courts in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka improved their ability to respond to women's legal needs, while in Thailand, prosecutors' knowledge on women's rights were enhanced. In Afghanistan, young female lawyers enhanced their skills in gender-responsive legislative analysis and advocacy.

31. Temporary special measures to ensure women's representation in the police, judiciary, prosecution services, military and prisons were developed in Burundi and Tanzania. In Burundi, the Ministry of Public Security developed a gender strategy to improve women's representation in the judiciary with UN-Women's support.

32. Over 30,000 women and girls from rural and peri-urban communities in 19 countries have increased awareness of their rights through legal aid services thanks to UN-Women's support to women lawyers' associations and community-based organizations. In Ethiopia, women enhanced their knowledge of laws and institutions to uphold their rights.

#### *Leaving No One Behind*

*UN-Women continues to focus on women and girls at risk of being left behind. In 2018, UN-Women developed dedicated strategies and guidance to enhance programming for specific groups of women at risk of multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. An internal guidance note on strengthening programming on the rights of LGBTI people in line with existing human rights standards was developed with inputs from civil society experts.*

*A strategy on the empowerment of women and girls with disabilities was launched with a focus on ensuring their meaningful participation. UN-Women contributed to efforts for their empowerment in 50 countries. In Egypt, rural girls with disabilities and their mothers engaged in community work to transform discriminatory beliefs, attitudes and stigma. As part of a project of the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, access to justice for women and girls with disabilities was improved in Zimbabwe with the assistance of disability specialists, such as sign language interpreters, in the provision of legal and logistical support.*

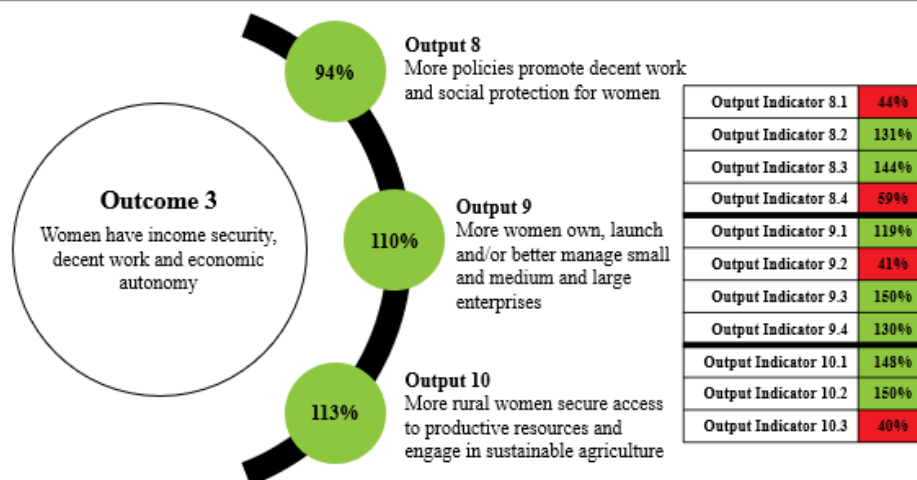
*UN-Women started collecting data disaggregated by age, sex, migratory status, disability and for urban/rural populations for eight Strategic Plan indicators<sup>5</sup>. In 2019, investments will be made to further enhance disaggregated data for planning and monitoring purposes and to inform interventions to leave no one behind.*

### C. Outcome 3: Women have income security, decent work and economic autonomy



33. In 2018, significant progress was made in 62 countries in increasing women's income security, decent work and economic autonomy, including for rural women. While four indicators did not reach their planned milestones in this area, overall progress against all outputs remains positive (Figure 5).

**FIGURE 5: OUTCOME 3**



34. In 28 countries, gender-responsive economic policies, including on decent work, social protection, unpaid care, procurement, and land, were either developed or implemented with UN-Women's policy advice and capacity-building of policy

<sup>5</sup> See column "possible disaggregation" in the IRRF.

makers. In the Dominican Republic, through UN-Women's partnership with ILO, UNDP and the Government, human rights and gender considerations were incorporated into the national social protection system, impacting over 100,000 women, including unemployed women and women living with disabilities.

35. In eight countries, macroeconomic frameworks integrated variables related to unpaid care and domestic work. UN-Women's methodology on costing investments in the care economy stimulated public policy reform and spending on social care infrastructure in five countries. Additionally, national development plans of 21 countries of the Indian Ocean Rim Association addressed challenges and opportunities of women in the blue economy with UN-Women's research contributions.

36. Despite this progress, UN-Women had anticipated a greater number of new legal/policy frameworks on decent work and unpaid care work to be adopted in 2018. UN-Women will intensify advocacy efforts and policy advice in 30 countries to accelerate progress in this area, including the collection, analysis, and dissemination of sex-disaggregated data.

37. In addition to supporting the adoption of laws and policies, UN-Women helped enhance the capacity of governments, civil society, the private sector, and more than 400,000 women (including rural women and women entrepreneurs) to enable women's participation in the economy.

38. To strengthen women's entrepreneurship, over 23,000 women (18,088 from rural areas) in 25 countries accessed financial services and improved their businesses with UN-Women's support. The Entity engaged with financial institutions and supported capacity-building of women entrepreneurs to do so. In addition, 273 government entities, companies and international organizations adopted gender-responsive procurement policies, increasing business opportunities for women-owned/led businesses. An additional 385 companies signed the Women's Empowerment Principles.<sup>6</sup>

39. In 26 countries, over 50,000 women producers, workers and entrepreneurs, including rural women, youth, migrants and women living with disabilities, have increased access to economic assets through capacity-building facilitated by UN-Women. In the Philippines, over 600 women migrants, who were initially domestic workers, gained entrepreneurial skills through the Fund for Gender Equality. Stronger advocacy and capacity-building of national stakeholders are underway to improve legal and policy environments for entrepreneurship to increase the number of women reached by UN-Women and partner interventions.

40. Rural women in 25 countries have improved sustainable livelihoods, particularly through climate-resilient agriculture and access to productive resources, facilitated by the adoption of 31 land policies that ensure equal rights of women. The rights of rural women were integrated in country situation analyses and a policy guidance tool on land and tenure security developed by UN-Women in partnership with Kenya and Tanzania. Through these efforts, over 95,000 women, including youth, migrant women, women with disabilities and women living with HIV, gained access to, use of and control over productive resources with support from UN-Women. In Senegal,

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.empowerwomen.org/en/weps/about>.

15,000 members of a women's association in the rice value chain doubled their productivity through climate-smart agriculture capacity-building.

*Innovation as a driver of change*

*In 2018, UN-Women intensified its efforts to identify, test and scale up innovative interventions and promote innovation by and for women.*

*The UN-Women led public-private partnership Global Innovation Coalition for Change launched the [Gender Innovation Principles](#) which set global standards for gender-responsive innovation. The Coalition launched the "She Innovates" Award in partnership with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 2018, a women-led team that developed newborn vital signals monitors received the Award.*

*In Kenya, field testing of blockchain technology in real-life settings with women refugees was developed in partnership with the World Food Programme to support cash transfers. The technology had been assessed in a Blockchain Live Simulation Lab, organized by UN-Women and the UN Office of Information and Technology, where seven companies showcased solutions for verifiable digital identities and trackable low-cost cash transfers.*

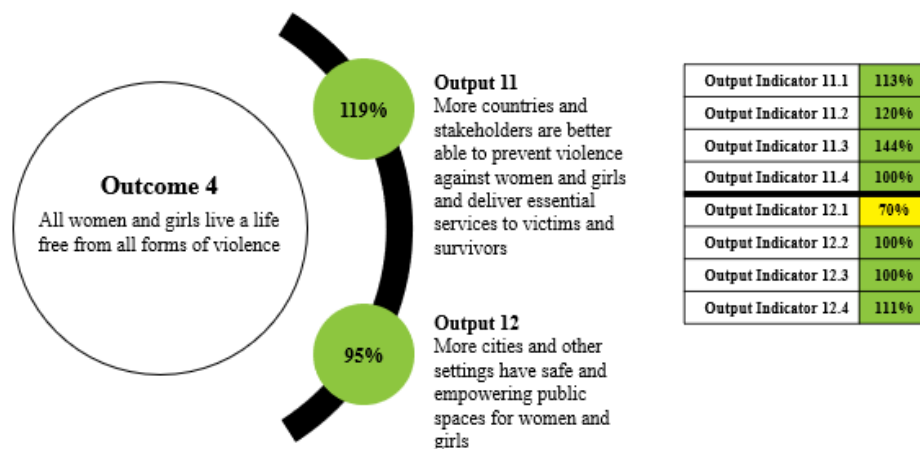
*UN-Women also continued to explore technology to enhance results of its Climate-Smart Agriculture Programme. A "Buy from Women" digital platform prototype was tested in Haiti and Mali to allow women farmers to access information, new markets and establish themselves as legal commercial entities. It will be further expanded in 2019.*

*Eight women-led organizations funded by the Fund for Gender Equality learned to use social innovation in gender equality programming and received personalized coaching and new tools, such as ideation and prototyping sessions. In Paraguay, the number of women applying for membership to domestic workers associations and unions increased by 40 per cent in five weeks after broadcasting an innovative radio programme produced and led by domestic workers.*

#### D. Outcome 4: All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence



41. UN-Women has reached almost all its 2018 milestones on ending violence against women and girls with a focus on prevention, services, as well as safety in public spaces (figure 6). UN-Women successfully leveraged its UN system coordination function to promote comprehensive and joint approaches in this area. This has resulted in greater coherence in the work of the UNDS on ending violence against women, including through the pioneer European Union (EU)-UN *Spotlight Initiative*.

**FIGURE 6: OUTCOME 4**

42. In 2018, as part of strengthening prevention efforts, nine countries adopted national action plans or strategies with a component addressing social norms, attitudes and behaviour, including of men and boys, with UN-Women's support. In 12 countries, initiatives on changing negative social norms through education and large-scale community mobilization were implemented, including through UN-Women partnerships with faith-based and sports organizations. In the State of Palestine, a violence against women prevention curriculum was developed, piloted and further refined together with teachers, counsellors, parents and students in schools of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. In 2019, this curriculum will be scaled up and implemented in additional schools, targeting more than 1,200 teachers.

43. In Tanzania, as part of an initiative with the Government, police and civil society, local communities and 96 traditional leaders were mobilized to abandon female genital mutilation. In just one small community, over 600 adolescent girls benefited from investments in girls' education instead.

44. Over 48 countries adopted the *Essential Services Package*, developed by UN-Women, UNDP, UNFPA, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime as the standard for the provision of quality services to victims/survivors of violence across the health, police and justice, and social services sectors. In Kiribati, national guidelines for coordinated response and referrals were launched with UN-Women's support, providing a clear set of guidelines for safe and quality multi-sectoral collaboration for responding to cases of violence.

45. To ensure high-quality police and justice response, UN-Women is currently strengthening the capacity of law enforcement in addressing violence against women. Since 2015, the capacity of over 20,000 police and justice officials has been strengthened with UN-Women's support. This will be scaled up in 2019 through a state-of-the-art global training programme adaptable to national circumstances. The number of reported cases of domestic violence increased in two municipalities in Albania in 2018 by 45.6 per cent and 71.6 per cent, respectively, after dedicated capacity-building for law enforcement.

46. In 2018, eight new cities committed to preventing and responding to sexual harassment in public spaces, bringing the total number of participating cities to 37. This was an outcome of the Fourth Global Forum on Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces, organized by UN-Women and the City of Edmonton in Canada.

47. In Papua New Guinea, youth activists implemented a behaviour change campaign on sexual harassment and other forms of violence against women in public spaces through electronic and print media, reaching more than 100,000 women and men.

48. In Georgia, building on data from a national prevalence survey supported by UN-Women, a legal definition of and regulations against sexual harassment were developed in 2018, which will enable women to file complaints.

49. During the 16 Days of Activism, the UNiTE Campaign to End Violence against Women galvanized efforts with over 500 activities around the globe. Fifty-four iconic landmarks were illuminated in orange, including the Great Pyramids of Giza. The hashtags #orangetheworld and #hearmetoo reached 1,050 million accounts on Instagram and Twitter.

#### *Addressing Sexual Harassment*

*In 2018, the UN system took decisive steps to prevent and address sexual harassment. To ensure that UN-Women demonstrates leadership and action, and to focus and coordinate internal efforts, the Entity created the role of Executive Coordinator on Addressing Sexual Harassment, reporting directly to the Executive Director. UN-Women and the UN Office of Human Resources Management co-chaired a working group to support the development of [UN System Model Policy on Sexual Harassment](#), which was endorsed by the Chief Executives Board for Coordination and now guides strengthened sexual harassment policies across the UN system. UN-Women's contributions focused on the importance of addressing sexual harassment as a violation of human rights and a matter of gender inequality.*

*UN-Women also convened stakeholders, including Member States, the UN system, civil society, private sector and academia, to discuss promising practices to eliminate sexual harassment. Discussions informed a publication called "Towards an end to sexual harassment: The urgency and nature of change in the era of #MeToo", aimed at supporting policy makers, employers and activists with new guidance on addressing sexual harassment*

*UN-Women's internal policy framework and staff knowledge and awareness on sexual harassment, discrimination and abuse of authority were strengthened in 2018. The revised Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Discrimination and Abuse of Authority Policy and the Protection against Retaliation Policy were launched and a guide on Sexual Misconduct providing guidance on existing policies and procedures was also developed and widely disseminated. UN-Women, UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA updated an e-course on the prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, which over 1,000 UN-Women personnel completed.*

**E. Outcome 5: Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience, and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and from humanitarian action**

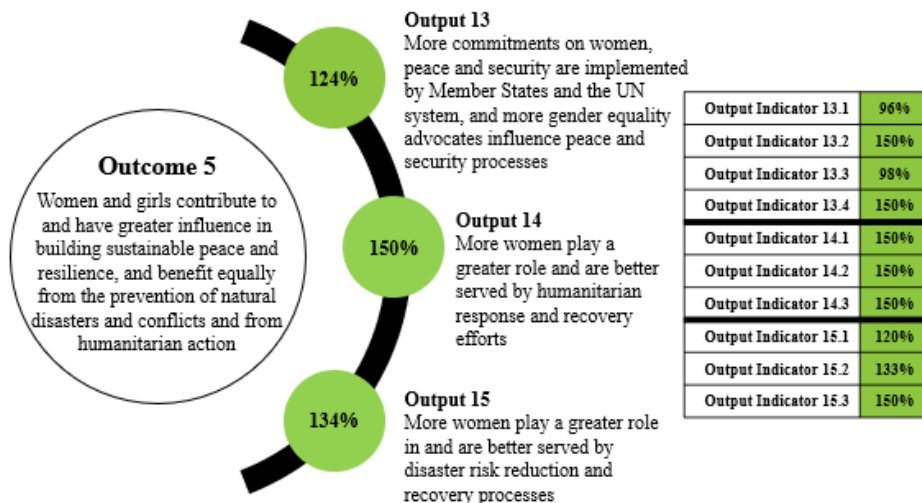
<b>Number of countries and territories covered: 55</b>	<b>Total expenditure 2018: \$89.44 M</b>
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Contributes to achieving the following SDGs:



50. Women’s participation and inclusion make peace more sustainable; enhance community resilience to natural disasters; increase the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance; and accelerate recovery. UN-Women has made major contributions in these areas, reaching or surpassing all its 2018 milestones (figure 7). This outcome has the highest level of expenditure in the Strategic Plan.

**FIGURE 7: OUTCOME 5**



51. In the Security Council, 76.5 per cent of resolutions and other key documents were more gender-responsive as a result of UN-Women’s engagement with the Informal Experts Group on Women, Peace and Security. Briefings to the Security Council by 27 women from civil society from conflict-affected contexts which UN-Women supported also contributed to these results.

52. Fourteen new National and 11 Regional Action Plans on women, peace and security were adopted. UN-Women provided technical advice to develop, adopt and implement action plans and worked with civil society to advocate for and monitor their implementation.



53. In 27 countries, from Afghanistan to Yemen, over 400 women's organizations and networks received support to engage in conflict mediation and prevention and to participate in peace processes with UN-Women's assistance, often in partnership with DPA, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and UNDP. The final statement of the Libyan peace talks included strong references to women's engagement and inclusion, resulting from UN-Women's partnership with DPA, the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network and the Nordic Women Mediators. This is a significant achievement, given that since 1990, women have constituted only two per cent of mediators, eight per cent of negotiators, and five per cent of witnesses and signatories in all major peace processes. UN-Women also supported the training of 120 uniformed women to join peacekeeping operations.

54. Investigations and accountability mechanisms in 12 countries and territories received expertise from 31 experts on sexual and gender-based violence, deployed and trained by UN-Women, in partnership with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. In 2018, experts deployed by UN-Women to the UN Commission of Inquiry for Syria documented such violence committed by all parties to the conflict.

55. UN-Women's support to justice mechanisms has also seen tangible results. In Kosovo<sup>7</sup>, survivors of conflict-related sexual violence received compensation for the first time in the form of a monthly pension by a reparations commission established by the government with UN-Women's expertise.

56. Working in partnership with UN-Women, the Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund allocated nearly 40 per cent of its funding in 2018 to projects integrating a gender perspective, including 11 per cent to projects with gender equality and women's empowerment as a principal objective. To strengthen women's organizations in conflict contexts, an additional 24 civil society organizations in three countries received funding totalling USD 3.6 million through the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, of which UN-Women serves as secretariat.

57. UN-Women directly provided services to 235,000 crisis-affected women and girls through its humanitarian programmes. A large proportion of these women accessed support for livelihoods provided by UN-Women through vocational training, cash for work, and other economic empowerment activities. In 2018, UN-Women further expanded its partnerships at field level, working with 14 UN agencies including UNFPA, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the World Food Programme.

58. Enhanced focus on the differential needs of women, girls, men and boys was also integrated in coordinated crisis response planning in 37 countries, in particular through Humanitarian Response Plans. These included the Rohingya refugee crisis in Bangladesh and refugee crisis in Colombia. To promote women's participation in the planning and implementation of humanitarian responses, UN-Women supported over 400 women's organizations working in such settings.

59. UN-Women also promoted increased capacity for addressing gender perspectives in humanitarian action. UN-Women led the updating of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee *Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action*, including an

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<sup>7</sup> All references to Kosovo in this report should be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999) and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

updated section on needs assessment. This was complemented with training for over 100 frontline humanitarian response personnel in over 40 different entities, including government, non-governmental and UN partners in Bangladesh, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Malawi, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

60. In 2018, over 90,000 women and girls in 11 countries were supported to develop skills to increase their resilience against disasters and engage in the development of gender-responsive disaster risk reduction and resilience strategies. In countries as diverse as Haiti, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Serbia and Solomon Islands, UN-Women facilitated women's engagement in decision-making processes of disaster risk reduction and resilience policies to identify and address the needs of at-risk women and girls and promote their leadership.

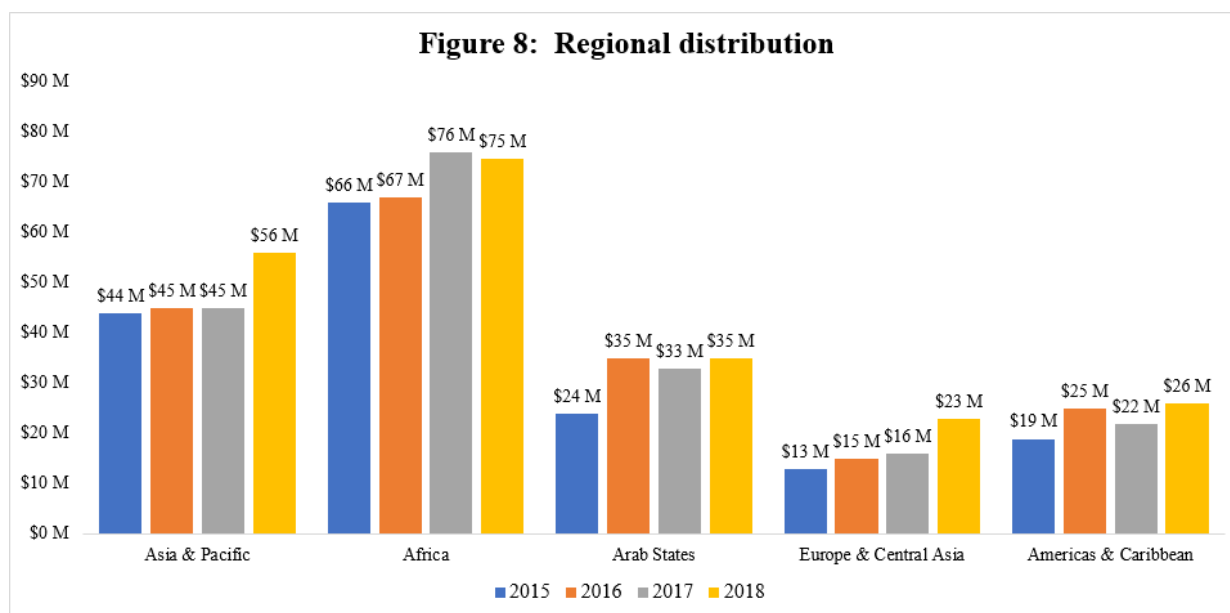
61. In 39 countries, UN-Women worked with national and local authorities, UN partners and local civil society, to support the strengthening of disaster risk reduction and resilience policies, strategies, plans, and coordination mechanisms to better identify and address the specific needs and inclusion of women and girls, achieving policy change and capturing the gender-specific needs of 77 million people in 16 countries altogether. In addition, gender focal points in national disaster platforms were appointed in eight additional countries supported by UN-Women.

62. Following and building on its contributions to integrating gender equality into the Joint Post-Disaster Needs Assessment Declaration issued by the World Bank, the EU and the UN, UN-Women led and coordinated the gender-focused elements of the post-disaster needs assessment in Kerala, India, after floods that affected 5.4 million people. UN-Women provided a robust assessment to the local government with a focus on the different recovery needs of women, girls, men, and boys; female-headed households; persons with disabilities; older persons; and others, possibly facing multiple or intersecting discrimination, with clear and tailored policy recommendations.

## **F. Programme expenditures and type of contribution**

63. Total programme expenditures in 2018 reached a record USD 285.7 million, a 15 per cent increase from 2017. Expenditures in field offices increased by 73 per cent over the past five years. Thirteen per cent of UN-Women's total programme expenditure were as part of joint programmes, exceeding the 10 per cent milestone.

64. Geographically, the highest level of programme expenditures continued to be in sub-Saharan Africa, followed by Asia-Pacific (Figure 8). Thematically, peace and security and humanitarian action had the highest expenditure (USD 89.44 million), followed by ending violence against women (USD 77.52 million). Despite a shortfall against projections, the overall distribution of expenditures across outcome areas is in line with projected trends.



65. UN-Women further increased its programmatic focus with a 15 per cent reduction in total number of outcomes and outputs pursued by all offices compared to 2017, partly due to the improved focus of the Strategic Plan.

66. In line with the Strategic Plan, UN-Women provided diverse types of support in its programming. Capacity development, as well as advocacy and social mobilization, continued to be provided in most countries (84 in total). UN system coordination was undertaken in 69 countries and integrated policy advice in 56 countries. UN-Women will continue to refine definitions for its types of support to align with functions identified at the systemwide level in the context of the UNDS repositioning.

### III. Organizational effectiveness and efficiency

67. In the first year of implementation of the Strategic Plan, UN-Women achieved 73 per cent of its milestones in organizational performance (figure 1). Effective UN system coordination, partnerships and communications, high-quality programmes and improved management of human and financial resources supported the achievement of results for women and girls.

68. The 2018 Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) assessment highlighted UN-Women's significant progress since 2014 in improving its organizational effectiveness and capacity to meet current and anticipated needs through enhanced systems, processes and structures, as well as stronger results focus. It noted UN-Women's strong commitment to results-based management and accountability, use of evaluations in programming, as well as the improvements made to financial systems, operational management and audit arrangements.

69. UN-Women has actively engaged in the repositioning of the UNDS, including by participating in more than 20 interagency bodies at global level to ensure that

ongoing reforms support more coherent systemwide results for gender equality and women's empowerment. UN-Women also made necessary adjustments to its programming and other processes to contribute to the new generation of United Nations country teams, including through revamped UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs), reinvigorating the role of the resident coordinator system, and other aspects of the reform.<sup>8</sup>

70. Building on the reforms, a comprehensive change management process was initiated to strengthen organizational effectiveness and efficiency. It also seeks to address institutional weaknesses identified in lessons learned from the last seven years. This draws on recommendations from evaluations, audits and external assessments, such as MOPAN, including on accountability, efficient delivery and sustainability of results.

71. The change management process encompasses four interrelated workstreams: (i) review of regional architecture and country typology to optimize country presence; (ii) functional review of headquarters to identify specific capacity that could be decentralized; (iii) business processes reengineering to optimize operational support to the field, and (iv) knowledge management to improve evidence-based policy and technical advisory services.

#### **A. Output 1: Enhanced coordination, coherence and accountability of the UN system for commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment**

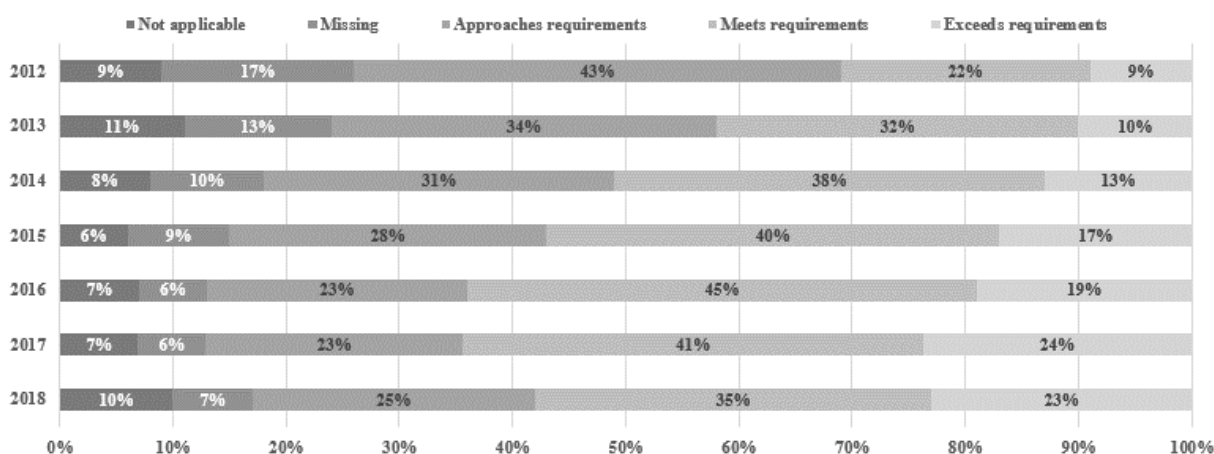
72. The work to strengthen UN system-wide coordination, coherence and accountability for gender equality and women's empowerment has yielded positive results in 2018, including accelerating momentum towards gender parity, and updating accountability frameworks for gender equality results. Most of the 2018 milestones were achieved.

73. Sixty-six UN entities reported under the updated United Nations System-wide Action Plan on gender equality and the empowerment of women (UN-SWAP 2.0), showing overall compliance with commitments at 58 per cent (figure 9). The enhanced indicator system resulted in an expected slight decline from 2017 results.

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<sup>8</sup> See reports to the Executive Board <http://www.unwomen.org/en/executive-board/documents/2018/informal-briefing-on-the-preliminary-analysis-of-the-implications-of-the-repositioning-of-the-un> and <http://www.unwomen.org/en/executive-board/documents/2019/informal-briefing-on-an-update-on-the-implementation-of-general-assembly-resolution-72-279>.

Figure 9: Overall ratings of UN-SWAP for the UN system, 2012-2018



Source: Calculations for the UN system are based on 990 individual ratings, derived from 66 entities reporting on 17 performance indicators.

74. UN-Women and UNDP led the finalization and roll-out the updated [UNCT-SWAP Scorecard](#), which provides a framework for UNCTs to report against performance indicators for common processes. The Scorecard was implemented by 24 UNCTs in 2018. UNCTs prioritized key actions, including on gender parity, addressing sexual exploitation and abuse, and integrating a gender perspective in UN Business Operation Strategies.

75. UN-Women continued to support gender mainstreaming in UNDAF processes. In 2018, 70 per cent of UNDAFs featured a gender-specific result at the outcome level. UN-Women was present in 68 out of the 73 UNCTs with joint programmes on SDG 5, while the total number of those joint programmes grew to 145.

76. The ability to track resources dedicated to gender equality and women's empowerment remained weak both at individual entity and UNCT levels. To bolster improvements, in collaboration with the UN Development Operations Coordination Office, UN-Women developed and integrated a gender marker into the online planning, monitoring and reporting platform for UNDAFs and Joint Workplans, piloted in over 30 UNCTs.

77. UN-Women developed the *Enabling Environment Guidelines* in support of gender parity with comprehensive recommendations, through a participatory inter-agency process. UN-Women continued to leverage a network of over 200 Gender Focal Points across the UN system, strengthening their capacities to support gender equality work, providing them with guidance, and facilitating inter-agency coordination and knowledge sharing.

78. UN-Women managed the senior female talent database and proposed over 60 qualified candidates to senior level positions.

79. UN-Women brought gender perspectives in the Secretary-General's Executive Committee and led discussions on women in peace processes, civic space, and violence against women in politics. It also provided dedicated gender expertise to UN partners working on artificial intelligence, aviation and outer space.

80. The Entity continued to support the H6 partnership for women's, children's and adolescents' health together with WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS, and the World Bank. It ensured a strong gender perspective in the H6 Vision, Results Framework and Implementation Plan adopted in 2018.

## **B. Output 2: Increased engagement of partners in support of UN-Women's mandate**

81. UN-Women continued its efforts to strengthen and expand partnerships for gender equality and women's empowerment, achieving or exceeding 11 out of 13 milestones for this output.

82. In recognition of the vital role played by women's organizations, UN-Women continued to work closely with civil society at various levels. The 2018 milestone was exceeded by steering 92 initiatives of Civil Society Advisory Groups, including supporting the participation of civil society in intergovernmental and country-level normative processes.

83. The Entity continued to galvanize support for gender equality and women's empowerment by working with diverse groups. This included engagement with women human rights defenders, youth, men and boys, faith-based organizations, trade union networks, disability rights activists, indigenous leaders, and others.

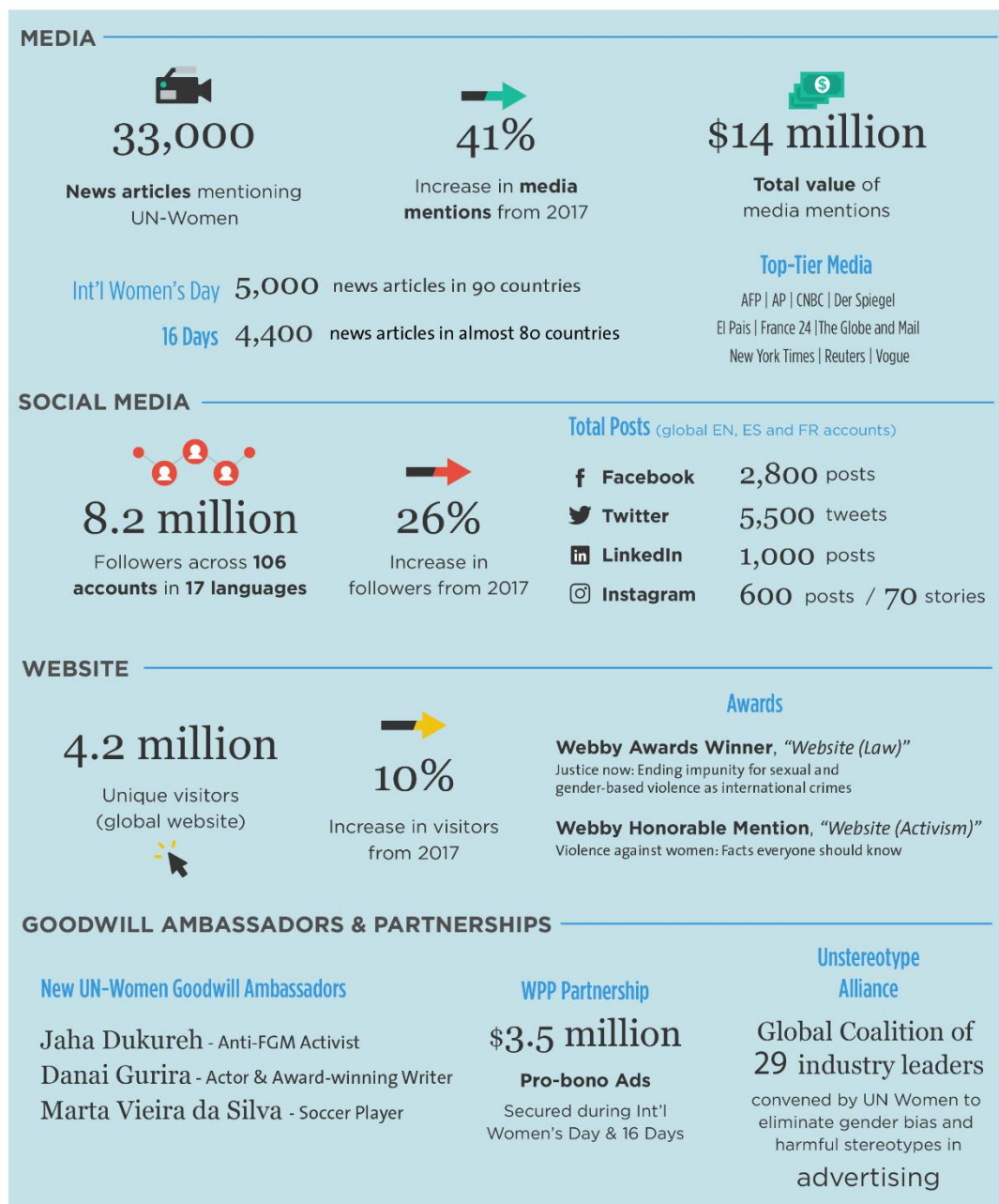
84. The engagement of men and boys and/or faith leaders features in the work of 49 countries, including in Algeria, Cabo Verde, China, India, and Morocco. This includes initiatives on prevention of violence against women and promoting non-violent masculinities. UN-Women is scaling up efforts to further mobilize these groups in support of gender equality and women's empowerment and meet its targets in this area.

85. The HeForShe movement continued into its fourth year, yielding 177,000 new commitments in 2018. A unique male allies guide on managing emotions developed in collaboration with Finland will reach 27.5 million military personnel around the world. As part of their HeForShe commitment, PwC increased female representation in their global leadership team from 18 to 47 per cent in just 15 months.

86. UN-Women worked with youth in 58 countries, exceeding its 2018 milestone, notably by working with young women and girls through innovative programming, for example in sports and technology.

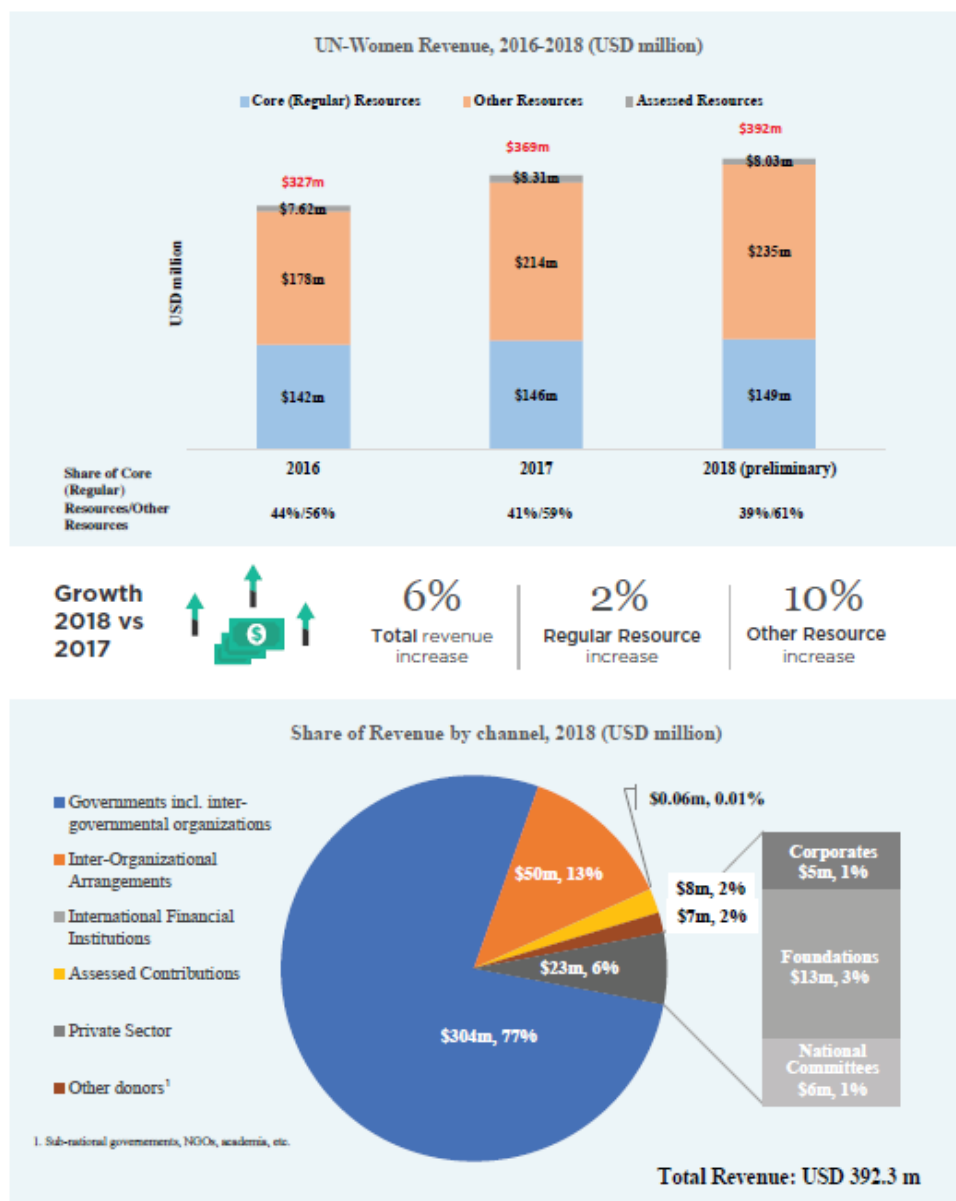
87. Overall, communications results for UN-Women have also exceeded 2018 milestones, contributing to increased public awareness of gender equality issues and increased visibility of UN-Women (figure 10).

Figure 10: Communications and Advocacy



88. Although still below targets, UN-Women recorded the highest level of revenue since inception in 2018, totalling USD 392 million. Governments continue to contribute the largest share of resources, while pooled funding increased by 16 per cent (figure 11).

Figure 11: Resource Mobilization



**198**  
Total funding partners

**104**  
Member States contributed to UN-Women

**102**  
Member States contributed to Regular Resources

89. To further target resource mobilization efforts, dedicated partnership strategies have been embedded in strategic notes at national and regional levels. At the global level, UN-Women will continue to hold the Strategic Dialogue on Financing with the Executive Board with an aim to improve the predictability and flexibility of resources.



### C. Output 3: High quality of programmes through knowledge, innovation, results-based management and evaluation

90. Achieving or surpassing most of its 2018 milestones for this output, UN-Women enhanced the quality of its programmes, including through a new knowledge management strategy, enhanced knowledge production and sharing, and strengthened capacity to plan for and capture results, good practices and lessons learned.

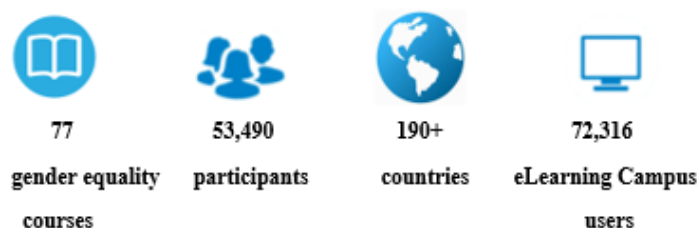
91. UN-Women launched an internal ‘one-stop-shop’ portal to strengthen its corporate policy, procedure and guidance framework. This framework is continuously updated and informed by independent assessments and evaluations in key operational priorities for UN-Women, such as accountability, risk management, and sustainability of results.

92. Knowledge sharing on good practices and lessons learned to enhance the quality of programmes was facilitated through eight new communities of practice, in addition to the existing 14. Additionally, UN-Women facilitated South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives of 55 countries and embedded this approach in its knowledge management strategy. A global centre of excellence was established in 2018 by UN-Women and Mexico to strengthen gender statistics, notably through South-South and triangular cooperation.

93. To increase knowledge on progress on gender equality and improve evidence-based and gender-responsive programming, UN-Women started preparing country gender equality profiles in 2018. These profiles support the integration of gender perspectives in the preparation of Common Country Assessments and UNDAFs. The pace of finalization of these profiles has been slower than expected, but improvements are expected in 2019 through dedicated guidance.

94. The Training Centre further improved its reach in support of capacity-building for the Strategic Plan outcome areas (figure 12).

**Figure 12: Training Centre Results**



95. Increasing capacities on gender-responsive results-based management and evaluation continued to be prioritized in 2018. UN-Women launched the first gender-responsive RBM e-course for staff and partners to strengthen programming and national efforts to achieve development results. Additionally, over 300 UN staff gained knowledge on how to plan, manage and use evaluations with a gender equality and human rights perspective.

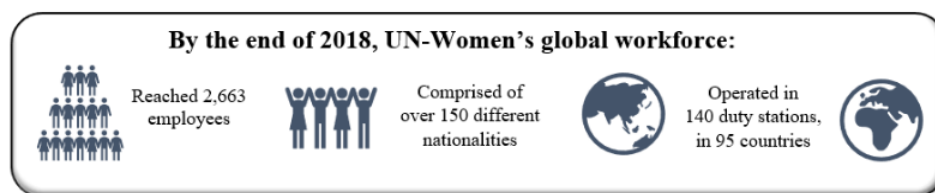
96. Eighty-eight per cent of evaluations managed by UN-Women were externally assessed as good or very good and supported organizational learning. UN-Women

also led the preparation of a guidance note on evaluating corporate performance on gender mainstreaming, published by the UN Evaluation Group, and provided advice and technical support to four joint and nine UNDAF evaluations.

#### **D. Output 4: Improved management of financial and human resources in pursuit of results**

97. Throughout 2018, UN-Women improved the management of human and financial resources, with over 80 per cent of 2018 milestones achieved for this output. UN-Women further improved its management systems and processes, focusing on improving transparency and accountability and enhancing efficiency and effectiveness.

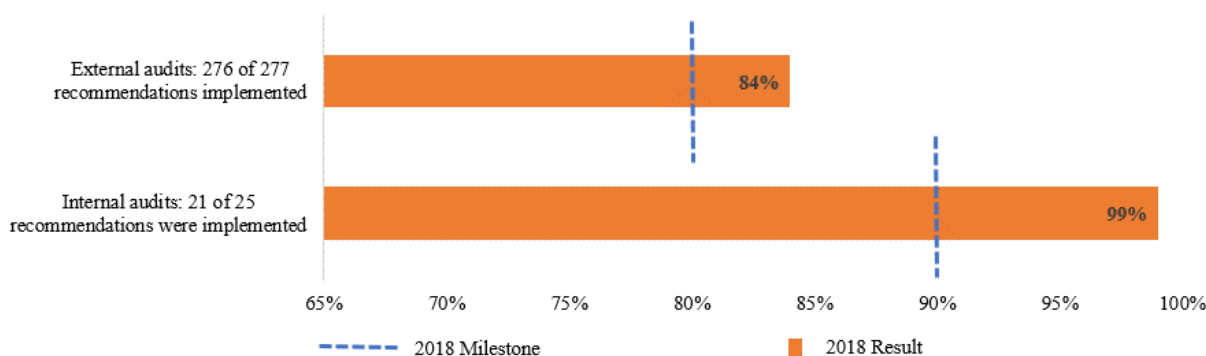
**Figure 13: UN-Women global workforce**



98. UN-Women reached the 6<sup>th</sup> place on the 2018 Aid Transparency Index among 22 UN agencies that publish their information under the International Aid Transparency Initiative. This is UN-Women's highest transparency score so far and a significant improvement from 2017. The improvement was attributed to increased RBM capacity as well as new ICT systems.

99. UN-Women enhanced its risk management framework globally, including components of the fraud risk management programme. An inter-agency online Fraud and Corruption Awareness training was rolled out in 2018. Work is underway for a coverage increase of fraud training for personnel and third parties coupled with fraud risk assessments for all risk units.

100. UN-Women received its seventh consecutive unqualified audit opinion for the year 2017 and sustained a high implementation rate for internal and external audits (figure 14).

**Figure 14: Percentage of audit recommendations implemented**

101. The final 2018 security compliance status stalled slightly below the established milestone, due to changing security environments with newly required security measures.

102. UN-Women streamlined recruitment processes with the rollout of a new E-Recruitment solution and increased inter-agency collaboration to leverage resources on sourcing and reference-checking. The process of decentralizing Human Resources Business Partners to the regions began in 2018, bringing decision-making and services closer to most of the Entity's workforce.

103. In 2018, UN-Women increased the use of Long-Term Agreements, reducing transactions for such procurement by 70 per cent, and leveraged cost-effective cloud-based platforms, exceeding its milestone on availability and uptime of corporate systems.

104. A corporate performance scorecard was introduced to support senior managers overseeing human and financial resources, drawing on automated reports. This management tool tracks key performance indicators and highlights those at risk of falling behind or already below target.

105. Seventy-six per cent of UN-Women country offices were co-located in common premises. The Entity exceeded its milestones for common service lines.

106. UN-Women witnessed steady progress in the timeliness of donor reports, improving from 60 per cent in 2017 to 68 per cent in 2018, despite not achieving the 2018 milestone. In 2019, the Entity will further enhance capacity-building, accountability and timeliness for donor reports at country and regional levels by leveraging its Virtual Global Service Centre and Regional Offices.

#### **IV. Analysis and conclusion**

107. UN-Women achieved significant results in the first year of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021, continuing a trajectory of progressive growth and improved performance since its creation despite some weaknesses and a persisting funding gap.

108. In 2018, UN-Women successfully leveraged its comparative advantages as outlined in the new Strategic Plan. Leveraging its thought leadership, UN-Women continued to support Member States in strengthening global normative frameworks

and accompanying Member States and other partners in their implementation, while better leveraging the UN system to scale up results. Stronger coalitions were forged with civil society, women's organizations, youth groups and grassroots networks, and UN-Women will continue to work to further expand the constituency of support for gender equality and women's empowerment.

109. At the same time, accelerating and sustaining change remains a challenge. UN-Women will address areas of weaker performance and improve data collection, in particular disaggregated data. Some areas that require a comprehensive approach have seen slower-than-expected progress in this first year and a faster pace of results will be expected after some foundations have been put in place, such as the adoption of conducive policy/legal frameworks. Significant results are expected through the implementation of multi-stakeholder partnerships, which were being built or enhanced in 2018, such as the *Spotlight Initiative*. UN-Women will continue to diversify its funding sources, including mobilizing individual giving and diverse core resources through innovative funding.

110. While the UN system, including UN-Women, has been undergoing substantial changes, 2019 will be a year of consolidation. UN-Women is preparing for 2020, the year of the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; five years of implementing the 2030 Agenda; 20 years of Security Council resolution 1325; and ten years of UN-Women. These anniversaries provide an opportunity to galvanize support for gender equality and women's empowerment and provide opportunities for faster and more sustainable progress.

## **V. Elements of a decision**

The Executive Board may wish to:

- (a) Welcome the 2018 Annual Report of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director on the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021;
- (b) Commend UN-Women on a strong performance; and the progress achieved as described in this report;
- (c) Encourage UN-Women to use lessons learned from the first year of the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021, as well as from previous strategic plans, to inform the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021.