

# UN-Women Information Note on the Implementation of General Assembly Resolution 72/279



UN-Women Executive Board

Annual session 2022

## INTRODUCTION

This Information Note provides an update on how UN-Women has supported and implemented the United Nations development system (UNDS) repositioning, in the context of the 2020 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (QCPR)<sup>1</sup> and the resolution 76/4 on the review of the resident coordinator system. The Information Note compliments previous Information Notes to the Executive Board and covers the period April 2021 to April 2022.

### 1. Implementing UNDS reform in the context of the 2020 QCPR and UN-Women's Strategic Plan 2022-2025

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed deep structural inequalities and has reversed the gains made in the past decades on gender equality and empowerment of women and girls. The ongoing impacts of climate change and conflict have exacerbated these challenges further, and urgent action is needed.

The 2020 QCPR recognizes the need for the UNDS to enhance its coordination and coherence to support national priorities for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In alignment with the 2020 QCPR, the UN-Women Strategic Plan 2022-2025 elevates the Entity's efforts to lead, coordinate and promote the accountability of the UN

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- New Management and Accountability Framework implemented.
- UN-Women 2022 cost share to RC system \$2.6 million.
- UN-Women is meeting or exceeding all 14 Funding Compact commitment targets available to report against.
- All 16 country Strategic Notes initiated or developed in 2021 are fully aligned with the Cooperation Framework.
- 35 per cent of UN-Women non-core revenue stems from joint UN initiatives.
- More than 80 per cent of field presences are located in common premises.
- 31,418 UN personnel complete *I Know Gender* course in 2021.
- In 4 out of 5 regions, UN-Women is co-chairing a gender equality focused Issue-Based Coalition.

<sup>1</sup> Progress updates on UN-Women implementation of the UNDS reform are presented in detail in the annex to the annual report of the Executive Director on the implementation of the QCPR and are mainstreamed into the annual report of the Executive Director and its Integrated Results and Resources Framework, as well as the structured dialogue on financing the results of the UN-Women Strategic Plan, 2022–2025.

system for gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls, incorporating a dedicated outcome on UN system coordination aimed toward driving coherent and systematic UN contributions to gender equality and empowerment of women across the 2030 Agenda. The SDGs are mainstreamed into UN-Women's Strategic Plan 2022-2025, which includes an increased number of SDG indicators at the outcome and impact level in the Integrated Results and Resources Framework compared to the previous strategic plan.

## 2. Supporting the consolidation of UNDS reforms

### 2.1 New Management and Accountability Framework

In 2021, UN-Women provided substantive technical inputs to the review of the new Management Accountability Framework (MAF), actively participating in UNSDG consultations on the new MAF. UN-Women is in full alignment with the new MAF commitments related to performance management, including the dual reporting line of UN-Women Country Representatives to their respective UN-Women Regional Director as well as the Resident Coordinator (RC) for their contributions to Cooperation Framework objectives and to United Nations country team (UNCT) collective results towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda; and the requirement for collective, RC-led strategies and action plans to ensure coordination and alignment of protection from and response to sexual exploitation and abuse.

### 2.2 Alignment of Country Strategic Notes with United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks

UN-Women has continued to actively support the development and implementation of United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (Cooperation Frameworks), including for a twin track approach to gender mainstreaming in Cooperation Frameworks. Of the 27 Cooperation Frameworks developed in 2021, 19 (70 per cent) incorporated a dedicated gender equality outcome as a means toward achieving the SDGs and in response to national priorities. In parallel, UN-Women continued to promote the integration of a high-level result on gender equality in UN entities' strategic plans. According to 2021 UN-SWAP reporting, the strategic plan of 50 UN entities include a high-level result on gender equality.

UN-Women continues to work to ensure that country office Strategic Notes fully derive from Cooperation Frameworks. In alignment with the MAF, UN-Women Country Representatives engage the RCs as part of the Strategic Note approval process, and the UN-Women Strategic Note submission processes are aligned with the Cooperation Framework approval cycle. Altogether 16 UN-Women country offices worked on the development of their Strategic Notes in 2021.

In 2022, UN-Women introduced a Strategic Dialogue pilot to provide a platform for country offices to engage with UN-Women senior management before the development of their respective Strategic Note on the country context to ensure gender is mainstreamed in the Common Country Analysis and Cooperation Framework. As of April 2022, four Strategic Dialogues have been held across three regions with RC participation in some.

### 2.3 Funding the Resident Coordinator system

UN-Women has continued its support to the enhanced RC system and its efforts to fulfill related entity-specific commitments, continuing to pay its obligations towards the annual cost sharing contribution to the RC system. Accordingly, UN-Women transferred \$5.2 million in 2020 as its share, of which \$2.6 million comprised an advance payment for 2021.

## **2.4 Inter-agency mobility and facilitation of a mobile and flexible global workforce**

UN-Women continues to promote the RC function as a career path for its staff to ensure that UN leadership benefits from the unique, gender specific expertise of UN-Women, participating in the RC pool. UN-Women has submitted nominations in the two rounds conducted since April 2021. UN-Women ranks in the top three agencies in terms of the number of candidates that passed the assessments in 2021. In addition, UN-Women encourages inter-agency staff mobility. In 2021, 19 staff members joined UN-Women from other UN entities and 24 were released from it.

Within UN-Women, a global rotation exercise was recently implemented for international positions, specifically for country representatives. In addition, a virtual deployment roster was launched and implemented, enabling the organization to fill staffing gaps and offer development opportunities to its workforce despite constraints imposed by the pandemic. Further, incorporating the lessons of remote work learnt during COVID-19, UN Women has instituted hybrid working modalities and is adopting innovative workplace practices. The experience of remote work demonstrated that most functions could be performed from almost anywhere in the world, strengthening the Entity's priority of pivoting to the field. Consequently, UN Women has embarked on a reduction and redesign of its headquarters office, creating a space that better services a hybrid workforce.

## **2.5 Improved and harmonized business practices and efficiency gains**

UN-Women remains an active participant in the rollout of the Business Operations Strategy (BOS) 2.0 and continues to participate actively in the common back office (CBO) roll-out. UN-Women will continue its participation both in the BOS as well as the CBO roll-out where it makes financial sense as a service recipient, participating in inter-agency efforts to further enhance work in this area.

UN-Women participated in the data collection exercise for the "first of its kind" annual report on efficiency gains and effectiveness improvements covering 2019-2020. UN Women was one of thirteen Agencies that participated. Results indicated roughly \$100 million in efficiency gains across thirteen UN entities toward the Secretary-General's ambitious annual efficiency gain target of \$310 million; internally, UN-Women reported a total of \$1.361 million in efficiency gains for 2019-2020<sup>2</sup>.

Regarding co-location in common premises, UN Women surpassed the target of 50 per cent at the end of 2021 having more than 80 per cent of its field presence in common premises worldwide. The Entity's goal is to maintain this proportion and even to increase it further where it is financially advantageous. UN-Women remains interested in benefitting from the global service provision by another UN entity. It is using services for instance provided by UNDP to manage payrolls, the treasury function, and the new enterprise resource planning-system and Quantum, while the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) manages the investigative function on behalf of UN-Women.

## **2.6 Reporting through UN INFO**

UN-Women's guidance on Strategic Notes instructs country offices to align them with the Cooperation Framework, including related results reporting, and the application of the United Nations country team gender equality marker (UNCT GEM) in UN INFO Joint Work Plans (JWPs).

UN-Women continues to collaborate with UNDCO to advance the application of the UNCT GEM in JWPs in UN INFO, to increase the availability of information on, and discussions on the extent to which UNCT financial resources have a gender equality focus. The Entity provides support to UNCTs on the application of the UNCT GEM through a global helpdesk and trainings at the country and regional levels. UN-Women

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<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that the efficiency gains cannot be interpreted as actual cash savings that can be redeployed, many refer to cost-avoidance and in cases where time savings have been converted into USD equivalent amounts to enable aggregation, the time saved will potentially result in redeployment of capacity, but not actual cash savings.

also continues to monitor key data related to the UNCT GEM in UN INFO and found that in 2021, 63 UNCTs were applying the UNCT GEM systematically to financial allocations reported in JWPs, with an average 65 per cent reporting that they have gender equality as either the primary or a significant objective. This informs the agreed financial threshold of 70 per cent for the related QCPR Monitoring Framework, against which progress on UNCT financial resource allocations to gender equality will be tracked in the forthcoming years<sup>3</sup>.

### 3. System-wide support to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

#### 3.1 Active engagement in the United Nations Sustainable Development Group

In 2021, UN-Women continued to participate actively in United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) processes to support the consolidation of UN repositioning and to ensure gender considerations are mainstreamed across UNSDG priorities. UN-Women co-chaired the UNSDG Task Team on SDG Financing and the UNSDG Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) Working Group, deploying staff to UNSDG Task Teams and working groups.

Through its leadership on the SDG Financing task team, UN Women supported capacity development of UNCT members and RCs to ensure that gender equality considerations are embedded in sustainable financing policies and instruments. UN-Women leveraged its leadership in the GEWE Working Group to enhance knowledge sharing and joint analysis on important gender equality issues to enable the UNSDG to more effectively respond to and embed gender considerations within and across its work. Under the auspices of the Gender Equality Working Group, UN-Women co-led with UNDP the development of a [Technical Note on Gender Mainstreaming into the UNCT Response to COVID-19](#) and, with UNICEF the development of [Gender Theme Groups Standards and Procedures](#), the first guidance of its kind aimed to ensure common standards in the establishment and operation of UNCT Gender Theme Groups.

UN-Women also actively engaged with the work of the Fiduciary Management Oversight Group (FMOG) through its working group on interagency pooled funds. In addition to the first survey of common management features in interagency pooled funds and joint programmes, UN-Women has supported the update of specific guidance for Multi-Partner Trust Funds (MPTFs) integrating the use of the gender equality marker and the establishment of financial targets for programmes with gender equality as a primary objective.

#### 3.2 Support to joint capacity-building initiatives and knowledge management

UN-Women has continued to invest in capacity-building initiatives for gender-responsive programming and planning across the UN system, providing tailored capacity building on gender mainstreaming frameworks and tools (including UN-SWAP 2.0, UNCT-SWAP and the gender equality marker) and on gender-responsive Cooperation Frameworks. In early 2022, UN-Women established a Coordination Network comprised of coordination focal points across all of its country and regional levels. The purpose of the Network is to gear progress on outcome 7 results on UN system coordination in UN-Women's new Strategic Plan 2022-2025, facilitating learning and South-South exchange.

Tracking financial resources and establishing the financial envelope required for the implementation of gender mainstreaming remains central to strengthening focus on gender equality work. Accordingly, UN-Women has invested in implementing the recommendations emanating from the High-Level Task Force on

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<sup>3</sup> QCPR Monitoring Framework Indicator 1.4.18: Proportion out of total UNCTs with a Joint Work Plan in UN INFO 2.0 that allocated 70 per cent or more of the UNCT annual funding framework available resources to activities with gender equality as a principal or significant objective.

Financing for Gender Equality, including at the entity and country team levels and in pooled funds, by providing technical support through a dedicated help desk to individual entities and the UMOJA team in the Secretariat, documenting good practice on the implementation of the gender equality marker in the UN system and the establishment of financial targets in pooled funding mechanisms, namely the COVID-19 MPTF, the Joint SDG Fund and the Special Trust Fund for Afghanistan, and in humanitarian pooled funds managed by UN OCHA.

In 2021, 31,418 UN System personnel completed the UN Women flagship *I Know Gender* online training course established under the UN-SWAP to strengthen the understanding of gender equality perspectives of all UN staff. UN-Women also supported the capacity building of 2,600 humanitarian actors, civil society representatives and other partners on gender in humanitarian action across 21 crisis-affected countries. To facilitate continued expansion of capacity-building efforts, UN-Women also piloted a new virtual Gender in Humanitarian Action-programme in 2021.

With specific reference to efforts to accelerate the achievement of gender parity, UN-Women supported UNCTs through leading and coordinating the UN system-wide network of Gender Focal Points working on parity and enabling environment issues and providing capacity development and resources for implementing the 2021 Field-specific Enabling Environment Guidelines developed by UN-Women. Also, in 2021 UN-Women launched UN System-wide Dashboard on Gender Parity, together with UNDP, in support of the Secretary-General's System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity. The dashboard consolidates data on the representation of women and men by grade, staff category, entity, age group of nearly 40 UN entities. It also enables UNCTs to monitor gender parity progress by duty station.

## 4. Delivering results in the UNDS

Building on its triple mandate of normative support, UN system coordination and operational activities, UN-Women has continued to focus on catalyzing partnerships and supporting UN system coordination for coherent and impactful results for women and girls.

### 4.1 Multi-Country Offices and Small Island Developing States

UN-Women is committed to ensuring adequate support to countries and territories serviced by its multi-country offices (MCOs) and has continued discussions with regional offices and MCOs to explore ways to enhance its MCO typology, continue its country typology assessment, which builds on country vulnerability data to ensure the optimization of its presence within available resources. In 2021, the Barbados and Fiji MCOs led the development of a Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) Strategy-draft. With support from the Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office, the structure was updated to facilitate better service to the 22 countries and territories and the 6 UNCTs served by the Caribbean MCO. Consequently, the Caribbean MCO expanded its project personnel presence in the sub-region to Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago; and its planning and coordination personnel in Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago. In the Pacific, the Fiji MCO serves 14 Pacific countries with a presence in six, and plans to expand its presence and work through joint staff positions with other UN entities and through joint programmes.

UN-Women provides support to countries and territories covered by MCOs report to and participate in intergovernmental forums and processes, in particular, in relation to the Commission on the Status of Women and CEDAW. In 2021, the Caribbean MCO collaborated with the CARICOM Secretariat to host a pre-CSW meeting and support the development of a joint CARICOM position for CSW. UN-Women has continued its support to the collection of gender data and its use for policymaking, for example supporting through its Caribbean MCO the strengthening of data systems nationally and sub-regionally on gender-

based violence prevalence and unpaid care work through the Caribbean Women Count Portal and supporting the development of the CARICOM model for the collection of data on GBV prevalence. In 2021, the Caribbean MCO also piloted work to support data collection on SDG 5.4.1 on unpaid care work. In the Pacific, UN-Women continued to support data collection on gender issues through the *Build Back Better* and *Women Count* programmes.

The Fiji MCO continued to advance the operationalization of the MCO recommendations in the Pacific through increased coordination support across all three MCOs (Micronesia, Samoa and Fiji MCOs), co-chairing with UNFPA the Outcome Group 2 on Gender Equality of the UN Pacific Strategy as well as the expanded Gender Coordination Group together with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community. The Fiji MCO also contributed to enhanced coordination on gender issues in disaster response through its role as chair of Pacific Humanitarian Protection Cluster. To increase support in gender equality normative and coordination actions to the new Micronesia MCO, budget has been allocated towards the recruitment of a Country Programme Coordinator to be placed in that office. Increased cross agency coordination has been progressed in the area of elimination of violence against women and girls (EVAWG) through joint technical coordination between the Spotlight regional and country programmes, and the Pacific Partnership on EVAWG.

#### 4.2 Update on the regional review

UN-Women regional offices continued to actively support and engage in UNDS regional repositioning processes, under the leadership of the regional collaborative platform (RCP) Chair and Vice Chairs. This includes work across five transformation areas: the creation of RCPs; the establishment of regional knowledge hubs; the enhancement of transparency and results-based management; the consolidation of data and statistics capacities; and advancing regional efficiencies through common back offices. UN-Women has assumed a co-lead role in most of the regional gender equality focused Issue-Based Coalitions (IBCs) to mobilize and enhance interagency action at regional and country level and ensure the gender-responsiveness of the UN's support to the 2030 Agenda in the Decade of Action.

UN-Women country offices cover roughly half of UNCTs (61<sup>4</sup> out of 130). The large number of countries where UN-Women does not have an office has required substantive effort to ensure UN-Women support commensurate to the needs of and requests from UNCTs. Currently, the Entity is serving 46 additional countries through a 'UN Reform Presence', including non-resident forms of programme delivery and coordination for gender equality and women's empowerment. Catalyzing its triple mandate, UN-Women has played a central role in UNDS regional repositioning, playing an active part in regional Peer Support Groups (PSGs) to advise and guide UNCTs on the integration of the UN guiding principle of gender equality and women's empowerment in the Common Country Analysis (CCA) and Cooperation Framework and related joint programming; and has ensured enhanced gender mainstreaming in intergovernmental and normative processes at the regional level.

UN-Women **Arab States Regional Office** contributed to 6 out of 8 IBCs, co-leading the IBC on Gender Justice and Equality with UNFPA. The regional office's engagement with the IBCs has resulted in strengthened joint action on gender equality, in particular, by directly linking the work of the IBC on Migration to gender work of national Migration Networks in the Gulf Cooperation Council sub-region. The IBC on Gender Justice and Equality has advanced its focus on common and country level concerns to strengthen the UN's impact on women's labor force participation and on eliminating violence against women. Through its engagement in the regional PSG, UN-Women strengthened the incorporation of gender considerations in 4 CCAs and corresponding Cooperation Frameworks (Iraq, Jordan, United Arab Emirates, Yemen); and in 3 CCAs and Cooperation Frameworks as non-resident member of the UNCT in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Bahrain, where UN-Women supported also the implementation of the UNCT SWAP. Recognizing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and region-specific needs for sustainable

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<sup>4</sup> 3 of the 61 offices are multi-country offices (Barbados, Fiji, South Africa).

development, UN-Women continued to support mainstreaming gender into humanitarian programming and related documents – such as the 2020-2022 Jordan Response Plan and the 2022 Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan needs overview for the Syria crisis – including through the regional Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group which the regional office co-chairs with Care International and UN OCHA. UN-Women spearheaded advancing the implementation of Women, Peace and Security agreements by inter alia integrating gender equality and women’s empowerment issues in the Syrian-led and UN-facilitated peace process under UN Security Council resolution 2254, in partnership with the Office of the UN Special Envoy for Syria.

UN-Women **Asia-Pacific Regional Office** engages in 3 out of 4 IBCs in the region, co-chairing the IBC on Human Rights and Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (GEWE). Through this IBC, UN-Women has spearheaded support to the 40 UNCTs in the region to advance joint programming in the areas of access to justice and the elimination of violence against women and to ensure integrated programming with women and girls at the center; to the organization of events and dialogues, and the development of knowledge products, such as the [Guidance on including gender equality and human rights in rapid assessments and socio-economic surveys on the impact of COVID-19](#); to the provision of guidance on the integration of normative work on GEWE in UNCT programming; and trainings on UNCT-SWAP and UNCT GEM. The regional office played an important role in coordinating for enhanced UN system engagement and collaboration on GEWE in normative processes, such as in the [CSW preparatory meeting](#) and engagement with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to support a strengthened gender equality focus in the [ASEAN-UN Plan of Action \(2021-2025\)](#).

The high proportion of countries where UN-Women does not have a country office in **East and Southern Africa** (11 out of 21 countries) and **West and Central Africa** (14 out of 24 countries) has required significant effort to ensure support for gender mainstreaming in Cooperation Frameworks and related processes and programming. In this regard, the two regional offices have collaborated to build capacities for and advise on gender mainstreaming in Cooperation Frameworks, including in the context of cross-regional training sessions delivered to 4 UNCTs through the regional PSG in 2021. UN-Women **East and Southern Africa Regional Office** convenes the Regional Gender Theme Group (R-GTG) was relaunched in March 2022 to provide a strategic platform for engagement on gender issues in the region. In 2021, UN-Women provided technical support to the inclusion of a strong gender lens in 7 CCAs and Cooperation Frameworks through the Africa PSG and facilitated trainings for GTGs and inter-agency teams on gender mainstreaming and gender equality programming principles in six countries as part of the Cooperation Framework roll-out process.

UN-Women **West and Central Africa Regional Office** participates actively in 4 out of 7 regional Opportunities/Issue-Based Coalitions, including in the coalition on Harnessing Demographic Dividends through investments in Youth and Women's Empowerment. The regional office has actively contributed to the UN Task Force on Monitoring and Evaluation of the SDGs and to inter-agency initiatives to advance gender data and analysis, for example partnering with UNDP and UNHCR to conduct a study on the role of women’s human rights defenders in West and Central Africa in 2021. The regional office co-leads the regional UN Gender Theme Group, which provides a platform for information-sharing, strategic dialogue and consensus building on critical GEWE issues within the region. In 2021, the regional office provided technical advice and support to mainstreaming gender into 16 Cooperation Frameworks, including in 10 countries where UN-Women does not have a country office; and supported 4 UNCTs in the region to mainstream EAWG into various joint processes and documents such as the CCA, national HIV strategic plans, and EAWG national strategies. The UNCT-SWAP gender mainstreaming requirements has provided a key entry point for the regional office to engage with UNCTs, including and to guide and support gender mainstreaming in Cooperation Framework processes and to ensure effective UN coordination on GEWE, raising awareness of requirements regarding UNCT Gender Theme Groups, among other.

Under the new Regional Collaborative Platform, UN-Women **Europe and Central Asia Regional Office** contributed thought leadership and influenced the restructuring of the regional architecture by co-leading the IBC review and management response with UNDP in 2021. UN-Women engages in 4 out of 7 Issue-Based Coalitions. Chaired by UN Women and UNFPA, the regional Issue-based Coalition on Gender Equality possesses gender expertise from 15 UN entities cutting across the 17 SDGs. The IBC provided critical support and technical expertise to ensure gender mainstreaming across the UN Mainstreaming, Acceleration, and Policy Support (MAPS) missions resulting in the identification of gender equality as a key accelerator for SDG implementation, and the IBC's work has been appreciated for its policy advisory role and its support to UNCTs<sup>(1)</sup>. With regard to system-wide accountability for gender equality and women's empowerment, since 2019 gender has been effectively integrated in Cooperation Frameworks across the region by UNCTs as a result of UN-Women's support with 54 per cent of Cooperation Frameworks including targeted GEWE outcomes, up from 8.3 per cent in the past United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) cycle. UN-Women also co-chairs the regional Operations Management Team with UNDP, which has initiated the development of a regional BOS is provides oversight to UNCTs on the roll-out of the BOS, local shared services centers and common premises.

UN-Women **Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office** participates in all 6 regional IBCs as well as 5 Working Groups and 2 Thematic Groups (Gender as well as Youth). Of these coordination mechanisms, UN-Women co-chairs the IBC on Crime and Violence; the regional Gender Inter-agency Group (GIG); the Working Group on Data and Statistics; and the regional Monitoring and Evaluation Task Team. In 2021, the regional office provided support to ensure the gender responsiveness of 4 UNDAF/Cooperation Framework evaluations and to the inclusion of a transformative approach to gender equality in 4 Cooperation Frameworks, including the Caribbean Multi-country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework which covers 22 countries and territories; and facilitated 6 country specific trainings to support mainstreaming gender in the CCA and Cooperation Framework. Further, the regional office continued to support 8 UNCTs in countries where UN-Women does not have a country office, supporting the incorporation of a gender perspective in joint programme initiatives (Costa Rica, Paraguay and Peru) and the Cooperation Framework (Dominican Republic), and strengthening the capacities of the GIG to spearhead the implementation of gender mainstreaming frameworks and tools (Cuba).

### **4.3 COVID-19 response and recovery**

UN-Women has contributed to significant results across the five pillars of the UN framework for the socioeconomic response to COVID-19, in collaboration with UN partners. The UN-Women and UNDP [COVID-19 Policy Tracker](#) and 78 rapid gender assessments on COVID-19 impacts on women and girls shed light on countries' responses. As a result, over 20 countries enacted gender-sensitive policies. As co-custodian for 3 economic empowerment-related indicators derived from the UN Framework for the Immediate Socio-Economic Response to COVID-19, in 2021 UN-Women's technical support and capacity building for governments to assess COVID-19 impacts and promote recovery led to the development and/or implementation of 14 gender-responsive macroeconomic policies and 22 gender-responsive fiscal stimulus packages, and strengthened capacities in 15 countries to implement women's empowerment policies. UN-Women has also continued to leverage its expertise and capacities to support the combined implementation of the gender equality marker and financial targets, including in the context of the COVID-19 Multi-Partner Trust Fund.

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In her 31 December 2021 Memo to the Vice-Chairs of the ECA Regional Collaborative Platform, Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed noted that "the RCP has provided policy advice on regional priority issues through its Issue-based Coalitions (IBCs), particularly those on sustainable food systems and gender." At the IBC-Gender Equality planning retreat in 2021, the Regional Director of the DCO for ECA also cited the positive assessment of the IBC by Resident Coordinators and UNCT Outcome Groups.



#### **4.4 Strengthening joint programmatic impact for the SDGs**

Internally, 35 per cent of UN-Women's non-core revenue in 2020 stemmed from joint initiatives, and UN-Women has continued to contribute to improving UN system-wide guidance on joint programmes and results reporting, contributing gender-specific inputs to the new approach for measuring system-wide contributions to the SDGs. The Entity has also continued to provide guidance and capacity development support to ensure that gender is mainstreamed into joint programming initiatives at all levels, advocating for and supporting the integration of gender equality markers coupled with financial targets into inter agency pooled funding mechanisms.

UN-Women has continued to pursue and support joint programming initiatives focused on gender equality and women's empowerment. For instance, in 2021, the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund), a UN-system wide grant-giving mechanism administered by UN-Women, managed a grants portfolio of 157 projects aimed at preventing and addressing violence against women and girls in 68 countries and territories, across five regions, with grants totaling \$74.7 million. The UN Trust Fund is a mechanism for partnership fostering across the United Nations system and beyond, that brings together partners from civil society and Member States for collective action, contributing to the UNDS reform commitments on improved coordination to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2021, UN Trust Fund supported projects reached 41,782,089 people, including 22,506,645 women and girls overall; and 260,587 women and girls were empowered to exercise agency for change in their own lives—specifically, through accessing specialist support services, prevention initiatives, and as co-creators in the design and implementation of projects to end violence against women and girls, including efforts to improve effectiveness of legislation, policies, and national action plans.

#### **4.5 UN Coordination and Strategic Partnerships**

UN-Women has continued to leverage its coordination mandate to enhance the accountability, coherence and impact of the UN system on gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, strengthening its partnerships with UN entities. This work builds on the UN-SWAP accountability framework at the corporate level and the UNCT-SWAP at the country level. In 2021, 71 UN entities reported on the UN-SWAP and 61 UNCTs reported on the UNCT-SWAP with UN-Women's support.

In 2021, UN-Women established an agreement with UNHCR to accelerate joint work across coordination, programmatic and advocacy initiatives for all refugees, internally displaced and stateless women at global, regional and country levels. Moving forward, UN-Women will engage in further strategic coordination dialogues with UN entities to strengthen and establish such concrete partnerships with them.

UN-Women has continued to convene high-level virtual ministerial roundtables with International Finance Institutes (IFIs) and national development banks to highlight best practices and ensure gender-responsive stimulus packages. This has led to concrete areas of collaboration on sustainable financing, gender-responsive budgeting, lending and procurement practices as well as strengthened data and evidence collection by IFIs on the impact of COVID-19 on the SDGs. Among other, UN-Women, the International Finance Cooperation and the International Capital Market Association developed and launched a practical guide on gender bonds, which aligns sustainable debt with gender equality objectives in the debt capital market<sup>5</sup>. UN-Women has ensured these guidelines are disseminated with key global market actors, including development finance institutes, to catalyse demand and supply for new and innovative financing instruments, such as gender bonds, for an inclusive post-COVID recovery.

UN-Women has also continued to co-chair the Finance in Common Summit's Coalition on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Banks established in 2020, together with the African

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<sup>5</sup> [Bonds to Bridge the Gender Gap: A Practitioner's Guide to Using Sustainable Debt for Gender Equality.](#)

Development Bank. Through its work with Public Development Banks and key partners within the Coalition, UN-Women is seeking to ensure that international and domestic development financiers understand how to track gender investments and practices, with a view to ultimately increase and/or re-orient funding to gender equality actions and impacts.

#### **4.6 Funding Compact and Structured Dialogue on Financing**

UN-Women is meeting or exceeding all assessable indicator targets across the eight Funding Compact commitments that require entity-specific reporting and continues to implement activities in support of its Funding Compact commitments. UN-Women has continued to collaborate with UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF to coordinate approaches to funding dialogues and the Funding Compact, including in the context of the inter-agency working group on the structured dialogue on financing, established in response to calls made by the Executive Boards of the four New York-based operational agencies.

As part of the implementation of the Funding Compact Commitment 14 on common management features, UN Women has provided support to the FMOG for capturing information about the implementation of the gender equality marker and financial targets, as well as specific gender-related criteria, in pooled funding mechanisms.

UN-Women received a total of \$556 million in 2021, up from \$548.6 million in 2020. Member States continue to be UN-Women's most significant donor segment, particularly OECD-DAC countries. Regular resources decreased slightly in 2021 compared to 2020 (\$165.1 million vs. \$165.8 million), and the share of regular resources to other resources again met the Funding Compact threshold, at 30 per cent. To complement regular resources, UN-Women encourages all partners able to do so to contribute high-quality other resources. One proven approach to high-quality other resources is funding for UN-Women country-level Strategic Notes. This offers flexibility through soft earmarking in support of UN-Women's programmes at country level, aligned to the respective Cooperation Framework and national priorities. While Strategic Note funding has generally increased since 2015, UN-Women believes this instrument remains under-used.

UN-Women has also continued to pursue engagement across various donor streams to strengthen partnerships with the private sector as well as other UN agencies and intergovernmental organizations, including international financial institutions, to reduce the concentration of its financing. In 2021, 179 partners contributed to UN-Women, up from 173 partners in 2020. This demonstrates broad-based commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment and support for the Entity among Member States, the private sector, UN agencies and National Committees, among others.

#### **4.7 System-wide reporting**

UN-Women is actively participating in the inter-agency working group tasked with spearheading the development of a methodology for system-wide reports on SDG support and contributions. In 2022, UN-Women contributed its data on legal reform, elimination of violence against women, women's participation in local government, and the social care infrastructure for this year's report to the Economic and Social Council's Operational Activities for Development segment. UN-Women will continue to work with UN partners to develop the methodology for system-wide reporting in 2023. Furthermore, as co-custodian for three SDG5 indicators, UN-Women continues to support the collection and dissemination of related data.

#### **4.8 System-wide evaluation**

UN-Women promoted United Nations system coherence, coordination and accountability for gender equality and the empowerment of women through its engagement with system-wide evaluations and joint evaluations. The UN-Women Independent Evaluation Service participated in UN system-wide efforts by joining the Evaluation Advisory Group for the UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund (COVID-19 MPTF) and by contributing to the COVID-19 Global Evaluation Coalition managed by the

OECD. UN-Women collaborated on joint evaluations and initiatives and supported several Cooperation Framework evaluations at the country and regional levels and engaged in more than 17 joint evaluations and trained over 450 United Nations Evaluation Group members, international organizations, and Monitoring and Evaluation Focal Points from the UN system on the topics related to gender-responsive evaluation. UN Women continued to support the UN-SWAP evaluation performance indicator by providing technical guidance to all reporting entities, preparing an annual report documenting progress and highlighting best practices for improving gender mainstreaming in evaluations.

#### **4.9 Our Common Agenda**

“Our Common Agenda” (OCA) report contains the Secretary-General’s agenda of action to accelerate the implementation of existing agreements, including the Sustainable Development Goals, building on a vision for global cooperation and solidarity, and a stronger, more networked multilateral system anchored within the United Nations. OCA puts forward five transformative actions on gender equality: women’s equal representation through the use of temporary special measures; women’s economic empowerment and the care economy; the repeal of discriminatory laws; ending violence against women and girls; and supporting young women’s leadership. Each of these is rooted in existing mandates, commitments and areas of ongoing work. They are also fully aligned with the UN-Women Strategic Plan 2022-2025. UN-Women has agreed to lead or co-lead on eight OCA proposals central to UN-Women’s mandate: the repeal of gender-discriminatory laws; temporary special measures; women’s economic inclusion, including the care economy and equal pay; young women; eradication of violence against women and girls; intergovernmental processes and gender equality; a review of UN system capacity to deliver on gender equality; and the development of a people-centered policy that takes into account intersectionality. The Entity will utilize its coordination role in existing mechanisms, such as the Secretary-General’s Call to Action for Human Rights, to accelerate work on gender equality.

## **5. Conclusion**

UN-Women has continued to implement relevant UNDS reform mandates and to contribute to key repositioning processes at different levels, ensuring that these support the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. As this Information Note demonstrates, UN-Women has fully implemented its financial obligations vis-à-vis the RC system; the matrixed, dual reporting line of country representatives; and alignment of country Strategic Notes with the Cooperation Framework. The Entity is well above targets regarding common premises and has continued to play a lead role to ensure system-wide coherence on gender equality, through support to advancing common standards and approaches through joint programming and through advisory support, guidance and capacity development on gender mainstreaming in Cooperation Framework processes. To generate a greater share of resources to achieve SDG 5 on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls UN-Women has enhanced its support to the implementation of gender equality markers and related financial targets at entity and UNCT levels and in inter-agency pooled funds; and strengthened its partnerships in particular with IFIs to improve the understanding of gender perspectives as related to their processes and work.

More work remains to be done on UNDS repositioning mandates related to *inter alia* advancing and consolidating system-wide efficiencies; regional repositioning; and system-wide reporting in UN INFO. In 2022, UN-Women will continue to contribute to consolidating UNDS repositioning in these areas, and to play a lead role to ensure that gender equality and empowerment of women figure centrally in UNDS repositioning efforts and results.

