



**Executive Board of the  
United Nations Entity  
for Gender Equality and the  
Empowerment of Women**

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**Operational activities**

**Operational activities of the United Nations Entity for  
Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women**

**Report of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director**

*Summary*

The present report on operational activities is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/289 requiring the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women to submit an annual report on operational activities for consideration by the Executive Board of the Entity, and to report on those activities to the Economic and Social Council during its operational activities segment.

The Executive Board may wish to welcome this report and transmit it to the Economic and Social Council with recommendations and guidance, as appropriate.



## I. Introduction

1. The present report should be read in conjunction with the report of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)<sup>1</sup> on the progress made on the strategic plan, 2011-2013 (UNW/2012/4), which details results achieved in line with the strategic plan, examples at the country level and progress against targets.<sup>2</sup> The present report provides an account of actions taken by UN-Women to implement the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 62/208, and follows the structure set out in that resolution.

2. The Entity became operational on 1 January 2011, with a mandate to lead, coordinate and promote the accountability of the United Nations system in advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women. Its creation lies at the heart of system-wide coherence on gender equality, and represents a major step forward in aligning and enhancing the response of the United Nations to accelerating gender equality and women's empowerment.

3. During 2011-2012, UN-Women continued to strengthen its institutional capacity. By the end of 2011, a three-pillar structure was in place covering: (a) partnerships, coordination and intergovernmental work; (b) programme and policy; and (c) management and administration. With the endorsement of the regional architecture by the Executive Board at its second regular session of 2012, in November 2012 (see Executive Board decision 2012/6), UN-Women has now put in place the final changes needed to respond to the universal mandate and strategic plan of the Entity.

## II. Funding for operational activities

4. The resource mobilization and partnership strategy of UN-Women is focused on deepening and broadening its donor base as well as leveraging and supporting the gender equality work of other United Nations agencies at the country level, focusing on partnerships while avoiding duplication of efforts. Beyond efforts to sustain and further increase core resources from current and future Government donors, UN-Women has intensified its outreach to harness new opportunities for non-core funding. These include the two multi-donor funds that it manages, the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women and the Fund for Gender Equality.

5. Total contributions in 2011 of \$227 million fell short of the \$300 million per year envisaged in the strategic plan, 2011-2013 (see UNW/2011/9, annex III). However, there were important gains. The ratio between core and non-core contributions exceeded parity, at \$125 million for core contributions and \$102 million for non-core contributions. Both core and non-core resources increased in comparison with 2010. The number of Member States who became donors to

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<sup>1</sup> The present report draws upon results achieved up to and including in December 2011, unless otherwise stated.

<sup>2</sup> The annual report of the Entity for 2012 will be presented to the Executive Board at its annual session of 2013.

UN-Women rose from 107 to 117, with a notable increase in Member States that do not participate in membership of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. In addition, in 2011, 30 donors initiated multi-year funding arrangements with UN-Women, offering greater sustainability and predictability of funding. UN-Women also gained additional donors contributing amounts of \$10 million or more: in 2011 there were 7 such donors. In 2012, total contributions are expected to exceed the level achieved in 2011, although they will still fall short of the \$300 million target.

6. The resource mobilization strategy for the Entity emphasizes outreach to foundations and the private sector and developing the fundraising capacity of its national committees, which raise resources and awareness in Asia-Pacific, Europe and North America. In 2011, foundations contributed over \$1.2 million in grants, and the network of 18 national committees raised about \$800,000. In 2012, UN-Women exceeded its target of \$3 million in contributions from private and voluntary sector funding. Many such contributions directly benefit operational activities through concrete projects. For example, a partnership was signed with a private foundation in 2012 for a multi-year, five-country project on the economic empowerment of widows.

### **III. Strategic partnerships, including cooperation with the private sector**

7. In 2011-2012, UN-Women developed a more robust and institutionalized approach to its strategic partnerships with civil society and the private sector. The Entity's dedicated strategy for proactive engagement with the private sector seeks to leverage private sector expertise and enhance resource mobilization. Partnerships with civil society organizations aim to ensure that their contributions are heard in all priority areas to strengthen norms and policies on gender equality and women's empowerment.

8. Expanding and strengthening partnerships has been a crucial aspect of addressing violence against women. In 2011-2012, work targeted at adolescents was expanded through partnerships with "Together for Girls", a public-private initiative to end sexual violence against children, in Haiti, Kenya, Swaziland, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe, with surveys concerning violence against children conducted in all five countries to inform national action plans; and with the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts to develop a non-formal education curriculum on the prevention of violence and on creating safe and equal spaces for girls to speak up about violence and get support. The flagship global advocacy initiative "Say NO — UNiTE to End Violence against Women", which is the social mobilization platform of the Secretary-General's UNiTE campaign, has to date recorded over 5.5 million actions and engaged close to 900 civil society partners.

9. As part of its unique convening role creating spaces for dialogue between civil society and Governments, UN-Women supported the active participation of civil society organizations, including grass-roots women's groups, at several intergovernmental meetings, including the fifty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. A strong advocacy alliance with the women major group around the Conference contributed substantially to the strengthening of gender equality language in the final outcome document (see General Assembly resolution 66/288).

10. In October 2012, UN-Women convened the first meeting of the Global Civil Society Advisory Group, whose members include grass-roots and community-based leaders, leaders of indigenous people's groups, feminist scholars, women's rights lawyers, and male leaders working on gender equality and women's rights. The meeting served to reaffirm the strategic importance of the partnership between civil society and UN-Women, to reinforce common agendas and to share opportunities to advance gender equality and women's empowerment. Civil society advisory groups at the regional and country levels are being established, eight of which have already been set up, with 11 more in process.

11. Zonta International continued to be an important partner, in particular for UN-Women work on gender-based violence and in 2012, agreements were signed with Microsoft and Coca-Cola to develop initiatives to empower women entrepreneurs. Tag Heuer conducted an international campaign throughout 2012 to raise awareness and made a commitment to raise funds for UN-Women gender equality and women's economic empowerment programmes at the global level. The Middle East division of Kraft Foods raised funds for UN-Women leadership and economic empowerment programmes.

12. The Entity, together with the United Nations Global Compact, continues to promote the adoption and implementation of the initiative "Women's Empowerment Principles: Equality Means Business" by private sector organizations around the world. By the end of 2012, 466 chief executive officers had signed to the initiative.

13. Strategic media partnerships contributed to increased and sustained coverage of the work undertaken and gender equality issues addressed by UN-Women. Contacts were established with over 1,600 media outlets worldwide and strategic outreach ensured extensive news coverage in more than 160 countries. The online presence of UN-Women grew threefold, with over 220,000 website visits per month. Along with a combined social media following of 320,000, representing a more than six-fold increase since 2010, these results provide the basis for the communications-driven advocacy by UN-Women in support of its operational activities.

## **IV. Contribution of United Nations operational activities to national capacity development and development effectiveness**

### **A. Capacity-building and development**

14. Capacity development remains a cornerstone of the UN-Women strategy in response to demand for support at the national, community and institutional levels. This emphasis cuts across its five priority areas of operational work, and is articulated throughout the current strategic plan. It recognizes the importance of an approach that recognizes that "one size does not fit all" for individual countries and contexts and that is simultaneously flexible and catalytic. UN-Women follows a capacity development framework consistent with the United Nations Development Group, which visualizes capacity development in terms of (a) individual competencies, (b) collective capabilities and (c) system capacity.

15. Capacity development offers a means of linking the normative and operational aspects of the mandate of UN-Women by strengthening coherence between the

normative guidance generated by intergovernmental processes and the operational support provided at the country level. UN-Women assists national partners in translating international commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of women into laws, policies and strategies, and in monitoring and advocating for their effective implementation.

16. Initiatives of UN-Women have supported partners and constituencies, including government ministries of finance and planning, national women's machineries and other government institutions, civil society organizations, and grass-roots women's groups through training; the provision of technical expertise and financial support; development and dissemination of knowledge and learning; mobilizing of networks and advocating for the inclusion of women's voices; and South-South cooperation.

17. For example, in supporting Member States in the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, UN-Women provides capacity development in reporting, dialogue with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and follow-up on the concluding observations. In 2011, 27 countries received such support. In Afghanistan, UN-Women supported the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in analysing the country's compliance with the Convention and presenting its initial and second reports to the Committee. Capacity-building support was also provided to gender advocates to monitor implementation of the Convention and ensure the inclusion of civil society perspectives.

18. At the global level, UN-Women is partnering with the United Nations Statistics Division in a new joint programme, the Evidence and Data for Gender Equality initiative, to accelerate existing efforts to generate comparable gender indicators on health, education, employment, entrepreneurship and asset ownership.<sup>3</sup> The initiative aims to build national statistical capacity to address major gaps in availability, quality and comparability of gender statistics, including better monitoring of progress and evaluation of the impact of policies to advance gender equality. Capacity-building activities will directly involve staff of national statistical offices, as well as foster exchanges between countries in each region.

19. The following sub-sections provide examples of results from capacity development efforts in different thematic areas of the work of the Entity. The examples cited include large-scale programmes and smaller projects, illustrating the diversity of UN-Women activities as the Entity makes the transition to a fully-fledged organization.

## **B. National planning and budgeting**

20. UN-Women continues to prioritize support to national partners to build systematic and institutional capacity to ensure that budgets, national plans and the evidence base for gender equality are strengthened. Support to finance and planning ministries, national women's machineries and local governments has focused on

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<sup>3</sup> The initiative is guided by a steering committee, composed of members of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics, regional commissions, regional development banks and key agencies that coordinate statistical work, including the World Bank and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

improving capacity to collect and analyse data, conduct gender-responsive budget analysis and advocacy, and promote inclusiveness for women's participation in planning processes. In 2011, UN-Women supported such capacity development efforts in 58 countries. This contributed to national planning documents incorporating priorities and allocating budgets for gender equality in 18 countries. In six of those countries (Plurinational State of Bolivia, Ecuador, Mali, Morocco, Nepal and Zimbabwe), this led to increased national resources being allocated for gender equality with combined budgetary increases of over \$1.5 billion.

21. The Entity provided technical assistance to national partners in Cameroon, Nepal, Peru, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania to conduct institutional capacity assessments, including of gender equality gaps in sector programmes and/or budgets. These were followed by targeted plans for capacity needs and led to efforts to integrate gender into national budget guidelines for sector ministries in Cameroon and Rwanda and efforts to develop methodologies for tracking gender-responsive national and sectoral budget allocations in Nepal. The enabling environment for gender-responsive budget implementation was strengthened in the United Republic of Tanzania, with the establishment of a national gender-responsive budget core team led by the Ministry of Finance, the allocation of a specific budget line for gender-responsive budgeting, and an institutionalized training approach to facilitate the ongoing capacity development of stakeholders.

22. Gender advocates received significant support to enhance their capacity to participate in and influence national and global planning processes. For example, such global women's organizations as the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) and the WIDE network, were supported in mobilizing gender advocates around the Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in Busan, Republic of Korea, in 2011. Their active participation was instrumental in achieving, in the Busan outcome document, an explicit commitment to ensuring that public expenditures are targeted appropriately to both men and women.

23. UN-Women partners with the United Nations Capital Development Fund on a programme for gender-equitable local development in Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone and the United Republic of Tanzania. The initiative focuses on improving women's access to resources and services at the local level and supports the capacity of local governments to plan, budget and implement programmes. In the United Republic of Tanzania, after women from the Morogoro district identified access to safe drinking water as a priority area, the programme provided capacity support enabling the local government to improve infrastructure, which led to the delivery of water to 7,500 new users in the district.

24. Since its inception in 2009, the Fund for Gender Equality has supported interventions to catalyse new national plans and laws and implement existing plans and laws that advance commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment around the world. With a particular focus on economic and political empowerment, the Fund manages a portfolio of 55 programmes in 47 countries, worth \$43 million. As a result of the second phase of its grant-making cycle for 2011-2012, launched in March 2012 for all regions, except Arab States (held in 2011), the Fund is adding approximately 39 programmes and \$12.5 million to its portfolio by the end of 2012.

### **Gender and national HIV/AIDS planning**

25. The Entity works to bring gender equality perspectives to the response to HIV and AIDS by promoting the leadership of women living with HIV and women caregivers in that response; promoting gender-sensitive governance of the response; and supporting access to justice for women living with, and affected by, HIV and AIDS.

26. In 2011-2012, UN-Women supported networks of women living with HIV and caregivers in 26 countries to participate in decision-making within the HIV response. In Mozambique, UN-Women supported 45 organizations for women living with HIV, which resulted in a Women's Charter that will be presented to policymakers as a call for accountability in gender equality commitments.

27. UN-Women also worked with national AIDS coordinating authorities in 22 countries to integrate gender equality into HIV strategies, policies, laws, institutions, budgets and accountability frameworks. UN-Women placed gender experts in the coordinating authorities of Cambodia, Jamaica, Kenya and Rwanda. Gender training for more than 400 staff contributed to more gender-responsive national strategic plans on HIV, including recognition of spousal transmission in Cambodia and the integration of measures to address gender-based violence in Jamaica's plans for the prevention of HIV and mitigation of its impact.

28. In sub-Saharan Africa, UN-Women partnered with 20 community-based organizations to enable women living with or affected by HIV to access their property and inheritance, as a means of mitigating the impact of the epidemic and increasing the awareness and legal literacy of more than 1,200 women.

29. In June 2012, UN-Women became the eleventh co-sponsor of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). Given the impact of the epidemic on women, there is a clear need to ensure gender equality is at the heart of the responses to HIV and AIDS. By formally joining UNAIDS, UN-Women is better positioned to support this goal.

### **C. Women's leadership and participation**

30. The Entity is committed to increasing women's capacity for leadership and political participation in the decisions that affect their lives. UN-Women supports capacity development to promote gender-responsive constitutional and legal frameworks, electoral management systems and non-governmental institutions (such as political parties, media, local governments, local women's groups and youth groups), to achieve increased representation of women in decision-making processes. In 2011, UN-Women supported the strengthening of those capacities in 35 countries.

31. In 2011 and 2012, UN-Women, through its support, contributed to eight countries increasing the number of women elected to office at the local and national levels. In Mexico, the SUMA programme (Strengthening Women's Political Participation and Promoting an Economic Empowerment Agenda), supported by the Fund for Gender Equality in cooperation with the National Institute for Women, enhanced the capacity of women leaders at the federal, local and state levels, contributing to an increase in representation from 28 per cent to 37 per cent of women parliamentarians in the Lower House, and from 21 per cent to 33 per cent in

the Senate. In Senegal, UN-Women and its United Nations partners provided support to government institutions and civil society organizations to promote the application of the Gender Parity Law during the electoral process, by building the capacity of the National Observatory of Parity to monitor compliance with the law and disseminate data on its implementation. This contributed to an increase in the number of women parliamentarians from 22.7 per cent to 42.7 per cent. The Entity also worked with national partners in Algeria and Libya, in coordination with other United Nations agencies, to promote the inclusion of women in key electoral processes. Algeria registered an increase in female members of parliament from 8 per cent to 31 per cent. In Libya, more than 600 women ran for political office, attaining an unprecedented 33 seats or 16.5 per cent representation in the country's first free and fair elections in over 60 years.

32. UN-Women supported capacity development towards legal and constitutional reform processes and in gender-sensitive electoral reform in 15 countries. In El Salvador, support for a joint effort by 22 women's groups, the Parliament and the Supreme Court of Justice led to the passage of the Law on Equality, Fairness and the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women which promotes the political participation of women and contains a mandate for the integration of gender-specific provisions in all public policies.

33. Since 2011, UN-Women has worked closely with United Nations partners including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs to open spaces for women's participation in electoral processes, including the development of gender-responsive electoral policies and coordination on United Nations system-wide advocacy to increase the participation of women as candidates and voters. In 2012, in Pakistan, UN-Women partnered with UNDP in an initiative that saw the roll-out of a more gender-responsive electoral management system, requiring individual polling stations to collect sex-disaggregated information, for the first time, during the by-election in Sanghar District, in order to inform civic and voter education efforts, and pinpoint areas where women faced obstacles to voting.

34. In September 2012, UN-Women, with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UNDP, launched a study at the General Assembly, entitled "Informal Justice Systems: Charting a Course for Human Rights-based Engagement", which offers the first comprehensive assessment of informal justice systems and human rights protection. The study, which involved a comprehensive literature review and country-specific case studies from Bangladesh, Ecuador, Malawi, Niger, Papua New Guinea and Uganda, identifies the most promising strategies for bringing informal justice systems into greater alignment with human rights requirements.

35. In addition, in response to the flagship report of UN-Women for 2011-2012, entitled "Progress of the World's Women: In Pursuit of Justice", a joint global programme is being developed by UN-Women, UNDP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to enhance women's access to justice through comprehensive and coordinated justice sector reforms, focusing on constitutional and legal reform to protect rights; gender-responsive judicial decision-making; gender-sensitive justice service delivery; non-discriminatory informal justice systems; and increasing women's capacity to claim their rights.



## **D. Ending violence against women and girls**

36. Building on intensifying political will at all levels and growing support from a wide range of stakeholders for ending violence against women, UN-Women worked with partners in 57 countries in 2011 to build capacity on advancing policy and legal reforms, developing new national action plans, and improving service delivery.

37. Capacity development support was provided to Government partners to develop new laws responding to international women's rights standards. Support was also provided to national institutions to enhance their capacity to enforce legislation, through the development of specialized mechanisms such as new units to address family violence and sexual offences in Solomon Islands, and gender and children's desks led by the Tanzania Female Police Network.

38. Assistance to initiatives that expand and improve services for survivors of gender-based violence included support to partners to develop plans to improve the quality of service delivery, establish stronger coordinated responses and develop standards and protocols for service provision. This contributed to increased access to care in countries including Algeria, Mauritania, Rwanda and Zimbabwe, where, for instance, one-stop centres now reach more than 1,700 survivors.

39. Capacity development support to national partners as part of the global programme on Safe Cities Free of Violence Against Women and Girls contributed to increased awareness of the universal challenge of sexual harassment and violence against women in urban public spaces, and enhanced partnerships and increased actions by local authorities, community groups, the police and the media to promote safer public spaces. In 2012, support to the city government in Quito contributed to the adoption of an amendment to a City Ordinance on eliminating violence against women to also include violence in public spaces. UNICEF has joined UN-Women and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) to expand Safe Cities in eight cities.

40. Work to provide technical guidance and resources to country-level practitioners through the Virtual Knowledge Centre (available from [www.endvawnow.org](http://www.endvawnow.org)) is ongoing and to date has reached nearly half a million people from 222 countries and territories, with a 90 per cent satisfaction rating from its users. UN-Women also continues to maintain the Secretary-General's database on violence against women, a central repository for information on government measures to address gender-based violence. Since the launch of the database in 2009, 131 Member States have provided submissions, which are being used to produce an analytical study for the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

41. UN-Women administers the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women. The current active portfolio of the Trust Fund now includes 95 projects, involving over 5,000 partners and covering 85 countries and territories, with a total value of over \$63.5 million. Currently, the Trust Fund supports 13 joint programmes of United Nations country teams, for a total value of \$12,659,893, in Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, Ecuador, Indonesia, Mexico, Nepal, Panama, Serbia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Uruguay.

## **E. Economic empowerment**

42. The work of UN-Women to enhance the economic empowerment of women cuts across multiple dimensions of women's control of, and access to, sustainable livelihoods, decent work and social protections, and productive assets. Linking the normative and operational aspects of its work, UN-Women has provided capacity development support to advancing policy and legal reforms, while also expanding women's access to services and economic and financial resources. Support has especially targeted the most economically vulnerable women, including rural women, indigenous women and migrant women workers. In 2011, capacity-building support was provided in 38 countries.

43. To advance legal reform, UN-Women provided capacity development support to the Government of Montenegro to amend the Labour Law to include provisions for equal pay for work of equal value, and require all public institutions to collect sex-disaggregated data.

44. In Rwanda, through the Fund for Gender Equality, UN-Women provided capacity support to non-governmental organizations to establish a mobile network of paralegals, who helped to build the knowledge and skills of 100,000 rural women in order to claim their inheritance and land ownership rights. In the Great Lakes region, UN-Women is working to improve economic opportunities for women engaged in informal cross-border trade, a precarious livelihood that often exposes women to insecurity and abuses at border crossings and is underestimated and neglected in trade policies and processes. Capacity development support to municipal authorities and women traders has contributed to the establishment of a number of cooperatives, giving women greater voice in advocating for their concerns.

45. The capacity of economically disadvantaged women to access financial resources and develop entrepreneurial and management skills was enhanced through the establishment of women's centres. UN-Women has supported the establishment of grass-roots women's centres in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, providing rural women with training in business development and leadership skills and facilitating sustainable income-generation projects linked to community-based development priorities. These centres have reached an estimated 28,000 women at the grass-roots level across 13 governorates in the West Bank. In Guatemala, UN-Women capacity development support to service centres for women entrepreneurs established at the local level enabled more than 10,000 indigenous women to gain access to technical and financial services to improve their livelihoods. Service centres have also been established in El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua.

46. A joint programme on accelerating progress towards the economic empowerment of rural women, launched by UN-Women, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) in 2012, aims to empower rural women so they can enjoy better economic opportunities and run successful enterprises. The programme, to be implemented initially in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda, capitalizes on the synergies and comparative institutional strengths of each agency to generate wider-scale improvements in the livelihoods and rights of rural women.

47. The Entity is also developing a knowledge gateway, an online platform that will mobilize capacity among partners to act on the trends and drivers of change for women's economic empowerment. Aimed at policymakers, business leaders, gender advocates and women at the community level, including excluded women, the platform will build on and make more visible the work of UN-Women and its partners and respond to gaps in knowledge.

## **F. Women and peace and security**

48. The Entity continued to influence the women and peace and security agenda through capacity development assistance in 21 countries in 2011, to promote women's participation, access to justice and contributions to post-conflict and peacebuilding processes at the international, regional and national levels.

49. Responding to requests from Member States, support was provided to Georgia, Indonesia, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Pacific region in order to strengthen national capacities for the development of national action plans relating to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security.

50. In partnership with Department of Political Affairs, UN-Women provided regional training on effective mediation and negotiation skills for women politicians and peace and security experts from 25 countries, which contributed to an increase to 30 per cent of women on the roster of mediators of the Department.

51. To reduce conflict-related sexual violence, UN-Women and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations developed and tested scenario-based predeployment training for peacekeepers in several countries. In Mali, Nepal and Rwanda, UN-Women also supported the training of army officials in gender and women's rights, in order to enhance their responsiveness to women's security and rights. In addition, the Entity continues to promote the increased participation of women as peacekeepers in United Nations peacekeeping missions worldwide. Zimbabwe, for example, is one of the few countries in Africa where the number of female peacekeepers from the police meets the Department of Peacekeeping Operations recommendation of at least 10 per cent female representation.

52. Women's access to transitional justice, and in particular reparations, remains one of the most neglected areas in post-conflict reconstruction. UN-Women works with partners such as Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to support policies and programmes on gender justice, including reparations for victims and survivors. This has included providing experts and support to the Truth Commissions of Kenya and Solomon Islands, so as to ensure that women's needs and priorities were part of the reparation programme and recommendations. In addition, in response to the request by the Secretary-General in his report on women and peace and security (S/2011/598), UN-Women has consistently provided gender expertise to commissions of inquiry supported by the United Nations, including in Côte d'Ivoire, Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic. UN-Women is partnering with OHCHR to review and propose stronger and consistent measures for gender-responsive transitional justice and reparations systems.

## **G. South-South cooperation and development of national capacities**

53. The Entity seeks to promote South-South cooperation by serving as a facilitator for knowledge exchange, policy dialogue and the development of regional and subregional projects. In 2012, UN-Women entered into a partnership with the Government of Brazil to provide technical assistance to incorporate gender into their South-South cooperation activities. As a part of the agreement, UN-Women is providing technical and facilitation support to the Governments of Brazil and India for a South-South cooperation programme focused on advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. Both countries have expressed interest in exchanging knowledge and expertise on areas including gender and sustainability, social inclusion programmes, income-generation strategies for women, and women-centred public policies.

54. A global agreement was signed between UN-Women and the Barefoot College in India, for a project that empowers rural women from around the world to become solar engineers. The College, with the Government of India as an important partner, trains illiterate grandmothers from some of the most excluded communities in the world to install and manage solar energy in previously non-electrified villages. The women, many of whom have never left their communities before, receive funding and logistical support to travel to India to study for six months, and then return to their communities armed with knowledge and skills to implement grass-roots solutions for delivering clean energy. In the Pacific region, 10 women from Fiji have already graduated and returned to their communities. At least 500 homes are expected to directly benefit in Fiji, and the project has since extended into Kiribati, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. UN-Women has also supported expansion of the initiative to Liberia, South Sudan, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, with future plans slated for the Latin American region.

55. Knowledge-sharing and South-South collaboration supported by UN-Women facilitated access for countries to learning opportunities on effective approaches for implementing national laws and policies to address violence against women. This included exchange visits between Burundi and Rwanda to discuss one-stop centres; between the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Morocco to discuss shelters and counselling centres; and between El Salvador and Nicaragua to discuss the formulation of new laws.

56. UN-Women is facilitating cooperation between Brazil and Egypt on addressing violence against women in public spaces, through its Safe Cities programme. Egyptian policymakers and development experts are exploring promising practices and lessons learned from the Brazilian Government's implementation of the Safe Cities initiative in Rio de Janeiro.

## **H. Gender equality and women's empowerment: a United Nations system perspective drawing from the triennial comprehensive policy review of the Entity**

57. An analysis of annual reports of resident coordinators, carried out by UN-Women on behalf of the United Nations Development Group over the last several years shows evidence of steady progress made by the United Nations system in supporting national priorities on gender equality and the empowerment of

women. United Nations system support to address violence against women was reported by 106 countries in 2011, up from 89 countries in 2008. Support for reproductive health increased, from 62 countries in 2008 to 73 countries in 2011. The country reports from resident coordinators documented support for national women's machineries, the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the promotion of gender equality in policies relating to HIV/AIDS, women's political participation, education and data and statistics, all registered steady and significant progress since the last triennial comprehensive policy review.

58. The United Nations system also strengthened the integration of gender equality perspectives into its policies, strategies and planning tools and in rolling out gender-related performance standards, benchmarks and targets. With the endorsement by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination of the United Nations system-wide action plan for gender equality and the empowerment of women, in April 2012, the United Nations system now has a unified accountability framework for its work on gender equality and women's empowerment. The action plan is designed to promote a common understanding, enhanced coherence and systematic self-assessment, as well as a steady, targeted and progressive approach to which United Nations system entities can adhere in their work on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

59. A guidance note on the gender equality marker was developed by the United Nations Development Group Task Team on Gender Equality. It guides the development of effective and coherent approaches for tracking resources that support gender equality results. Once agreed system-wide, it is expected to enhance coherence and accountability significantly.

60. The United Nations system adopted gender equality as one of the five key programming principles in the planning of its operational activities through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. The United Nations Development Group handbook on results-based management provides additional guidance to United Nations country teams on ensuring that gender issues are thoroughly reflected in their results frameworks. A review conducted by the Development Group of the previous cycle of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2006-2009) found that those specifying gender-equality outcomes were rated highest overall in terms of the potential to deliver results on national priorities for gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Development Group reviewed 13 United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, which were signed in 2010, for the period 2011-2016. All those frameworks were found to address gender equality, with country teams taking a variety of approaches.

61. In 2011 there were 105 gender theme groups, up from 37 in 2004. In Fiji and Samoa, for example, gender theme groups supported gender mainstreaming in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework process and developed proposals aimed at improving gender equality performance in key areas. There is more to be done, however, in terms of efforts to build the gender equality capacity of staff in United Nations country teams through dedicated gender equality capacity-building for staff at all levels. Fewer than half of the country teams reported such activities in 2011, a trend that has remained unchanged since 2008.

## **I. Transition from relief to development**

62. UN-Women focused on deepening its commitment to supporting existing coordination mechanisms to generate a more effective United Nations system-wide humanitarian response to the specific needs of women and girls.

63. While the organization has worked in areas affected by conflict for some time, its work on post-crisis humanitarian response and early recovery is an area under development. UN-Women has participated in a number of disaster risk reduction and disaster response management processes, such as the development of the minimum preparedness package in Asia-Pacific and post-disaster needs assessments in the Horn of Africa and Nigeria. In addition, UN-Women is active in a number of global, regional and national humanitarian initiatives and mechanisms, including participation in the Sub-Working Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and in country-level responses in Kenya and Pakistan and, more recently, in Mali.

64. Going forward, UN-Women continues to build its capacity and will leverage and expand its engagement in disaster risk reduction and disaster response management and early recovery initiatives and mechanisms, including through the Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery led by UNDP, in order to strategically play an increasing and more systematic role in humanitarian action. This will include engagement at the global, regional and country levels.

## **V. Improved functioning of the United Nations development system**

### **A. Coherence, effectiveness and relevance**

65. The mandate of UN-Women reflects the clear demand for a coordinated, integrated system-wide response enabling Member States to have better access to the resources of the entire United Nations system, with their full range of expertise in different dimensions of gender equality and women's empowerment. It also reflects the crucial role that UN-Women plays in ensuring accountability of the whole system to advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women.

66. The membership of the Entity in global coordination structures and inter-agency mechanisms underpins its coordination efforts to ensure that system-wide policy decisions and recommendations on gender equality and women's empowerment are implemented at all levels. UN-Women participates as a full member of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and its three pillars: the High-level Committee on Programmes, the High-level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group. UN-Women currently chairs the Advisory Group of the United Nations Development Group meeting at the Assistant Secretary-General level, which, under the overall leadership of the Development Group, has worked closely to provide common recommendations from the Development Group on different aspects of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. With respect to gender equality, key recommendations will be considered by the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session, as well as a strong

endorsement of the coordination mandate of UN-Women. The Entity also chairs the Task Team on Gender Equality of the Development Group, the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality and the United Nations Evaluation Group.

67. The framework for the coordination role of UN-Women in enhancing coherence is focused on five key areas: (a) promoting more coherent and coordinated United Nations system efforts on gender equality, building on the comparative advantages of different agencies; (b) mobilizing joint action; (c) strengthening capacity for gender mainstreaming; (d) promoting accountability and increased resources for gender equality; and (e) advancing gender parity and the status of women within the United Nations system.

68. In its capacity as Chair of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, UN-Women has engaged the Network as a unique mechanism dedicated to setting standards, coordinating and monitoring the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in the overall substantive, normative and operational/programmatic work of the United Nations system. In defining the system-wide action plan for gender equality and the empowerment of women, UN-Women engaged the Network as a strategic ally in building consensus around standards and targets and in ensuring the endorsement of the tool across the United Nations system.

69. At the country level, UN-Women leads or co-leads 62 of the 105 gender theme groups around the world. Strategic partnerships with United Nations entities, including joining as a co-sponsor of UNAIDS, have increased. In 2012, UN-Women focused efforts on mobilizing United Nations support for intergovernmental processes to apply a gender perspective and assist with gender mainstreaming in the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the quadrennial comprehensive policy review for 2012, the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015, and the sustainable development goals. Inter-agency capacity was enhanced through guidance, instruments and tools, including a community of practice intranet portal populated with best practices and frequently asked questions on gender, and a repository of system-wide gender mainstreaming policies and action plans. UN-Women also functions as the Secretariat for the Secretary-General's UNiTE to End Violence Against Women campaign, leading inter-agency coordination of the campaign at the global and regional levels.

70. To enhance system-wide accountability, UN-Women led and coordinated the development of the system-wide action plan for gender equality and the empowerment of women. Since April 2012, UN-Women has led its rollout by setting up a help desk that has supported 20 United Nations system entities and held workshops to accelerate and support the implementation of the action plan. Further, it has developed a web-based reporting tool for baseline reporting that aims to harmonize reporting and systematize information availability on relevant policy and practice. UN-Women is also partnering with other entities to support the roll-out of the action plan and to monitor progress on specific performance standard indicators relating to the action plan, including the implementation of the evaluation performance standard indicator.

71. UN-Women promotes and supports gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system, directly to entities upon request, by servicing the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, holding expert group meetings on the issue and developing policy recommendations, guidance notes and information packages. UN-Women also supports the substantive segment of the Economic and

Social Council in this regard and produces the report of the Secretary-General on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (the most recent of which is E/2012/61). Under the auspices of the Task Team on Gender Equality, UN-Women is leading the development of a basic course on gender mainstreaming for system-wide use, as well as working with the United Nations System Staff College to develop a roster of experts on gender mainstreaming in order to support the work of the United Nations country teams.

72. To advance system-wide gender parity, in 2012, UN-Women prepared the Secretary-General's biennial report on the improvement in the status of women in the United Nations system (A/67/347). Specifically, the report focused on the representation of women at the level of United Nations system, entities and Secretariat departments in relation to appointments, promotions and separations, progress made and obstacles encountered in achieving gender balance, including policies and practices, good practice examples and impediments to progress. UN-Women also coordinates a system-wide network of gender focal points to facilitate the formulation, implementation and monitoring of policies and good practice relevant to gender balance.

73. At the country level, in 2011, UN-Women contributed to the development of strong gender equality components in United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks in 28 countries. UN-Women leads and coordinates the work on the gender equality results identified in the frameworks. The Entity also facilitates the use by United Nations country teams of performance indicators for gender equality and the empowerment of women. The indicators track the contribution of country teams, as a whole, to gender equality, through common country programming. To date, the indicators have been implemented in 25 countries.

74. The Entity has intensified support for joint programmes to advance gender equality, and is currently active in 104 joint programmes, up from 72 in 2008. Joint programmes, when well coordinated, are contributing to the expansion of multisectoral engagement, and increasing awareness of how gender equality issues are relevant to development effectiveness in different sectors. The UNDP-Spain Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund has provided significant support in this area, including capacity-building for central ministries in gender analysis of development and aid effectiveness in Colombia, Morocco and Nicaragua.

75. UN-Women is present in all eight of the "Delivering as one" pilot countries. The recent independent evaluation of the initiative found that increased priority and attention is given in pilot countries to gender equality and women's empowerment, as compared to conventional approaches under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. National ownership, leadership, commitment and country capacity are critical ingredients that contribute to these successful outcomes. UN-Women has actively promoted strategic advocacy and communicating as "one voice" on gender equality and the empowerment of women within the United Nations country teams. The Entity has facilitated capacity-building and promoted accountability for gender equality through the use of system-wide tools such as the performance indicators on gender equality, the gender audit and the gender marker to track resources applied towards gender equality results. All eight pilot countries have implemented the performance indicators and/or gender audits, and/or have carried out initiatives aimed at establishing some form of gender marker to assess performance and investment.



## **B. Regional dimensions and country-level capacity of the United Nations development system**

76. The Entity attaches high priority to strengthening its presence and effectiveness in the field, by following up on the field capacity assessment it carried out in 2011 in order to help define the core services that UN-Women presences should be equipped to provide at the country level and the base capacity required, and by responding to requests from Member States, including by leveraging the presence and capacity for gender equality work of other United Nations agencies in countries where UN-Women is not present. This has involved in some cases placing senior gender advisers to the Resident Coordinator and United Nations country teams so as to strengthen the overall response of the United Nations to advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women.

77. UN-Women is a member of all five regional teams of the United Nations Development Group, and a member of the regional coordination mechanisms that have been set up by the regional commissions. The new regional architecture for UN-Women will substantially improve the Entity's overall capacity to deliver its mandate. The regional architecture will establish six regional offices and six multi-country offices. There will be greater decentralization of authority to the field and some technical and operational functions will be transferred from headquarters to the field.

78. In 2012, recognizing that the resident coordinator system is the key driver of United Nations system-wide coherence, UN-Women prioritized the implementation of the management and accountability system to strengthen mutual accountability for results between resident coordinators and UN-Women. The United Nations Development Group identified UN-Women as one of the seven United Nations agencies that had implemented the key areas of the management and accountability system: revision of job descriptions of field representatives; inclusion of results from United Nations country teams in the Entity's performance appraisal system; and ensuring the resident coordinators and country teams are apprised of the resource mobilization and programme implementation specifically led by UN-Women in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework/"Delivering as one" programme.

## **C. Transaction costs and efficiency**

### **Procurement**

79. UN-Women is a new member of the Procurement Network and represented in the working group on the harmonization of procurement at the country level. Under its new procurement framework, UN-Women will contribute to and benefit from the various working groups and other initiatives of the network, adopt the vendor eligibility framework, utilize other organizations' long-term agreements, and enter into its own long-term agreements and share them. Additionally, an independent working group on common procurement has been revived and was convened in October 2012. The potential for cooperation within the group is promising, given the number of long-term agreements that were shared during the meeting.

**Finance and budget**

80. International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) were adopted in 2012, in line with their adoption by UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UNICEF. UN-Women has harmonized financial statements and policies, where applicable, with those entities. Implementation of IPSAS has enabled UN-Women to introduce a range of new procedures and instructions to promote and demonstrate stronger financial management of the assets and resources under its control.

**Information and communications technology**

81. The information and communications technology strategy of UN-Women for 2012-2015 is fully aligned with the strategic framework on information and communications technology adopted by the Information and Communications Technology Network of the High-level Committee on Management. The strategy emphasizes the need to consolidate and streamline systems while leveraging capabilities, systems and infrastructure elements that already exist across the United Nations system. UN-Women is already benefiting from cost efficiencies and economies of scale through collaboration with other agencies. This includes a corporate agreement with the International Computing Centre for hosting services relating to information and communications technology.

**VI. Evaluation of operational activities for development**

82. The independent evaluation office of UN-Women focuses on four strategic areas: (a) conducting corporate evaluations and establishing effective corporate evaluation systems; (b) strengthening a decentralized evaluation culture and systems for greater accountability and improved programming; (c) leading United Nations coordination on gender-responsive evaluation to generate system-wide accountability; and (d) promoting innovation and knowledge generation on best practices for gender equality through national evaluation capacity-building.

83. In 2011, four corporate evaluation processes were completed and two new ones initiated. Two were conducted jointly with United Nations organizations, on peacekeeping activities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and on the United Nations joint programmes on gender equality, which provides a first comprehensive repository of joint programming on gender equality within the United Nations system. In 2012, three corporate evaluations were in progress and 15 decentralized evaluations, which were initiated in 2011 (see para. 84 below), were completed, alongside significant progress in strengthening corporate evaluation systems through the development of the UN-Women evaluation policy (UNW/2012/12).

84. At the country level, 38 decentralized evaluations were planned for 2011, with an implementation rate of 40 per cent (15 were initiated). Although the implementation rate is low, the number of evaluations represents an increase compared with previous years and is significant in the light of the Entity's transition period. Efforts to strengthen decentralized evaluation capacity are ongoing. Throughout 2011, UN-Women provided training and technical advice to over 190 staff members and partners.

85. In its role of coordinating gender-responsive evaluation across the United Nations system, UN-Women continues to promote the integration of gender equality and human rights dimensions in evaluations, and contributes to the substantive work of the United Nations Evaluation Group, including more recently as its Chair. In 2011, significant joint efforts included: (a) completion of the first handbook on integrating human rights and gender equality in evaluation; (b) creation of a guidance document on developing and conducting impact evaluations of United Nations normative and institutional support work; (c) inclusion of gender dimensions in a frequently asked questions document concerning evaluation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework; and (d) formulation of terms of reference for a practical guide for national evaluation capacity development.

86. UN-Women continues to support national monitoring and evaluation capacities on gender equality through partnerships with evaluation associations and networks. For example, this has led to strengthened partnerships with the African Gender and Development Evaluators Network and the International Programme Evaluation Network in Central Asia.

## **VII. Follow-up to international conferences**

### **United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development**

87. At the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, UN-Women played an important role in advocating for the recognition of gender equality and women's empowerment as central to sustainable development in its three dimensions, economic, social and environmental. The Entity engaged in several ways, including by generating and providing evidence on the central role of women in sustainable development, providing technical support during negotiations as requested by Member States, coordinating messages with the United Nations system, strengthening partnerships with civil society, organizing communications outreach, and hosting various events, including the Women Leaders' Forum and the Women Leaders' High-level Summit. A "Call to action" was signed by the seven women Heads of State and Government present in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to call for greater attention to women's role and participation in sustainable development.

88. As a result, gender equality considerations and references are included both as a thematic priority and as a cross-cutting issue in the outcome document (General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex), which reaffirmed women's vital role and leadership in achieving sustainable development. These important gains strengthen the Entity's call and advocacy for the inclusion of a stand-alone gender equality goal among sustainable development goals, as well as the mainstreaming of gender equality in the other goals to be adopted. The outcome document also expressed support for UN-Women in its leadership of the United Nations system in promoting and achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women in the context of sustainable development. As a result, UN-Women is in the process of following up on the outcomes of the Conference through its operational, coordination and intergovernmental support functions.

### **Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries**

89. The Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (Istanbul Programme of Action) adopted during the Fourth United

Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, called for renewed and strengthened partnership to build human capacities by fostering sustained, equitable and inclusive human and social development, gender equality and the empowerment of women. Following the adoption of the Istanbul Programme of Action, the Executive Board of UN-Women, during its annual session of 2011, welcomed the strong support given by UN-Women to the least developed countries and stressed the need to integrate its implementation in UN-Women activities. UN-Women is currently increasing its coverage to those countries within the process of strengthening its regional architecture.

#### **United Nations development agenda beyond 2015**

90. UN-Women has been actively involved with the development agenda beyond 2015 in collaboration with other partners, including civil society organizations and development agencies. The global thematic consultation on addressing inequalities is co-led by UN-Women and UNICEF. UN-Women also co-chairs the Millennium Development Goals task force of the United Nations Development Group, and through the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, the High-level Committee on Programmes and the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs, is working to build system-wide support for mainstreaming gender in the development agenda beyond 2015, and to build civil society and intergovernmental engagement. Representatives of UN-Women are ensuring the voices of women are heard in more than 50 countries where consultations are being organized by resident coordinators and United Nations country teams. A meeting was held for women's civil society organizations in September 2012, to be followed by regular engagements with such organizations at the global level. An expert group meeting was held in November 2012 to develop a conceptual framework for gender equality and the empowerment of women in the future development framework. Looking forward, this will continue to be an important priority for the period of the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review 2013-2017.

### **VIII. Conclusion**

91. The ultimate aim of the triennial comprehensive policy review is to ensure a more effective, efficient and coherent United Nations system. In line with this, UN-Women has now put in place all elements of its transition to become a fully fledged, unified and effective organization, and is promoting system-wide coherence through its work on system-wide accountability for gender equality via the system-wide action plan for gender equality and the empowerment of women, through its global coordination efforts and at the country level, as well as in terms of its broader engagement in critical areas and conferences.