Management Response to Annual Report on Internal Audit and Investigation Activities

For the year ended 31 December 2020

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Context and Overview

Management Response to 4 Overarching Areas for Improvements

Positive Impacts from Actions to Key Recommendations

Internal Audit Opinion and UN-Women Achievements for 2020

Investigations Activities
Context and Overview

Leveraging on the audit and advisory results, UN-Women has:

- Embedded lessons learned into the formulation of Strategic Plan 2022-2025
- Continued to undertake improvements in governance, risk management and compliance for a stronger Second Line of Defense
- Recognized to deliver more efficiently with greater standardizations and facilitate scaling for impact through strengthened capacity at field level
Management Response to 4 Overarching Areas for Improvements

01. Enhanced Second Line of Defense:
   - SPRED lead analysis on strengthening Second Line of Defense workplan
   - Started with integrated planning and budgeting processes within SPRED

02. Increase management absorption capacity:
   - Determining options to address findings with a prioritized list of critical areas
   - Well-managed resource investments and organizational changes to be implemented over time

03. Strengthen capacity, particularly in the field:
   - Fit-for-purpose Presence Governance Framework for better aligned capacity and sustainability of UN-Women’s field footprint
   - Closer to ground support for the implementation of strategic priorities

04. Development of a Statement on Internal Controls:
   - Identifying specific gaps and requirements to establish the Statement of Internal Controls
Positive Impacts from Actions to Key Recommendations

Programme and project management

• Improved programme results with holistic global programme design
• Standardized results-oriented narrative donor reporting
• Responsive to beneficiaries’ urgent needs
• Ensured delivery of agreed results

Implementing partner management

• Strategic engagement and simplified risk-based selection process for partners
• Standardized Partner Agreement
• Minimized partnering risks
• Sustained programme results
Positive Impacts from Actions to Key Recommendations

Governance arrangements

• Fit-for-purpose office set-up to support the Strategic Plan 2022-2025
• Transitioning to decentralized and matrixed management approach
• Clear roles and responsibilities in business processes

Cybersecurity, Information System integration and data management

• Minimized cybersecurity risks with elevated staff awareness
• Timely detection of security related exceptions and risks
• Strengthened field capacity on information security and IT resilience
• Increased safeguarding of organizational data
• Fully integrated corporate systems tailored to business process needs
Positive Impacts from Actions to Key Recommendations

**UN System Coordination**
- Standardized tools to scale-up global, regional and country level gender mainstreaming performance and accountability
- Steadfast gender mainstreaming engagement in CCA/UNSDCF, UN Gender Working Groups and Opportunity and Issue-Based Coalitions (OIBCs)
- Embedded UN gender mainstreaming coordination capacity at field level

**Risk Management**
- Reinforced risk management governance and oversight
- Timely escalation of emerging critical risks to higher management
- Risk management as a meaningful managerial tool
- Risk-informed planning and decision making
- Risk management in project design with standardized risk register for UN-Women Project Document
Internal Audit Opinion and UN-Women Achievements for 2020

IAS’s 2020 Overall Opinion:

“The Entity’s governance, risk management and control processes were generally established and functioning but needed some improvement”

93%

Prior Year Recs Implementation Rate

Above corporate target of 90% for consecutive 6 years
The organization took note of the information presented on the investigation activities carried out by OIOS in 2020.

UN-Women’s commitment to an inclusive and supportive work environment has continued to guide the Entity’s efforts to address workplace related concerns in a holistic manner, fostering a harmonious and respectful organizational culture.

Transparency maintained with the 2020 Disciplinary Report; prompt and appropriate actions taken to implement the zero-tolerance policy in substantiated investigation cases disclosed.
Key initiatives conducted in 2020

- Active organizational discussion on racism and discrimination against different groups
- Roll-out of the 2020 annual UN Leadership Dialogue Programme on the topic of civility and dignity in the workplace, designed to drive and promote a robust culture of ethics in the organization
- Second phase of the Respectful Workplace Facilitators pilot programme coordinated by the office of the Ombudsman for Funds and Programmes
- Establishment and coordination of a network of (47) UN Women country and regional focal points, who serves as our first line of support on the ground
THANK YOU!