

**Alignment of UN-Women’s Strategic Plan 2018-2021  
with General Assembly resolution 71/243  
on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for  
development of the UN System**

**Introduction**

The 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (QCPR) provides great opportunities for the UN development system’s operational activities to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Given the cross-sectoral nature of gender equality and women’s empowerment, it also represents a key opportunity for UN-Women to help deliver transformative results for women and girls.

UN-Women is well placed to support the implementation of the QCPR. Its Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, directly responds to the guidance outlined by Member States in the QCPR. This is the case both in the Strategic Plan narrative and in the Integrated Results and Resources Framework. UN-Women also substantively contributed to the development of the QCPR monitoring and reporting framework and has integrated several indicators in its results framework.

In line with the practice of other UN entities, this annex provides an overview of some key aspects that demonstrate the alignment between UN-Women’s Strategic Plan 2018-2021 and the QCPR with a focus on specific requests to individual UN entities in the resolution. This is in line with QCPR paragraph 79 which “... requests the entities of the United Nations development system to ensure that their planning and activities, and strategic plans where applicable, are consistent with and guided by the provisions in this resolution [...]”. It should be noted that this annex only provides a snapshot of specific efforts by UN-Women to respond to the QCPR.

A number of specific requests to the Secretary-General were made in the resolution; these are not covered in this annex. UN-Women will continue to engage in the process of follow-up and

make adjustments to its Strategic Plan as applicable after specific proposals have been agreed by Member States.

This annex is structured in two parts. The first part is based on a conference room paper discussed at the 2017 first regular session of UN-Women's Executive Board and provides highlights of UN-Women's approach in supporting the implementation of the QCPR. The second part provides an overview of UN-Women's contribution to specific QCPR mandates, with a focus on mandates for which entities of the UN development system are expected to also act upon individually.

## **Part I - Highlights**

### **Supporting enhanced UN coherence**

A fully functioning and coherent UN development system is critical for implementing UN-Women's mandate. UN-Women is well positioned to contribute to and promote UN coherence in support of gender equality and women's empowerment in several ways.

First, based on the principle of universality, UN-Women provides guidance and technical support to all Member States, across all levels of development and in all regions, at their request, on gender equality, the empowerment and rights of women and gender mainstreaming. Second, UN-Women's mandate of normative support, UN system coordination and operational activities allows the Entity to act as a catalyst for change and leverage the UN system's contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment in a coherent and integrated manner across areas of work. Thirdly, UN-Women contributes to the three pillars of the United Nations allowing it to cohesively support efforts towards peace and security, human rights and sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental.

Aligning UN-Women's operational activities to national priorities is a fundamental guiding principle in the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021. Similarly, and consistently with the QCPR, the Entity supports Member States, upon their request, in developing national capacities, including through policy advice, normative support, leveraging partnerships and fostering south-south, north-south and triangular cooperation. The midterm review of the current Strategic Plan showed that capacity development is the greatest type of support provided by UN-Women, with 57 percent of programme funds in 2016 dedicated to this category of work.

At the country level, UN-Women is committed to the use of the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) as a strategic planning instrument that enhances coherence. The new generation of UNDAFs, which positions gender equality and women's empowerment as a key

programming principle, will be critical in ensuring effective gender mainstreaming in the work of UN country teams.

The QCPR calls on the UN development system to enhance coordination of development efforts with humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding efforts. This represents another area for which UN-Women is well positioned to contribute, as reflected in its Strategic Plan. In addition to its work on women, peace and security, the Entity will continue to work to address the gender equality gap in the provision of humanitarian assistance, and to support other UN entities to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment are integrated into their crisis, preparedness and humanitarian response. UN-Women maintains its role as Co-Chair and Secretariat of the Gender in Humanitarian Action Reference Group within the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), and will continue to advocate for full membership to the IASC.

UN-Women has coordinated the development of its Strategic Plan with UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF, to ensure synergies and common approaches (see common chapter and annex III on interagency collaboration). The Entity also continues to proactively support enhanced UN coherence within key interagency mechanisms such as the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and its three pillars.

### **Enhanced accountability on gender equality and the empowerment of women**

UN-Women firmly believes that the entire 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development must deliver for women and girls. This means achieving SDG 5 but also making sure that the entire agenda is implemented in a gender-responsive manner. As noted in the QCPR, promoting gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls has “a multiplier effect for achieving sustained and inclusive economic growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development”. The Entity will continue to play a central role in ensuring the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In the QCPR, Member States call upon all UN entities to further enhance gender mainstreaming across their work at all levels. UN-Women continues to provide leadership in this area, particularly through its UN system coordination mandate.

The Entity will continue to promote enhanced accountability of the UN system on gender equality and the empowerment of women. The UN System-Wide Action Plan for gender equality and the empowerment of women (UN-SWAP) has supported systematic improvements in gender

mainstreaming across the UN system. UN-Women is also leading discussions on the development of methodologies for reporting on gender-related SDG results.

A new generation of the UN-SWAP (UN-SWAP 2.0) and a corresponding country-level gender scorecard will be rolled out during the new Strategic Plan period, to ensure that UN entities and UN Country Teams sustain progress in gender mainstreaming, and promote greater accountability for gender equality results.

### **A UN development system funded for purpose**

More flexible and predictable funding will be critical to the effective implementation of the Strategic Plan. This represents a major challenge for UN-Women and other entities of the UN development system. In the context of the structured dialogue on financing with the Executive Board, it will be essential to reflect on how mutual accountability can be enhanced in regards to funding, so as to ensure the implementation of planned results.

UN-Women fully supports the enhanced use of interagency pooled funds as well as thematic funds. These have demonstrated to be well suited for integrated approaches to support the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda by improving coordination and coherence and bridging silos. Gender equality and women's empowerment remains the area with the largest number of joint programmes implemented across UN Country Teams.<sup>1</sup>

The Entity will also continue to strengthen its cost recovery framework by providing offices with the necessary guidance and tools, and by raising awareness, both internally and externally, on the important implications of cost recovery for the sustainability of its operations.

### **Fostering operational efficiency**

UN-Women continues to strive to enhance its structure and capacity to impact the lives of all women and girls by optimizing its human resources, tools, systems, administration and business processes. Ensuring organizational effectiveness and efficiency is a priority in UN-Women's Strategic Plan, including through the development of specific indicators to measure performance on critical institutional enablers.

The Entity will use streamlined business processes and integrated information systems for planning, financial management and reporting so that it can better link resources with results and operate optimally.

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<sup>1</sup> In 2016, out of 378 joint programmes, 108 focused on gender equality and the empowerment of women (source: UNDG IMS)

As part of its response to the evaluation on the regional architecture, UN-Women aims to better align headquarter functions with the needs of field offices by conducting a functional analysis of headquarter functions and ensure robust systems for the stewardship of resources. UN-Women remains committed to transparency and has taken steps to improve its reporting under the International Aid Transparency Initiative.

At the country level, UN-Women is committed to leveraging other agencies' presence and systems to avoid duplication of UN operational capacity, thereby allowing UN-Women to calibrate its operational presence depending on its programming engagement.

**Part II – Overview of UN-Women’s contribution to the implementation of specific QCPR mandates**

QCPR Operative paragraph	Integration in the new Strategic Plan of UN-Women
<p>OP 8 (...) mainstream the Sustainable Development Goals in their strategic planning documents and their work at all levels (...)</p> <p>OP 17 (...)mainstream the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as appropriate, into the work of each entity(...) to:</p> <p>a) (...) support the endeavor to reach the furthest behind first (...);</p> <p>b) Ensure a coherent approach to addressing the interconnections and cross-cutting elements across the Sustainable Development Goals and targets;</p> <p>c) Ensure a balanced and integrated approach within the system (...) bearing in mind [the United Nations development system entities’] comparative advantages (...)</p>	<p>UN-Women has mainstreamed the 2030 Agenda in its Strategic Plan in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• emphasizing UN-Women’s role in supporting the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda;</li> <li>• including relevant principles of the 2030 Agenda, such as reaching the furthest behind first, in the Strategic Plan as appropriate;</li> <li>• linking each outcome area to relevant SDGs, emphasizing the interconnections across SDGs;</li> <li>• including relevant global SDG indicators in the results framework at the impact and outcome levels.</li> </ul>
<p>OP 10 and 11 (...) continue to support developing countries (...) and (...) address within existing resources and mandates the special challenges facing the most vulnerable countries (...)</p>	<p>The Strategic Plan outlines six principles that will guide the refinement of UN-Women’s country typologies, in response to recommendations made in the evaluation of UN-Women’s regional architecture. In particular, the principles note that UN-Women will further differentiate its country presence to enhance its</p>

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	<p>responsiveness to country requests in line with its resource availability and will give special attention to the countries that need it most, in line with guidance by the QCPR.</p>
<p>OP 12 (...) continue to strengthen results-based management (...)</p>	<p>The Strategic Plan positions results-based management as a continuing organizational priority in the context of organizational effectiveness and efficiency. Building on achievements to date, UN-Women will make further progress in this area by: 1) providing training to staff and implementing partners on programming and results-based management; 2) linking UN-Women’s results management system and staff performance management systems; and 3) delivering targeted support to offices that face challenges in meeting standards on programming and results-based management.</p> <p>The Entity will continue to develop its online Results Management System (RMS) to foster a culture of evidence-based programming. UN-Women will also continue to develop and maintain guidance, policies, procedures and tools to see improvements in this area.</p>
<p>OP 13 (...) continue to promote women’s empowerment and gender equality by enhancing gender mainstreaming through the full implementation of the System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (...), as well as the United Nations country team performance indicators for gender equality and the empowerment of women (the “scorecard”) in particular with regard to gender-responsive performance management and strategic planning, the collection and use of sex-disaggregated data, reporting and resource tracking and drawing on available gender expertise in the system at all levels, including in UN-Women, to assist in mainstreaming gender equality in the preparation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, or equivalent planning framework</p>	<p>As noted in section I, UN-Women will continue to focus on promoting the accountability of the UN system on gender equality and women’s empowerment, notably through the roll-out of a new corporate UN-SWAP and a related updated gender scorecard for UNCTs.</p> <p>The Entity will work with UNCTs and through to RC system to support enhanced gender mainstreaming through the UNDAF, including through dedicated strategic advice, knowledge products and capacity development of UN staff.</p> <p>UN-Women will continue to report to ECOSOC on efforts in mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system.</p>

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<p>OP 21 (...) improve their [the United Nations development system entities'] support to the building, development and strengthening of national capacities, to support development results at the country level (...) including by (...):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) providing (...), where appropriate, integrated policy advice (...);</li> <li>b) assisting countries through normative support (...);</li> <li>c) strengthening its support to national institutions in planning, management and evaluation capacities, as well as statistical capacities (...);</li> <li>d) assisting Governments in leveraging partnerships;</li> <li>e) supporting, as appropriate, technical and scientific cooperation, North-South, South-South and triangular, regional and international cooperation (...)</li> </ul>	<p>The Strategic Plan notes that UN-Women will provide six types of support as part of its operational activities: i) normative support; ii) UN system coordination for gender equality and women's empowerment; iii) integrated policy advice; iv) capacity development; v) advocacy and social mobilization; and vi) technical assistance for essential services.</p> <p>This support takes place in broader context of leveraging partnerships for gender equality and women's empowerment. Innovation, knowledge-sharing, and South-South, North-South and Triangular cooperation have been identified as key strategies to enhance programming as part of UN-Women's organizational effectiveness and efficiency.</p>
<p>OP 24 (...) enhance coordination with humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding efforts at the national level in countries facing humanitarian emergencies, [and] in countries in conflict and post-conflict situations</p>	<p>Through its support to the women, peace and security agenda and to humanitarian action, UN-Women is well positioned to promote greater cooperation and complementarity between development, disaster risk reduction, humanitarian action and sustaining peace, and enhance coordination between development work and humanitarian assistance and peace building efforts.</p>
<p>OP 29 (...) implement integrated results and resource frameworks aligned to their strategic plans in order to strengthen results-based budgeting and to help determine and link the level of resources to results (...)</p>	<p>The Integrated Results and Resources Framework provides an overview of estimated resources needed for the achievement of each outcome area, based on a specific methodology combining trend analysis and forecasting. The link between results and resources will be further strengthened during the Strategic Plan cycle as the link between the RMS and the Enterprise Resource Planning system (Atlas) is strengthened. This will be reported on regularly to the Executive Board in the context of the Strategic Dialogue on Financing.</p>
<p>OP 30 (...) publish timely, harmonized, verifiable data on funding flows</p>	<p>UN-Women will continue to publish its funding sources as part of the annual report on the implementation of the Strategic Plan. In addition, UN-Women is undertaking improvements in its systems to make</p>

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	greater information on funding flows available on the International Aid Transparency Initiative portal (IATI).
OP 33 (...) continue enhancing the transparency and accountability of inter-agency pooled funding mechanisms, as well as to continue developing well-designed pooled funds, (...) and enhance participation, where appropriate, in such funding mechanisms...)	The Strategic Plan outlines UN-Women’s commitment to increase its share of funding from interagency pooled funding mechanisms and thematic funds. At the country level, UN-Women will continue to promote the use of joint programmes to maximize impact of UN supported interventions.
OP 34 (...) address on a continuous basis the decline of core contributions and the growing imbalance between core and non-core resources (...)	<p>UN-Women will continue its engagement with the public and private sector to deepen and diversify its resource base. Furthermore, it will continue working closely with Member States to enhance the case for investment in core resources and improve visibility of the impact of core investments. UN-Women will strive to maintain a healthy balance between core and non-core resources.</p> <p>In addition, UN-Women will continue to engage in annual meetings with its major donors to discuss core funding in support of the full implementation of the Strategic Plan.</p>
<p>OP 37 (...) mobilize multiple funding sources and deepen partnerships with other relevant stakeholders (...)</p> <p>OP 38 (...) further explore innovative funding approaches to catalyze additional resources (...)</p>	<p>While Member States remain the main funding source of UN-Women’s income, the Entity will continue to expand its resource mobilization approaches and investments to enable diversification of income sources.</p> <p>UN-Women will engage with the private sector to secure financial support towards core and non-core resources, including through digital fundraising, working with corporations, high-net-worth individuals as well as National Committees and individual donors. It will capitalize on its high-visibility campaigns in this regard.</p>
OP 43 (...) improve the functioning and effectiveness of the structured dialogues on how to fund the development results agreed in the strategic plans	UN-Women will continue to engage in structured dialogues on financing during the second regular session of its Executive Board on an annual basis. Every year, UN-Women has been improving its analysis in support of the dialogue and will continue to do so



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	particularly as it sees steady improvements in its programme management information systems.
OP 50 (...) (a) Strengthen the use of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework; (...) (g) Strengthen joint programming processes and use of joint programmes at the country level, where appropriate; (...) (i) Avoid new and significantly reducing the number of existing parallel project implementation units in programme countries	UN-Women will continue to promote coordinated implementation through UNDAF results groups, gender theme groups, UN joint programmes and flagship programmes. Currently 26 percent of UN Women’s programming is done through joint programmes. By the end of the Strategic Plan, it is expected that the majority of UN-Women programmes will be either joint programmes or flagship programmes.
OP 64 (...) maximize the use of the offices and resources on the ground and to avoid duplications and overlaps	In response to the recommendations of the evaluation of the Regional Architecture, UN-Women will further refine its country typologies, including by leveraging the presence of other agencies to calibrate its operational presence depending on its programming engagement, including in countries where UN-Women does not have a presence.
OP 66 (...) record details of efficiencies achieved through collaborative procurement, reporting these to their respective Executive Boards in a consolidated format in the Annual Statistical Report on United Nations Procurement	UN-Women is committed to leveraging economies of scale through collaborative procurement and will record progress in this regard.
OP 67 (...) review and tailor appropriately the role and operational activities of the multi-country offices (...), and to consider, where possible and appropriate, limiting the number of countries under the coverage of each multi-country office	As part of the refinement of country typologies, the Entity will review the role and operational activities of the multi-country offices and make appropriate adjustments to optimize the organization’s field presence.
OP 73 (...) continue efforts to achieve gender balance in appointments within the United Nations system at the global, regional and country levels (...)	UN-Women will assist with implementation of the Secretary-General’s gender parity strategy through strategic guidance, technical support and monitoring. UN-Women will continue to provide support to these efforts, including to ensure the achievement of the gender parity target in Senior level and Resident Coordinators’ appointments. UN-Women is also in active collaboration with other entities aiming to achieve gender parity.

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<p>OP 74 (...) align its staff capacities to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including by building transformative and empowered leadership, repositioning staff capacities to respond to the cross-sectoral requirements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, promoting inter-agency mobility and facilitating a mobile and flexible global workforce</p>	<p>Through targeted trainings and initiatives, including enhanced knowledge management systems, UN-Women will build capacity of its staff to respond to Member States' requests for support in implementing the 2030 Agenda.</p> <p>UN-Women supports inter-agency mobility for its staff and other UN staff who wish to join UN-Women. UN-Women has also launched a geographic rotation policy to facilitate and promote a mobile global workforce.</p> <p>UN-Women will continue to streamline HR processes and systems and enhance the skills of managers and staff through dedicated leadership and mentorship programmes.</p> <p>UN-Women's Training Centre is developing courses on gender equality and the 2030 Agenda for UN staff and partners. This will support capacity development for UN-Women staff and staff in other agencies, including Gender Focal Points.</p>