

## Management response on the Corporate Evaluation of UN-Women's Contribution to Women's Political Participation (WPP) and Leadership April 2018

UN-Women expresses its appreciation for the Corporate Evaluation of UN-Women's Contribution to Women's Political Participation and Leadership. The evaluation assesses UN-Women's cumulative contribution between 2011-2017 towards women's ability to "lead and participate in decision-making at all levels" (Impact Area 1 of UN-Women's 2014-2017 Strategic Plan) and informs future planning and implementation. Women's political participation (WPP) is defined as their participation in governance and decision-making bodies, particularly parliaments, local governments, constitutional and other drafting bodies, political parties, executive branches, and as heads of state and/or government, while leadership is considered as a cross-cutting theme. It considers the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of UN-Women's work on WPP, following extensive document review and consultations with stakeholders, partner agencies and UN-Women staff at Headquarters, Regional Offices and Country Offices. In addition to those listed in the evaluation Synthesis Report, UN-Women also wishes to acknowledge the support of the Political Participation Policy Unit throughout the evaluation process.

UN-Women is pleased to see that the evaluation views UN-Women as well-situated in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It cites WPP progress as one of the key drivers for the SDGs, acknowledges UN-Women as the main UN actor and thought leader on WPP and underscores that by grounding its work in normative frameworks and international commitments, UN-Women is considered an impartial, highly credible actor on WPP that is effective in assisting Member States to strengthen norms, policies and implementation. The evaluation also recognizes that with a clear, corporate-wide vision on WPP and strong partnerships, UN-Women has been responsive to country contexts by successfully adapting to political opportunities and challenges. The evaluation arrives within the first year of UN-Women's second Strategic Plan 2018-2021, affording an opportunity to address its conclusions and recommendations in the new Strategic Plan's implementation.

The evaluation offers reflections and opportunities for UN-Women to consider lessons learned, leverage its promising practices and explore additional dimensions to approach WPP more systematically, holistically and with expanded capacity. UN-Women takes note that achieving results for WPP requires a long-term, strategic vision, institutionalized knowledge and cross-cutting thematic approaches, and will ensure their application in implementing the new 2018-2021 Strategic Plan. UN-Women appreciates that the evaluation connects WPP, environmental sustainability and local governance, which are altogether critical for realizing the SDGs, while recalling that neither environment nor local governance were included as part of Impact Area 1 programming commitments under UN-Women's 2014-2017 Strategic Plan. UN-Women has committed to programming that meets the needs and interests of marginalized women across the board in the new Strategic Plan, and this is no less a priority for WPP.

As UN-Women strives to enhance its structure, capacity and capability to impact on the lives of women and girls who are left behind, it takes note of the staffing capacity gaps cited in the evaluation, and will seek increased resources to address these to ensure UN-Women is sufficiently capacitated to support SDG implementation. The Flagship Programme Initiative on Women's Political Empowerment and Leadership, aligned with the current Strategic Plan and the SDGs, has prioritized and streamlined areas of programmatic intervention. These considerations, and the evaluation's recommendations and observations, will inform UN-Women's WPP work and assessment of its impact on women's lives around the world.

**RECOMMENDATION 1: In a context of wide-ranging demands and limited resources, UN-Women needs to strengthen its prioritization capacity at the country level to contribute strategic and sustainable results on WPP**

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE**

UN-Women agrees with this recommendation and the assessment that UN-Women’s ability to deliver sustainable results at the county level depends on investing in strategic and targeted programming. The evaluation highlighted several of UN-Women’s promising practices that have led to tangible changes, impacted on the policy environment and demonstrated innovative programming at the country level despite limited resources. These include normative and policy frameworks strengthening, capacity-building for women policymakers, gender mainstreaming in electoral processes, global awareness raising on violence against women in politics and political party engagement.

UN-Women’s Strategic Plan 2018-2021 builds on these successes and places an emphasis on five main WPP priority areas:<sup>1</sup> supporting legal and policy reforms to promote women’s electoral participation; strengthened capacities of women to engage in political life; supporting parliamentary bodies to deliver gender equality reforms, monitoring and preventing violence against women in politics, and improved data and statistics on women’s representation in local government (SDG indicator 5.5.1b). UN-Women will work in coordination with UN agencies and strategic international partners (including the Inter-Parliamentary Union and International IDEA), to support Member States’ long-term efforts to address structural barriers to WPP in alignment with Strategic Plan priorities.

**Accepted**

KEY ACTION	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY FOR IMPLEMENTATION	STATUS	COMMENTS
Evidence-based programme guidance and tools on WPP priority areas in the Strategic Plan is developed to support implementation at the regional and country levels.	Q2 Q4 2018	Policy Division	In progress	

**RECOMMENDATION 2: To strengthen implementation of its coordination mandate, UN-Women should establish a clear division of labour with other UN agencies around potentially overlapping mandates and provide thematic operational guidance on planning and implementing its coordination role at the country and regional levels**

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE**

UN-Women agrees with this recommendation and the need to avoid overlap and fully coordinate with other UN agencies. UN-Women will, within the ongoing UN reform process, articulate its comparative advantage and support other agencies to apply theirs in ways that maximize the UN system’s impact and results.

**Accepted**

<sup>1</sup> Outcome 2 (Women lead, participate in and benefit from governance systems), Output 4 (More women of all ages fully participate, lead and engage in political institutions and processes); Output 6 (More and better quality data and statistics are available to promote and track progress of gender equality and women’s empowerment).

<p>UN-Women notes that the Annex to the Common Chapter to the Strategic Plans of UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UN-Women provides a sound basis for coordination among UN agencies, notably on <i>SDG 5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life</i>, which is aligned with the four priority areas outlined in UN-Women's new Strategic Plan 2018-2021. UN-Women will also continue to coordinate with UN agencies and provide gender expertise through the Inter-Agency Coordination Mechanism on Electoral Assistance (ICMEA), as well as strengthen cooperation with UNDP on election support through joint programming guidance at the country level.</p> <p>UN-Women will further clarify operational guidance for the implementation of its coordination role and functions. The operational guidance will provide additional operational clarity on the implementation of the Entity's coordination mandate across the themes and contexts in which it operates. The guidance will be aligned with the new QCPR, relevant CEB principles and policies, the new Strategic Plan and Strategic Framework of UN-Women and the UN Reform.</p> <p>UN-Women will provide additional thematic guidance on planning and implementation at the country and regional levels, and towards that end, a protocol for strengthening cooperation will be developed in line with the priority areas identified in the current UN-Women Strategic Plan.</p>				
KEY ACTION	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY FOR IMPLEMENTATION	STATUS	COMMENTS
Protocol for cooperation and partnership on gender mainstreaming in election support is developed and shared at country and regional levels.	Q4 2018	Policy Division	Not initiated	
Procedures and arrangements as per the UN reform process are complied with.	Ongoing	Policy and Programme Division	In progress	
Develop operational guidance for clarifying the implementation of the Entity's coordination mandate with UN-Women divisions, Country Offices and coordination specialists	Q2 2019	Coordination Division	Initiated	
<p><b>RECOMMENDATION 3: UN-Women should develop a long-term WPP capacity strengthening plan to enhance its ability to deliver results and meet stakeholder requests.</b></p>				
<p><b>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</b></p> <p>UN-Women agrees with this recommendation, noting the need to address some capacity gaps to better serve country offices and foster cross-regional learning and knowledge sharing throughout the organization. The</p>			<p><b>Accepted</b></p>	

<p>evaluation offers useful reflections and opportunities for UN-Women to leverage its promising practices and explore additional dimensions to approach WPP more systematically, holistically and with expanded capacity.</p> <p>Having identified the priority areas in the Strategic Plan 2018-2021, established strategic partnerships and produced a suite of relevant knowledge products available for use and adaptation at country level, UN-Women will invest in knowledge sharing and capacity-strengthening of personnel to deliver results on WPP at the country and regional levels. Based on needs identified through an organizational staff mapping, these investments will include a community of practice on WPP to facilitate applied knowledge exchange, in-person training, peer-to-peer learning, thematic webinars, one-on-one guidance and development of additional tools. UN-Women will prioritize boosting human resources on WPP knowledge management at global level to grow and maintain a community of practice on WPP to facilitate exchanges between regions, and will continue making knowledge accessible to staff at all levels.</p>				
<b>KEY ACTION</b>	<b>TIME FRAME</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTY FOR IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>STATUS</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
An organizational staff mapping and assessment on WPP conducted.	Q3 Q4 2018	Policy and Programme Divisions	Not initiated	
In-person trainings and thematic webinars convened to address capacity needs, facilitate peer-to-peer learning and promote a coordinated, corporate approach to WPP priorities and implementation at country level.	Ongoing	Policy Division, Programme Division in coordination with Regional Offices	Initiated	
A knowledge management specialist on WPP recruited to grow and maintain a thematic community of practice, codify lessons learned and assist with sharing good practices with regional and country offices.	Q1 2019	Policy Division	Not initiated	
<p><b>RECOMMENDATION 4: UN-Women should invest in a thematic resource mobilization approach that builds on existing innovative, flexible, and longer-term funding mechanisms and that addresses regional priorities.</b></p>				
<p><b>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</b></p> <p>UN-Women agrees with this recommendation and the need to continue to capitalize country programmes on WPP. UN-Women has strived to increase funding in part by the flagship programme on WPP, which builds multi-stakeholder partnerships including with other parts of the UN system, for transformative change and promote global policy coherence. Flagships also serves to as a resource mobilization mechanism that responds to funding shortfalls on WPP. This is in line with the Structured Dialogue on Financing Report<sup>2</sup> presented to</p>			<p><b>Accepted</b></p>	

<sup>2</sup> Structured Dialogue on Financing: UN-Women’s funding overview, gaps and financing strategy (UNW/2016/8)

<p>the Executive Board in September 2016, which highlighted the need for further capitalization of the WPP portfolio.</p> <p>Indeed, strategic programme planning on WPP and country office support, materialized through the flagship programme and subsequently, the Strategic Plan 2018-2021, have led to an increase in funding allocated to political participation. The evaluation notes that “after a decrease in funding between 2011-15 (from \$35 million in 2011 to \$ 28.8 million in 2014 and \$24 million in 2015), there has been a progressive increase in 2016 (\$39.4 million),” with the Africa region having “consistently received the largest level of investment.” UN-Women’s funding Pipeline Management System (Leads) seems to indicate we will be able to maintain this trend. UN-Women will also replicate the regional approach of adapting the FPI model as a resource mobilization tool in West and Central Africa by doing the same for other regions.</p>				
KEY ACTION	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY FOR IMPLEMENTATION	STATUS	COMMENTS
Multi-country flagship programme and multi stakeholder funding initiatives on WPP to support regional-level fundraising efforts and ensure programming and reporting coherence in alignment with SP 2018-2021 are developed.	Q3 Q4 2018	Policy Division and Programme Division	Initiated	
<p><b>RECOMMENDATION 5: UN-Women should prioritize “Leave No One Behind” within its WPP programming consistently at the global, regional, and country levels and build an evidence-base that can feed into its global normative and advocacy work.</b></p>				
<p><b>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</b></p> <p>UN-Women agrees with this recommendation, while observing that the principle of LNOB resulted from Member States’ pledge to achieve the SDGs, and was adopted during the implementation of UN-Women’s Strategic Plan 2014-2017. With clear commitment from Member States to reach first those who are furthest behind, and in direct response to the QCPR, UN-Women has mainstreamed the principles of LNOB into its current Strategic Plan, enabling UN-Women to adapt its programming to meet the needs and interests of marginalized women in all its programme areas, including WPP. UN-Women’s current Strategic Plan (Integrated Results and Resources framework, Priority 1, Output 4) provides the basis for monitoring support to women of all ages and women living with disabilities. Additionally, UN-Women’s new, integrated results management system is better positioned than before to regularly capture country-level LNOB results.</p> <p>UN-Women has also strengthened its analysis on LNOB and intersecting forms of discrimination in its recent report, “Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” (2018) which can provide guidance on how to strengthen mainstreaming LNOB in WPP work. Recognizing that data and statistics are indispensable for highlighting the needs of marginalized women who are left behind and whose rights are not always prioritized in policy-making, UN-Women’s flagship programme on gender</p>			<p><b>Accepted</b></p>	

<p>statistics<sup>3</sup> aims to create an integrated evidence base that informs decision-making to reach those furthest behind first. UN-Women is also part of the inter-agency Task Team that is drafting the LNOB “UNDG Operational Guide for UN Country Teams” and will operationalize its guidance once it is finalized.</p>				
KEY ACTION	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY FOR IMPLEMENTATION	STATUS	COMMENTS
Following RMS review, disaggregated data on Leave No One Behind as per Strategic Plan methodological notes related to Strategic Plan Output 4 are captured and reviewed.	Q1 2019	SPPEU	Not initiated	
Methodological tools and UNDG Operational Guide for UNCTs on LNOB are finalized and socialized widely.	Ongoing	Policy and Programme Divisions	Initiated	
<p><b>RECOMMENDATION 6: UN-Women should invest in new programming on social norms change that complements its WPP work and develop effective methods to monitor and report on progress in the long-term.</b></p>				
<p><b>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</b>  UN-Women agrees with this recommendation. Social norms programming is a vital component of all UN-Women’s work, and is included as a cross-cutting theme in the current Strategic Plan under Outcomes 1, 2 and 4, and under Output 2 in UN-Women’s organizational effectiveness and efficiency plan (e.g. convening partners against discriminatory social norms, working with faith-based institutions and working with the private sector).</p> <p>Additionally, the theory of change of the Strategic Plan thematic output on WPP squarely highlights the importance of social norm change by including as one of its four pillars an outcome that <i>women are perceived as equally legitimate and effective political leaders as men</i>. Progress towards this outcome will be achieved through ongoing programming like community dialogues to increase civic understanding of gender equality and women’s right to political participation, media capacity building and leveraging the HeForShe campaign to encourage more political leaders to publicly promote women’s leadership. These initiatives, along with the evaluation’s recommendations and observations, will inform UN-Women’s WPP work and assessment of its ability to deliver results for women around the world. UN-Women could additionally explore the possibility of donor interest and support for large-scale survey research on WPP and social norms change over time in partnership with UN-Women’s innovation facility, which may wish to pursue similar longitudinal research across all themes covered by the organization.</p>			<p><b>Accepted</b></p>	
KEY ACTION	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY FOR IMPLEMENTATION	STATUS	COMMENTS

<sup>3</sup> “Making Every Woman and Girl Count: Supporting the monitoring and implementation of the SDGs through better production and use of gender statistics”

Good practices of innovative programming on social norm change and engagement with men are codified.	Q1 2019	Policy and Programme Divisions	Not initiated	
Donor interest and support for large-scale survey on WPP and social norms change over time in partnership with UN-Women's innovation facility explored.	Q4 2018	Policy and Programme Divisions (Innovation Facility)	Not initiated	