

Management Response to the Evaluation of the Regional Architecture of UN-Women

OVERALL COMMENTS

UN-Women expresses its appreciation for the Evaluation of the Regional Architecture, which was conducted between September 2015 and August 2016, through consultation with member states, stakeholders and UN-Women staff at Headquarters and field levels. The evaluation analyzes the design, planning, and implementation of the Regional Architecture from its launch in 2012 to the first quarter of 2016. UN-Women considers this an important evaluation which reflects the current situation, both in terms of strengths and weaknesses, and identifies priority areas for attention moving forward.

UN-Women is pleased to see that the evaluation recognises the organisation's achievements and the overall success of the Regional Architecture roll-out as approved by the Executive Board. It notes with satisfaction the evaluation's reflection on impact in terms of UN-Women's strengthened positioning and standing with Member States, civil society, development partners, and the UN System, and the increased impact on the lives of women and girls around the world. The evaluation is timely, coming in ahead of the process of developing UN-Women's second Strategic Plan 2018-2021. This affords the opportunity to address the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation as part of the new Strategic Plan's development.

While the evaluation notes that UN-Women has made significant progress in the normative, coordination and operational areas, with significant contributions at global, regional and country levels; it also sets out some of the challenges UN-Women faces to deliver on various aspects of its mandate, as financial resources have not been translated in line with the budgets approved by the Executive Board. UN-Women looks forward to addressing these challenges within the context of the new Strategic Plan 2018-2021 and beyond, including through flexibility in and evolution of the organisation's institutional structure and building more capacity to deliver results. This is particularly crucial in the context of the expanded scope of work that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for achieving gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) provides. To date there is not a single country that has achieved gender equality. The 2030 expiry date of gender inequality requires accelerated progress and implementation of a gender responsive SDG agenda.

UN-Women continues to strive to enhance its structure, capacity and capability to impact the lives of the women and girls who are left behind. To this end, UN-Women has initiated a number of processes to ensure that the organisation is optimising its human resources, tools, systems, administration and deployment mechanisms in an effective and efficient manner. These processes include new ways of working as it is envisioned with the new programme modality of the Flagship Programme Initiative (FPI), which will harness UN-Women's composite mandate in UN coordination, normative and operations. The aim of the FPI is to push for transformational and accelerated change to help Member States realise the GEWE aspirations, agreed through various normative frameworks including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as UN resolutions on Women, Peace and Security, and Climate Change agreements.

With the increased commitment by Member States in the 2030 Agenda to work for a significant increase in investments to close the gender gap and to strengthen support for institutions on gender equality and the empowerment of women at the global, regional and national levels, the Commission on the Status of Women called upon UN-Women to continue to play a central role in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and in supporting Member States in coordinating the United Nations system and in mobilising civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders, at all levels, in support of the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

While resources have remained static, UN-Women has enhanced its work in terms of scope and breadth, including enhancing visibility of, and attention to, gender equality and the empowerment of women through its normative support work. UN-Women has also initiated the FPI to accelerate its programming footprint and to enable the organisation to effectively and efficiently deliver on all three aspects of its mandate: normative support, UN coordination and operational activities.

As noted by the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the Strategic Plan 2014-2017, UN-Women is on track to achieve significant results in implementing its Strategic Plan 2014-2017. The MTR also notes that while challenges still remains, UN-Women has made great strides in its institution building and in the organisation’s capacity to generate positive impact on the ground. After five years of operations, UN-Women has accumulated valuable lessons learned which provide opportunities for UN-Women to further improve its efficiency and effectiveness to be “fit for purpose”, within the new Strategic Plan 2018-2021.

In this context, UN-Women is reviewing and streamlining its business processes and programming and operations guidelines. This includes on-going work to link the organisation’s current information systems for planning, financial management and reporting so that UN-Women can better link resources with results and operate optimally as a decentralised institution. This will continue to be pursued in the context of strengthening field support while at the same time continue leveraging normative processes and UN coordination processes at global, regional and country levels.

These considerations, along with the evaluation’s recommendations and observations, will underpin UN-Women’s ongoing review of its existing footprint and country presence in the field. This review will inform decisions on UN-Women’s country differentiated presence typology, and on ensuring financial viability of its work including better use of different funding sources to finance transformative results for women and girls.

RECOMMENDATION 1: UN-Women should build greater flexibility into the regional architecture and deploy its types of presence strategically, while defining a clear process and criteria to be considered in making decisions about typology of presence.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

UN-Women agrees with this recommendation. UN-Women’s ability to respond to stakeholder needs has significantly increased since 2012 at all levels (global, regional and country) as a consequence of the regional architecture exercise.

However, despite the rapid build-up of UN-Women’s country and regional presence, as a result of the Regional Architecture, UN-Women’s field presence is insufficient to ensure the implementation of the Entity’s composite mandate, as financial resources have not been translated in line with the budgets approved by

SELECT ONE OF THE BELOW

Accepted

<p>the Executive Board. Since 2011, UN-Women has expanded from having presences in 74 countries with varying capacities and resources, including six regional offices, six multi-country offices, 45 country offices and 43 programme presences at the end of 2016. These observations and this recommendation underpin the need for UN-Women to be flexible and able to continuously adapt the organisation's footprint, capacities and structures to deliver on its universal tripartite mandate in an effective and efficient manner.</p> <p>Member States, including in UN-Women's Executive Board, have been unambiguous in their support for UN-Women's mandate and its role in accelerating delivery of transformative results on gender equality and women's empowerment. However, this support has not yet translated into financial resources that are aligned to Member State pledges and commitments.</p> <p>One aspect of UN-Women's response to this recommendation will be to review the scale of its field presence to ensure optimal distribution of capacity and support. In this regard UN-Women will within the context of the new Strategy Plan 2018-2021, conduct consultations at all levels within the organisation, to develop a tool based on a set of objective criteria and data, which will help to inform considerations for the type of country differentiated presence. This will help to more effectively leverage resources in support of the rights of women and girls.</p>				
KEY ACTION	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY FOR IMPLEMENTATION	STATUS	COMMENTS
Following organisation-wide consultations, a tool to assess country differentiated presence typology will be developed.	Q2 2017	Programme Division	In progress.	
A proposal for appropriate adjustment to differentiated field presence in the context of the new Strategic Plan 2018-2021 developed.	Q2 2017	Programme Division	To be developed.	
RECOMMENDATION 2: UN-Women should strengthen HQ integration within the regional architecture framework, as mandated in the Executive Board Papers.				
MANAGEMENT RESPONSE			SELECT ONE OF THE BELOW	
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<p>UN-Women agrees with this recommendation, noting that the regional architecture approved by the Executive Board in 2012 was successfully implemented. In recognition and anticipation of the issues raised by the regional architecture evaluation, UN-Women’s Bureau for Policy and Programme (Pillar B) initiated a functional review of its Programme Division at Headquarters in April 2016. The overall purpose of the process is to streamline business processes, align functions and address some of the capacity gaps to optimise the Bureau’s human resources, tools and systems in an effective and efficient manner to better serve country offices, foster learning and knowledge sharing across the organisation, and leverage economies of scale.</p> <p>UN-Women, based on the past experience and in line with the evaluation’s recommendations, will update the functional review of Headquarters functions to assess ways to strengthen services to the regional and country levels and make adjustments accordingly.</p>				
KEY ACTION	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY FOR IMPLEMENTATION	STATUS	COMMENTS
Functional analysis of Programme Division in Pillar B completed	Q1 2017	Programme Division	In progress.	
Update functional analysis done at Headquarters in 2012 to assess services to regional and country offices and programme presences.	Q 2 2017	EDO	To be developed.	
<p>RECOMMENDATION 3: UN-Women should make specific adjustments to each level in the regional architecture, adapting to more realistic expectations corresponding to each level’s capacity.</p>				
<p>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</p> <p>UN-Women agrees with the principle of this recommendation and will consider it closely with recommendation number one. UN-Women will conduct an analysis to validate its differentiated country presence typology and develop a risk mitigation plan to minimise impact on staff, as laid out under recommendation one.</p> <p>In addition, UN-Women will be undertaking a review of the current Delegation of Authority (DoA) Policy, and the Internal Control Framework Policy, with the overall purpose to adjust the current delegations, to better align the DoA with level of capacity and to meet the needs of country and regional offices.</p>			<p>SELECT ONE OF THE BELOW</p> <p>Accepted</p>	

<p>UN-Women will continue to invest in capacity development of staff and personnel at all levels of the organisation, to enhance their capacity to managing resources and large budgets. This will include continued training, webinars, one-on-one guidance and development of tools, as appropriate.</p> <p>As noted by the evaluation, UN-Women will also review its capacities within the regional offices to better align the regional support functions to country offices, based on experience and learning UN-Women has gathered since the roll-out of the 2012 Regional Architecture.</p> <p>The review of regional office capacities will also allow a better alignment of those capacities with the financial realities under which UN-Women works, and the real support needs on the ground.</p>				
KEY ACTION	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY FOR IMPLEMENTATION	STATUS	COMMENTS
DoA and ICF review finalised	Q2 2017	Programme Division and DMA		
Implement recommendations of review of Regional Office capacities	Q3 2017	Programme Division and DMA		
RECOMMENDATION 4: UN-Women should develop and strengthen knowledge sharing and learning communities.				
<p>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</p> <p>UN-Women agrees with this recommendation.</p> <p>At present, UN-Women’s capacity for knowledge management and learning is dispersed across several existing functions including the UN-Women Training Centre, Human Resource Learning, the newly established Innovation Unit, the Programme and Policy Divisions, DMA and through activities at country and regional level.</p> <p>While recognising the need to further strengthen UN-Women’s knowledge management function, UN-Women has already developed a number of knowledge products, including guidance notes, reports, policy briefs in priority areas within the context of the FPI, as well as discussion papers on emerging issues. An example is the E-learning training on Ending Violence Against Women. Communities of</p>			<p>SELECT ONE OF THE BELOW</p> <p>Accepted</p>	

practices have also been established in a wide range of issues: WPS, Humanitarian, coordination, EVAW.

In response to the recommendations of the regional architecture evaluation, UN-Women's Policy Division will lead the work to establish and manage a corporate Knowledge Management Group, to review existing mechanisms and initiatives on knowledge management, including the development of strategies to streamline the exchange of experiences, the dissemination of expertise and the collaboration between key stakeholders within and outside the organisation as well as country offices and regional offices. These strategies are expected to contribute to a higher degree of cross-fertilisation. Guidance on good practice in knowledge management at different levels will be also provided.

In undertaking this work, the Knowledge Management Group will address the establishment of Communities of Practice for the Flagship Programme Initiatives; establishing standard corporate practices for development of knowledge products and research; strengthened internal communication strategies to foster greater collaboration and transparency across divisions at HQ/field offices; it will also prioritise improving external communication to UN partners and key stakeholders in the field of gender equality.

UN-Women has also made significant advances in the development of its Results Management System (RMS). This system greatly enhances UN-Women's capacity to share knowledge internally, granting all staff the capacity to search for information, as well as analyze what is being done in each impact area. UN-Women will continue to enhance the Results Management System as a knowledge sharing tool and RBM system during 2017 in particular to adapt to the new Strategic Plan.

KEY ACTION	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY FOR IMPLEMENTATION	STATUS	COMMENTS
Knowledge management group established and plan of action elaborated with COPs in progress.	2016/2017	Policy Division with the support of Programme Division	Ongoing	
Result Management System upgraded as knowledge management and RBM tool.	2017	Programme Division	Ongoing	