

Implementation of GA RES 72/279 on Repositioning of the UN Development System

UN-Women's Information Note

August 2019

I. Introduction

1. UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNOPS and UN-Women are pleased to provide their respective Executive Boards with a further update on our engagement in the repositioning of the UN Development System. We remain fully committed to the UNDS Reform and to jointly drive all its remaining work streams forward in close coordination with the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG), under the leadership of the Deputy Secretary-General and with the support of United Nations Development Coordination Office (DCO) and the Transition Team.
2. This paper complements the earlier information notes presented to the Executive Board in the First Regular Session and the Annual Session in 2019. It provides an update on recent developments since June 2019. Additionally, it includes a mapping of regional assets and capacities, as requested by the Executive Board for information, in decision 2019/07.

II. Supporting the new UN Resident Coordinator system

a. Management and Accountability Framework (MAF)

3. In support of MAF implementation and mutual accountability within UNCTs, UN-Women is revising the job description for its Representatives, in consultation with other agencies to use common language and approaches to the extent possible. UN-Women is revising the performance review process for Representatives to align with the MAF, seeking input from the respective Resident Coordinators on the performance assessment.
4. All UN-Women Country Representatives are required to add to their performance plans one goal that focuses on leading effectively on the achievement of UNCT results (specifically those for which UN-Women is responsible for), making sure that UN coordination services are enhanced for the localization of the SDGs and the gender-responsive implementation of Agenda 2030 and supporting the strategic repositioning of the UNDS at the country level.
5. During the end-of-cycle performance assessments, Regional Directors will request feedback and inputs from Resident Coordinators when assessing the performance of Country Representative, based on the performance plans. UN-Women continues to follow up with the UN Development Coordination Office to seek approval for UN-

Women Regional Directors to be able to input into the performance of Resident Coordinators, as is the case with other entities.

b. Funding, levy implementation and reference to cost sharing

6. UN-Women provided guidance on the operationalization of the 1 per cent levy across the Entity. UN-Women has also conducted training for Headquarters and field staff. The Donor Agreement Management System (DAMS) was amended accordingly.

c. Supporting the RC pool

7. UN-Women has been advocating for gender parity in the appointment of Resident Coordinators, which was reached in 2018. UN-Women is supporting the RC pool by nominating qualified candidates for the RC assessment. Candidates who successfully pass the assessment are subsequently nominated to be considered for available RC positions.
8. In 2018 we nominated two candidates and in 2019 one candidate from UN-Women participated in the first round of RC assessments. In 2019, UN-Women successfully nominated one staff member from the RC pool for a Resident Coordinator position.

III. Strengthening system-wide analysis, planning and reporting

9. UN-Women has recently reviewed and updated its internal guidance for the development of Strategic Notes to align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). UN-Women's Strategic Notes were already aligned to the UNDAFs. However, with the Cooperation Frameworks, UN-Women has further strengthened this alignment by specifying that the UNSDCF outcomes to which UN-Women is contributing should be copied verbatim as Strategic Note outcomes in order to ensure full alignment. The guidance also reaffirms that the duration of a Strategic Note must be harmonized with the UNSDCF cycle in the country.
10. UN-Women ensures that Government and other national partners as appropriate, are consulted and that Government provides leadership and ownership in the development of the Strategic Notes. UN-Women has also ensured alignment with relevant requirements in the Management and Accountability Framework. For example, UN-Women Country Representatives must submit the draft Strategic Notes to the Resident Coordinator (and/or the Humanitarian Coordinator in humanitarian contexts) for their review and feedback, including to ascertain Strategic Note's full alignment with the country's Cooperation Framework.
11. As part of its change management process, UN-Women is also building its country typology and refining its criteria for country presence to be aligned with the roll-out of

new Cooperation Frameworks. This will ensure that UN-Women's country presences are fully aligned with the UNDS repositioning at country level.

12. UN-Women has prioritized capacity building and training of staff members in the new Cooperation Framework guidance. UN-Women staff will participate in Trainings for Trainers on the Cooperation Framework organized by the United Nations Development Coordination Office (DCO) and the UN Staff System Staff College (UNSSC). UN-Women has also planned a series of workshops and training activities on the Cooperation Framework.
13. In order to support mainstreaming of gender equality in Cooperation Frameworks, UN-Women will strengthen support to Country Offices and Multi-Country Offices through a dedicated surge capacity. The surge capacity will be composed of a network of resource persons from Headquarters, Regional Offices, and Country Offices that will deliver a menu of services in a rapid and flexible manner throughout the lifecycle of the Cooperation Framework, depending on the needs in the country.

IV. Advancing shared business operations and premises

14. UN-Women is contributing to the current work of the Business Innovation Group (BIG) that is leading the system-wide efforts on the ongoing work to identify efficiency gains in the area of common business operations.

a. Mutual recognition

15. As one of the 14 UN Entities who have signed the Mutual Recognition statement, UN-Women will be participating in the next steps, which is led by the BIG Project Team. The operationalization of mutual recognition is expected to progress as the inter-agency discussion on the design of back office configurations advances.-

b. Business operations

16. UN-Women continues to be actively engaged in BIG and as such the Entity contributed to the finalization of the revised BOS guidelines as well as the Business Operations Strategy (BOS) piloting at country level. The new BOS guidelines focus on service lines with the highest potential for efficiency gains. Similarly, the Common Back Offices (CBO) workstream seeks to achieve primarily efficiency gains and enhanced quality of service.
17. UN-Women is also participating in the inter-agency selected pilots at country level to understand costs by each function and activity across all entities within a country in order to identify potential consolidation opportunities. Furthermore, UN-Women is participating in the recently launched "UN Marketplace Survey" for Global Shared Service Centres (GSSC) to map existing service needs and potential offerings. As a

recipient of services, UN-Women is awaiting with great interest the findings of these pilots and the survey with the expectation that options for consolidation will yield not only efficiency gains but also enhanced quality of service based on adequate costing and pricing principles.

c. Premises

18. UN-Women continues its active participation in the inter-agency Task Team on Common Premises, where the Project Team is reviewing existing guidelines, outlining requirements, and establishing a new inter-agency database on UN premises. The series of pilots in eight countries where existing data demonstrates the highest opportunity for premise consolidation is underway. UN-Women will be engaged in the pilots at the country-level, through our participation on the UN Country Team wherever we have a presence. As shared in the previous updates to the Executive Board, 84 per cent of UN-Women's Country Offices are already co-located with one or more agencies.

V. Review of agency assets at country and regional level

19. As per Executive Board decision 2019/07, a detailed mapping of UN-Women's assets and capacities at the regional level is attached to this information note.
20. UN-Women is committed to the ongoing review of regional assets and capacities to ensure that the UNDS at the regional level is fit for purpose and that it has the ability to provide country-focused support in an optimal and efficient manner.
21. The Regional Offices of UNDS, including UN-Women, play an important role in supporting the effective delivery of results at the country level and in providing technical assistance to the UNCTs which can help solve capacity gaps. In particular, Regional Offices support the RC/UNCTs in the development of Cooperation Frameworks. UN-Women Regional Offices support the mainstreaming of gender equality in Cooperation Frameworks. This is done through different regional mechanisms, including the Peer Support Group and through quality assurance of draft Cooperation Frameworks.
22. UN-Women leverages its UN System coordination mandate to promote gender mainstreaming in the regional United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) and in the Regional Coordination Mechanisms. UN-Women Regional Directors are active members of these platforms.
23. UN-Women Regional Directors are at D1 level. Regional Directors of most entities are at D2. This limits our engagement in certain platforms. For example, our Regional Directors do not participate in performance assessments for Resident Coordinators where only

Regional Directors at D2 are allowed to participate. The disparities in seniority between UN-Women and other entities also exist at positions below the Regional Directors. UN-Women engages with other UNDS entities to make sure that UN-Women staff are recognized in line with their functions rather than their grades.

24. In the context of the strengthened positioning of the Cooperation Framework, UN-Women Regional Offices have enhanced their strategic coordination and technical roles by providing dedicated support to UNCTs in the design and roll-out of the Cooperation Frameworks, including by ensuring that high level gender analysis is included in the common country analysis (CCA).
25. Strategic partnerships with key partners and networks are critical for the work of the UNDS at regional level. UN-Women works closely with regional bodies such as the African Union (AU), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and other regional stakeholders, including civil society, to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women across regional policy development.
26. UN-Women also partners with regional bodies to get inputs for global intergovernmental processes such as the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).
27. UN-Women Regional Offices provide a range of support services to Country Offices to facilitate the delivery of results at the country level which are articulated in country Strategic Notes which are aligned to Cooperation Frameworks. These services include policy advice in various thematic areas, analysis of regional trends, partnership support, operational support, UN Coordination support, management oversight, advocacy support, inter-governmental support and quality assurance for strategic planning. UN-Women Regional Offices take the lead in the development, management and oversight of regional programmes.
28. The recommendations from the ongoing change management process in UN-Women, which is linked to the UNDS reform, have identified areas that require strengthening in UN-Women Regional Offices such as uneven policy advisory capacity and the need to strengthen programme design in order to enhance the focus on results.
29. Some of the capacities of UN-Women Regional Offices that require strengthening include policy advice, UN coordination, programme development and management, communications and resource mobilization. This will allow UN-Women Regional Offices to adequately play their backstopping role for country office and their regional leadership role. The functional analysis being conducted by the change management team

is to identify resources at headquarters that could potentially be decentralized to the field to provide the necessary strengthening.

30. As part of strengthening UN-Women Regional Offices' human resources capacities, several initiatives have been undertaken, including the recruitment of a dedicated Human Resources Business Partner, senior Operations staffs, and technical advisors. However, gaps in core resources may jeopardize the sustainability of such core functions in all offices.
31. UN-Women Regional Offices total financial expenditures range from USD 5.6 million (Americas and the Caribbean Regional Office) to 13.4 USD (Asia and the Pacific Regional Office) for an average of USD 7.8 million per Regional Office in 2018. These expenditures do not include expenditures achieved at the Country Office and Programme Presence level.
32. The sources of funding for UN-Women Regional Offices are overall balanced with Other Resources (Non-core) funding's share representing 40% of total expenditures in 2018. The share of Non-core expenditures ranges from 8% (Americas and the Caribbean Regional Office) to 67% (Asia and Pacific regional office). Some Regional Offices with relatively lower share of non-core resources provide support to resource mobilization efforts by Country Offices including through provision of technical expertise. In such cases, non-core resources are directly received and managed by Country Offices.
33. Ability to mobilize non-core resources is the main financial growth lever and non-core expenditures represent more than 65% of the total expenditures in the largest regional office. It is worth noting that some Regional Offices have managed to increase their non-core resources significantly, ensuring financial sustainability and a greater impact of UN-Women work.
34. UN-Women will review and update its cost-recovery policies and procedures providing more clarity and guidance with templates to ensure that all costs arising from the implementation of programmes funded from non-core resources are duly recovered. This is planned with full consideration of ensuring compliance with the approved cost recovery framework as applicable to UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UN-Women.
35. Hiring a dedicated staff to resource mobilization and partnerships is likely to have a direct impact on the growth of non-core resources.

VI. Funding Compact

36. UN-Women will engage with the Executive Board on the Funding Compact as part of its Structured Dialogue on Financing and in ongoing reporting to the Executive Board. The 2019 Structured Dialogue on Financing report will be presented to the Board during an informal session on 26 August 2019 and as part of the second regular session of the Executive Board on 9-10 September 2019. The report provides an overview of the funding situation for UN-Women. It promotes flexible and predictable funding, including unrestricted Regular Resources and complementary multi-year earmarked Other Resources aligned to the Strategic Plan, from a diverse partner source that includes governments, UN inter-agency arrangements, and the private sector, amongst others.
37. UN-Women, UNDP, UNICEF, UNOPS and UNFPA continue to collaborate on the Structured Dialogue on financing, including through a harmonized monitoring framework of the Funding Compact indicators, and a joint informal briefing on the Funding Compact scheduled for 28 August 2019.
38. UN-Women believes that the visibility of results and a strong link between results and resources is essential to enhance the financing of the Entity and plans to launch an online portal by the end of 2019 that will provide information on how and where UN-Women uses resources, showcasing the results enabled by funding partners' support. As a first step, the data companion to the Report of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women on the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021 has been built online, to allow for greater interactivity and better visualization of performance.
39. UN-Women presents results achieved as part of annual reporting to the Executive Board and through other channels, including its website and social media. On its global website, UN-Women highlights information on its financial partners and acknowledges contributions. The UN-Women Compendium of Financial Partner Contributions for 2018, being published in August 2019, provides a comprehensive financial analysis by funding types and sources, in alignment with the UN-Women Strategic Plan and commitments under the Funding Compact.

VII. Conclusion

40. Together with UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UNOPS, UN-Women reiterates its strong commitment to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 72/279 and to building on the lessons learned to further strengthen our common impact on the ground.
41. UN-Women will continue to engage proactively in system-wide processes on the repositioning of the UNDS and to ensure that the outcomes of these processes support the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment. UN-Women will continue to promote the implementation of system-wide commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of women by the UNDS. UN-Women will also continue to align its

ongoing change processes aimed at enhancing UN-Women's impact on the lives of women and girls with the UNDS repositioning.