

UN WOMEN
KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT
STRATEGY 2018-2021



UN WOMEN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2018-2021



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<p>ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS 6</p> <p>LIST OF FIGURES 7</p> <p>LIST OF BOXES 7</p> <hr/> <p>1 INTRODUCTION 8</p> <p>1.1 Background and context 9</p> <p>1.2 Knowledge Management in UN Women: Existing practices and challenges 10</p> <hr/> <p>2 HOW TO HARNESS KNOWLEDGE FOR ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS 18</p> <p>2.1 Objectives and areas of work 18</p> <p>2.2 Objective 1: Strengthen knowledge production, capture and analysis 20</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">i. Identifying and addressing knowledge gaps 20</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">ii. Strengthening processes for developing knowledge products (including quality assurance) 23</p> <p>2.3 Objective 2: Strengthen knowledge sharing and exchange within UN Women and with partners 24</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">i. Internal knowledge sharing: Enhancing design and use of the intranet and preventing knowledge loss with staff/personnel rotation 24</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">ii. Internal and external knowledge sharing: Strengthening communities of practice for strategic areas/programmes and other functions 25</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">iii. Strengthening external knowledge sharing and exchange through UN Women's platforms and networks 25</p>	<p>2.4 Objective 3: Develop a knowledge-sharing culture and better collaboration across sections 27</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">i. Creating an enabling environment for knowledge production and sharing 27</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">ii. Streamlining Knowledge Management in annual work plans and operations 28</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">iii. Including Knowledge Management indicators in performance management and developments 28</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">iv. Strengthening capacity for Knowledge Management in UN Women 29</p> <hr/> <p>3 IMPLEMENTATION 30</p> <hr/> <p>LIST OF FIGURES</p> <p>Figure 1.1 The knowledge cycle at UN Women</p> <p>Figure 1.2 The knowledge pyramid</p> <p>Figure 1.3 Three components of Knowledge Management and their relative importance</p> <p>Figure 3.1 Overview of knowledge creation to address knowledge gaps</p> <p>Figure 3.2 Overview of knowledge production and sharing roles</p> <hr/> <p>LIST OF BOXES</p> <p>Box 1.1 UN Women Strategic Plan 2018-2021 Outcomes</p> <p>Box 1.2 Knowledge products</p> <p>Box 1.3 Capacity development</p> <p>Box 1.4 Communities of practice</p> <p>Box 1.5 Safe Cities COP</p> <p>Box 1.6 Gender equality: A key SDG accelerator – A case study from the Republic of Moldova</p> <p>Box 2.1 UN Women principles for effective Knowledge Management</p> <p>Box 2.2 Capacity development good practice</p> <p>Box 2.3 Project Management Toolbox</p> <p>Box 2.4 Knowledge products</p> <p>Box 2.5 South-South collaboration</p> <p>Box 2.6 Key characteristics of an organization with a strong Knowledge Management culture</p>
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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AWP	annual work plan
CCA	Common Country Analysis
CGEP	country gender equality profile
CO	country office
COP	community of practice
DAMS	Donor Agreement Management System
ECA	Europe and Central Asia
IBC-Gender	Issue-Based Coalition on Gender Equality
IST	Information System and Telecommunications
PPG	Policy and Procedure Guidance
PSMU	Programme Support Management Unit
MAPS	Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support
KM	Knowledge Management
RMS	Results Management System
RO	regional office
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SPU	Strategic Planning Unit
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDS	United Nations Development System
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

INTRODUCTION

Knowledge Management is a set of practices and processes that enable an organization to generate, systematize and share cutting-edge knowledge internally and externally. In doing so, it promotes efficiency, reduces duplication and fosters learning and innovation. Through Knowledge Management, knowledge is transformed into an asset that can make the organization more efficient and effective. The objective is to produce and deliver the right knowledge in the right format to the right person at the right time in the right context. In the case of UN Women, Knowledge Management strengthens implementation of the ‘how to’ of advancing gender equality and women’s empowerment.¹

More specifically, UN Women will seek to achieve the following three Knowledge Management Strategic Outcomes:

- Improved performance across UN Women’s triple mandate (normative, coordination, operational) and, most urgently, in terms of capacity development through training
- Enhanced technical advisory services and evidence-based advocacy to mainstream gender into national policies and initiatives
- Strengthened capacity to engage in policy dialogue on gender equality as a non-resident agency (through, for example, country gender profiles in contexts where UN Women does not have programme presence).

This document presents UN Women’s Knowledge Management Strategy. It aims to communicate a corporate vision and objectives for Knowledge Management. It is guided by the UN Women Strategic Plan 2018-2021 and based on both an extensive review of documents and consultations with UN Women personnel in headquarters and in the field, including the Knowledge Management Consultation Group.

The review identified that even without a corporate Knowledge Management Strategy in place, many valuable knowledge practices are already being implemented, but that these need to be further

systematized and replicated. By providing a framework for standardization and prioritization of Knowledge Management practices, this Strategy will guide the integration of Knowledge Management by all UN Women personnel.

The present document includes four sections. Following the Introduction, Section 1 looks at the current context and rationale for Knowledge Management in UN Women, as well as providing a summary of existing practices, assessing their strengths and weaknesses. Section 2 presents the three areas of work that will take UN Women from ad hoc knowledge production and sharing to a more systematic and standardized strategy: strengthening knowledge production, capture and analysis; strengthening knowledge sharing; and developing a knowledge sharing culture within the organization. Section 3 outlines the implementation plan with preliminary timelines and resource requirements, while the final section briefly looks at next steps.

1.1

Background and context

General Assembly Resolution A/RES/72/279 “Repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system” proposes system-wide collective action to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The system-wide strategic document charts a path for the UN System to work collaboratively, building on the strengths of each entity, to accelerate its alignment with the 2030 Agenda at the country, regional and global level. Underlying these proposals is a strong Knowledge Management function.

In this model—which ensures an optimized mix of UN operational capacities and expertise to support country priorities across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) is a starting point to rethink United Nations Country Team (UNCT) activities and continues to be the most important planning instrument in support of SDG implementation. Key principles in the current UNDAF are gender equality and leaving no one behind. In the context of UN System reform, UN Women should be able to provide timely and accurate data and knowledge that can be adapted to changing country contexts to enable transformative actions toward gender-responsive and

inclusive sustainable development that reaches those who are furthest behind.

To position itself in the new optimized UN System presence and the revamped and streamlined regional approach, UN Women will need to demonstrate how it can add value to development proposals by providing timely evidence-based strategies to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment in different and complex environments, including through its convening role.

Responding to this imperative, UN Women’s Strategic Plan 2018-2021 highlights the importance of strengthened capacities for Knowledge Management for the advancement of gender equality and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Knowledge—together with innovation, results-based management and evaluation—is an element of high quality programmes (Output 3: Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency Framework, OEEF).²

The UN Women Strategic Plan aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, including women’s full enjoyment of their human rights, through five main outcomes (see Box 1.1). Each outcome is aligned with a set of thematic outputs that are meant to translate global norms into results for women and girls, in collaboration with the UN System and its partners.

BOX 1.1

UN Women Strategic Plan 2018-2021 Outcomes

1. UN Women supports the strengthening and implementation of a comprehensive and dynamic set of global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women
2. Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems
3. Women have income security, decent work and economic autonomy
4. All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence
5. Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and from humanitarian action

UN Women proposes six types of support in its operational activities for gender equality and women's empowerment: normative support; UN coordination; integrated policy advice; capacity development; advocacy and social mobilization; and technical assistance for essential services as key strategies for sustainable development.

Specifically linked to Knowledge Management, the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan requires UN Women to continue strengthening its knowledge platforms; develop communities of practice (COPs) bringing together thematic expertise and knowledge from across the organization and its partners; strengthen its capacity to anticipate emerging issues and trends to better drive normative advances, monitor progress on the SDGs, develop effective advocacy strategies and enhance gender-responsive programming; explore programme and policy innovations for

agenda-setting; and further develop South-South collaboration and triangular initiatives.

In line with these objectives, UN Women is currently implementing a change-management plan to improve business processes that allow the organization to more effectively deliver results and fulfil its triple mandate by making knowledge produced by UN Women, as well as by others, more easily available to staff across the organization and to other stakeholders.

In addition to the United Nations Development System (UNDS) reform and UN Women's Strategic Plan objectives, a recent report of the Joint Inspection Unit (2016) provides further impetus for developing a Knowledge Management strategy. The report highlights the importance of Knowledge Management to increased organizational efficiency and recommends that all agencies develop their own strategy.³

1.2

Knowledge Management in UN Women: Existing practices and challenges

Figure 1.1 shows how knowledge production and management is at the centre of UN Women's work and is critical to its ability to fulfil its triple mandate: normative, operational and coordination. This mandate includes support to develop and implement global norms; operational support to governments to translate global norms and standards into legislation, policies and development plans at the regional, national and local; and coordination across the UN System to support both normative and operational approaches to advance gender equality.

Knowledge Management (as defined previously in this document) is also key for enhancing organizational effectiveness and optimizing resource mobilization opportunities.

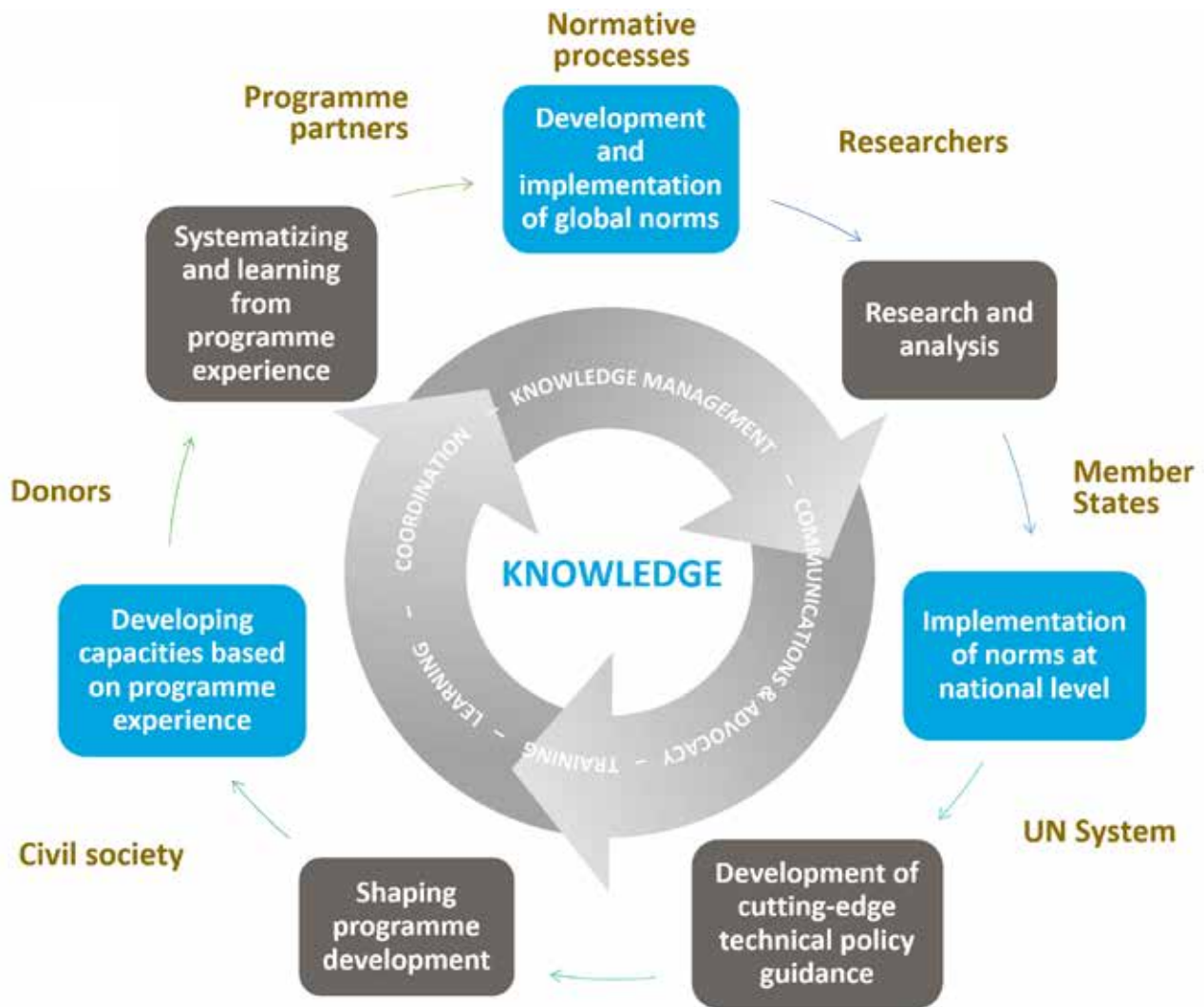
Figure 1.1 depicts the knowledge cycle in UN Women. Guided by global norms and frameworks for gender equality and based on evidence provided by research and analysis, cutting-edge policy guidance is developed that in turn feeds into programme development and implementation. Results and learning from programme experience must then be consolidated into capacity development modules to be

used globally and in country offices to strengthen the capacities of partners and stakeholders. Evaluations and documentation of experiences provide important lessons that feed back into the cycle. Practice on the ground and cutting-edge research can in turn lead to innovations in agenda-setting and normative frameworks.

Knowledge Management is what connects the different components in Figure 1.1, thus driving the cycle. Contextualized discussion of policy-oriented research, evaluations, good practices and lessons learnt allow the organization to understand and make such linkages. Communities of practice (COPs) provide one tool to facilitate this type of learning and exchange. The cycle is closed when the results of evaluations, lessons learnt and good practices are duly incorporated into coordination, policy and programme guidance and implemented—a dynamic process of organizational learning that is strengthened by tacit knowledge sharing (through COPs and networks) and training processes.

FIGURE 1.1

The knowledge cycle at UN Women



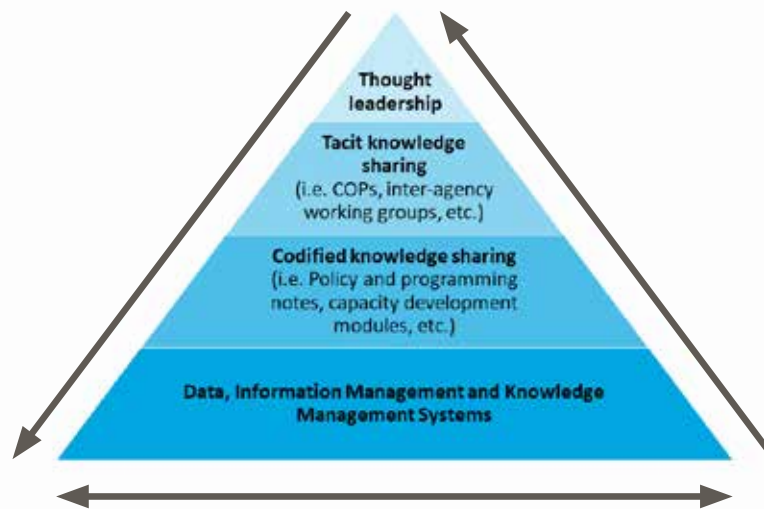
Although elements of this process are already in place, and UN Women dedicates a great deal of resources to the production and sharing of knowledge, practices are often ad hoc, leading to the evaporation of good practices and lessons learnt. Quality research, lessons learnt and promising practices are identified, but challenges remain in turning knowledge into programming guidance and programming into capacity development processes. Nor does UN Women’s programming experience on the ground always feed into global normative development. These issues are linked to challenges that stem from limited resources, inadequate planning and lack of prioritization of Knowledge Management in annual work plans and cumbersome knowledge flows between the regional and country offices and headquarters, among others.

In the absence of a strategy for Knowledge Management, and without the requisite corporate guidance and standards, a wide array of smaller-scale processes has emerged, depending on differential capacities of teams, leading to a diverse range of results. Understanding of Knowledge Management varies, but there is clear agreement that a strategic approach is needed.

Figure 1.2 below illustrates the hierarchical relationships between data, information and knowledge and how organizational learning happens. This figure can be used to assess how UN Women is faring in the implementation of Knowledge Management approaches.

FIGURE 1.2

The knowledge pyramid



Data and information are at the base of the Knowledge Management pyramid. UN Women has developed and implemented internal information systems (ATLAS, RMS, LEADS, DAMS, PPG,⁴ etc.), facilitating the capture, storage and dissemination of information on processes and results. These systems allow for the collection, organization and summarizing of the information on programmes and activities implemented and provide a basis for Knowledge Management. Although these platforms have allowed UN Women to capture the results of its activities in all aspects of its triple mandate,

challenges in this area still persist. These will be addressed in 2018, along with improving quality assurance and developing more useful linkages between some of these platforms and systems.

The data and information generated at the base of the pyramid, together with the results of research and evaluations that are guided by normative frameworks, are further analysed and elaborated into knowledge products (see Box 1.2) that allow **codified knowledge sharing**. These knowledge products include capacity development modules (see Box 1.3).

UN Women produces a very large number of knowledge products at headquarters and at the regional and national level. In 2017, 60 publications were uploaded to the global website alone. Many more were distributed and published through regional and national websites and dedicated thematic resource centres. This represents a significant investment of human and financial resources. However, not all knowledge products undergo adequate quality assurance. This has led to inconsistency in the quality of the products, which represents a reputational risk for the organization. In addition, inadequate planning and coordination have led to duplication of efforts and inefficiencies.

BOX 1.2

Knowledge products

Knowledge products are artifacts of information, consolidating knowledge on a specific topic so that it can be shared with other people. In the process of developing a knowledge product, implicit knowledge, information and data are made available to other interested people without intermediation. Knowledge products can support building institutional memory. Types of knowledge products at UN Women include programming guidance, research and evaluation reports, flagship reports, policy briefs and capacity development modules, among others, and they can be packaged in different formats (publications, infographics, interactive tools, eLearning courses, etc.).

BOX 1.3

Capacity development

Capacity development is defined within the UN System as “the process whereby people, organizations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt, and maintain capacity over time” in order to achieve development results. Capacity development is demand driven and can be grouped on three levels: individual, organizational and enabling environment. See: United Nations Development Group. 2017. [Capacity Development: UNDAF Companion Guidance](#). UNDG, New York.

Training for gender equality is a key activity for capacity development at the individual level and is defined by UN Women as a transformative process that aims to provide knowledge, techniques and tools to develop skills and changes in attitudes and behaviours. It is a continuous and long-term process.

Capacity development modules are knowledge products that contain curricula to implement capacity development processes at the individual level. These include proposed objectives, content, modalities and methodologies, etc.

An initial mapping carried out for the preparation of this Strategy shows that although UN Women has developed key knowledge products to guide normative, policy and programming work to achieve its outcomes, there are still gaps that need to be addressed.

The mapping reveals the existence of several quality knowledge products to guide programming at country level. However, there is no standardized approach to developing this type of product. While some teams have developed comprehensive tools, such as the Practitioner’s Toolkit on Access to Justice Programming, other teams have preferred to develop individual tools per topic. This diversity is to be expected, given the different topics, audiences and contexts of use for each tool. However, while some tools have been reviewed both by UN Women and external experts, others have just been reviewed internally and others have not had any peer review at all. Some tools are a result of interagency processes and others are UN Women’s products. In order to provide effective programming guidance, consistent quality assurance criteria and processes will be necessary.

The mapping reveals that some knowledge products and tools, including programming guidance, training courses and manuals, are not informed by the current global frameworks or UN Women Strategic Plan outputs or corporate approaches. Although these knowledge products can still be of use, there is certain reputational risk linked to outdated products.

A key Knowledge Management practice will be to develop quality assurance standards that include criteria for periodic review and updating. Knowledge product planning by each section should also include considerations for sustainability.

There are considerable resources for capacity development, but they are inconsistently developed. Some Strategic Plan output areas have a programming guidance but are missing the corresponding capacity development module. In other cases, quality training materials have been developed but they are not stored in easy-to-access formats to be implemented through different modalities.⁵

There are also emerging topics included in the current Strategic Plan that demand development of guidance tools. For example, the Plan proposes as one of its outputs the enhancement of data and statistics to promote and track progress in gender equality and women’s empowerment. This is a relatively new area that has gained relevance in the context of the 2030 Agenda. Programming guidance and capacity development modules, as well as a dedicated portal, will be produced starting in 2018 in the framework of the Flagship Programme Initiative Making Every Women and Girl Count (MEWGC) on gender and statistics.

Updating of capacity development modules and training materials and eLearning courses is also needed. Sustainability plans should be included in the initial project proposal to develop any knowledge product.

As Figure 1.3 shows, UN Women invests heavily in training activities. It supports capacity development not only at the individual level through its Training Centre but also at the regional and country level as part of ongoing operations. However, incorporation of UN Women's programme and policy good practices and lessons learnt into training modules is not standardized. As highlighted in relation to other issues, results are dependent on programme opportunities and team capacities.

The Training Centre carried out an analysis of training in UN Women based on planned activities for 2018. This finds a tendency towards atomization of training activities, with a proliferation of small activities that are not well coordinated. The analysis also highlights the opportunity for leveraging resources through better planning of training activities in annual work plans; building on existing training courses and materials developed by the Training Centre, including translation and adaptation to national contexts; strengthening capacities of country and regional offices; and implementing quality assurance processes.

Moving to the next layer of the pyramid, **tacit knowledge sharing** happens through communities of practice (COPs) and knowledge networks. Tacit knowledge refers to knowledge developed from direct experience that is in people's heads and can guide the *how to do things*. Tacit knowledge is difficult to capture and share, and this is usually done through interactive conversations and shared experience.⁶ COPs (see box 1.4) provide a forum for groups of people working on a common theme or issue to learn more about it through regular knowledge exchange and interaction. Members can learn about a specific topic of mutual interest, address common problems and improve their work and results. The community can meet face to face or virtually (through an online space, emails, web conferences and webinars, among others).⁷ COPs always present three characteristics: the domain (area of common interest); the community (group of people who share an interest or work in the same area); and the practice (members share and develop resources and tools to improve their practice and solve common problems).

BOX 1.4

Communities of practice

Communities of practice (COPs) are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. They provide a forum where members can learn about a specific topic of mutual interest, address common problems and improve their profession and thereby themselves. A COP agrees on which methods work better and how and when they are most useful. Community members are the stewards of knowledge and competence in that practice in the organization. Led by a COP manager or coordinator, members help each other to develop the competence to contribute individually within their own department. The community can meet face to face or virtually (through an online space, emails, web-conferences and webinars, among others).

A mapping and assessment of UN Women's COPs was done using criteria based on these three key features. Around 12 internal and external COPs have recently been developed at UN Women to support implementation of programmes or to enhance staff skills, knowledge and access to resources. Some of these are aimed at supporting internal knowledge sharing and learning, while others include both UN Women personnel and external stakeholders. Some COPs are organized per function, others per strategic area or topic and still others around global programmes. A number of COPs also support knowledge sharing within the Division of Management and Administration.

All UN Women COPs function on a web-based platform and have a specific area of interest as their focus. However, participants are not always clearly identified. The performance and results of COPs are varied. While some have grown and are now thriving (for example, Safe Cities – see Box 1.5), others have had difficulties taking off. The lack of a common corporate definition and standards of what COPs are and what they should achieve—as well as deficits in technical guidance, organizational capacity and resources (financial, human and time)—have made success heavily reliant on the capacities of individual teams and programme opportunities. While COPs have tried to overcome silos and weak communications, understanding who does what is still a challenge and can lead to duplication of effort.

BOX 1.5

Safe Cities COP

Built into the global programme, the Safe Cities COP started in 2017, which allowed adequate planning and resourcing for coordination and facilitation. It started as a small resource centre that drew attention to useful tools and engaged participants. While not calling itself a COP, the Safe Cities resource centre effectively operates as one. It now counts 300 participants and serves 32 cities in the global programme with 3 or 4 more cities in the pipeline. Participants have access to up-to-date guidance and engage in knowledge sharing through emails, webinars, Skype calls and face-to-face meetings. The COP also serves a secondary audience comprised of UN Women staff who do not work in the Safe Cities programme but need information about it. It is easy for anybody in UN Women to access the COP and obtain the information they need about the programme.

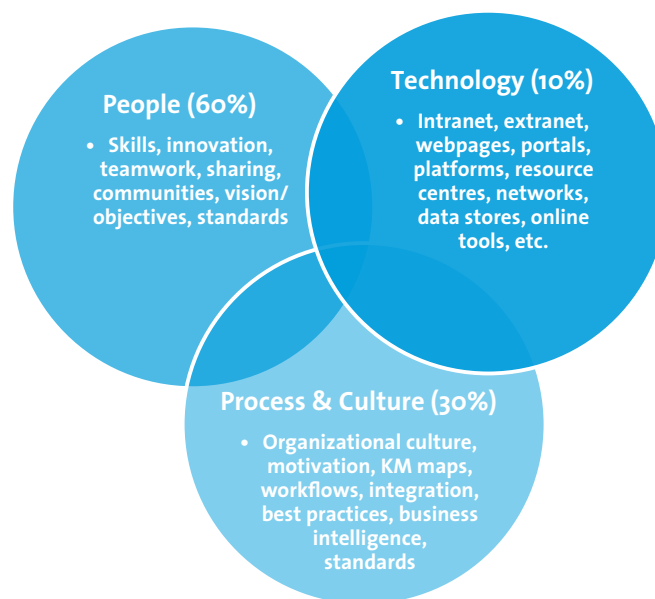
Intranets are another example of a knowledge network. An intranet is a web-based information platform and network that aims to enhance organizational effectiveness by providing access and retrieval of knowledge. Intranets usually include repositories of knowledge organized with specific criteria and in this way can facilitate codified knowledge sharing. Intranets can also support tacit knowledge sharing by hosting COPs. Access can be customized by function or section. Intranets can also provide a tool for expertise locators through which members of an organization can access experts on a specific area or function. Expertise locators generally involve a profile page and a search engine. Extranets are extended versions that can also include partners. To function properly, an intranet requires maintenance, support and knowledge curating. “Best practice assigns intranet and extranet maintenance to the IT function, which coordinates with departments through a knowledge sharing task force”.⁸

At UN Women, the corporate intranet is organized by pillar, division and section and provides a tool for internal knowledge sharing. However, difficulties in access, an unclear structure and inconsistent updating of the intranet lead to hindered knowledge sharing.

Regarding **knowledge portals** and **web-based applications**, UN Women currently counts approximately 40 websites, platforms and applications covering different strategic areas and functions and ranging from the internal systems and applications previously mentioned to corporate global and regional websites and resource and knowledge platforms on different output areas. Given the lack of guidance on knowledge sharing, the design, approach and quality assurance of platforms is uneven and their sustainability not always assured. Poor branding and atomization of platforms also leads to weak visibility and poor traffic. By contrast, platforms that have had adequate resources and invested heavily in design, mapping and engagement of stakeholders, production of high-quality peer-reviewed content and continuous monitoring—such as the Virtual Knowledge Centre to End Violence against Women and Girls—have achieved exemplary results, which the organization should learn from and replicate. Figure 1.4 illustrates the importance of working on people, process and culture to ensure systems and technology work and deliver the expected Knowledge Management results.

FIGURE 1.3

Three components of Knowledge Management and their relative importance⁹



Thought leadership sits at the apex of the pyramid in Figure 1.2. A thought leader is an individual or organization that is recognized as an authority in a specialized field and whose expertise is sought and rewarded. UN Women strives to be a thought leader on gender equality, a go-to knowledge hub for cutting-edge knowledge on policies and programmes

to advance gender equality and women's empowerment. As a thought leader, UN Women also aims to shape global discourses and influence policies and practices on gender equality, an aim that can be effectively leveraged through its normative, operational and coordination mandates.

BOX 1.6

Gender equality: A key SDG accelerator – A case study from the Republic of Moldova

This case study was developed by the UN Regional Issue-Based Coalition on Gender Equality (IBC-Gender) consisting of 13 UN agencies and entities in the Europe and Central Asia (ECA) region, co-chaired by UN Women and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in collaboration with the Gender Theme Group (GTG) in the Republic of Moldova and SDG Team of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Regional Hub. The document was developed with the aim of fostering knowledge sharing between countries in the ECA region in order to support future MAPS (Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support) missions and national progress towards the 2030 Agenda. IBC-Gender conducted an analysis of the data provided by the SDG Team of the UNDP Regional Hub from the 2017 MAPS mission in Moldova in order to ascertain and highlight the role of gender equality as an accelerator for the SDGs. The analysis is an example of one of the many ways in which gender equality and women's empowerment initiatives can act as an accelerator for progress on the SDGs.

For UN Women to be recognized as a thought leader across the very wide array of topics in the Strategic Plan, greater investments will be required in the technical capacity of the organization at all

levels. In addition, Knowledge Management can support UN Women's role as a thought leader both by ensuring the organization is capturing and learning from its own work at the global, regional

and national level and by bringing knowledge into the organization from partners and key stakeholders through convening and creating networks, as Box 1.6 describes. When lessons from UN Women’s programming and policy work are codified, analysed and shared, including through joint programming and South-South exchanges, the organization can position itself as an authority on ‘what works’ on the ground. By strengthening its role as knowledge producer, knowledge curator and knowledge broker,¹⁰ it is able to convene leading global authorities from across the UN, from governments and from civil society, including academia, to produce robust, empirically grounded, policy-relevant research and guidance. When this is shared effectively in various formats, UN Women can become known as a leading source of knowledge on gender equality.

Flagship research-based reports—including *Progress of the World’s Women*, *World Survey of the Role of Women in Development* and *Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*—are key knowledge products that support UN Women’s positioning as a thought leader. This is achieved not only by the products themselves but through the process of compiling them—which entails convening experts and gathering research and policy-relevant inputs—along with extensive engagement and outreach activities to ensure the reports are known, used and can influence policy and practice. The compilation and outreach processes both involve experts from within and outside of the organization.

The *Progress of the World’s Women* global report has also been produced with a focus on Latin America and the Caribbean, picking up on the general theme of the 2015 global report: *Transforming Economies, Realizing Rights*. Since its launch in March 2017, the report has been presented in many countries in the region as well as at various inter-agency and inter-governmental forums. As well as informing

UN Women’s regional strategy on women’s economic empowerment, the messages of the report have been used to provide substantive inputs to the organization’s positioning in the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development and has carved out new space for UN Women to engage in macroeconomic policy discussions, including in partnerships with ministries (such as planning or finance) that are not its traditional partners.

UN Women’s role as a thought leader is also supported by its mandate to submit reports to intergovernmental bodies on a range of gender equality issues. Based on information submitted by UN Member States and a desk review and analysis by UN Women, these reports examine the latest available evidence, policies and practices at the global, regional and national level, analyse key impediments to progress and make strategic recommendations to Member States. They are often instrumental in helping shape and advance the normative agenda while contributing to standard setting.

Aiming to continue strengthening UN Women’s position as a thought leader, the current Strategic Plan envisages that all country offices will produce country gender profiles by 2021 (see below). The development of country gender profiles will also strengthen UN Women’s position as a thought leader at the national, regional and global level, as they will contribute to the identification and analysis of current trends and emerging issues.

2

HOW TO HARNESS KNOWLEDGE FOR ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

2.1

Objectives and areas of work

Considering the gaps and challenges identified above, and to achieve the above-mentioned vision, this Strategy proposes three main objectives. The first two refer to technical skills, while the third element seeks to create the necessary enabling environment. Together, the three objectives enable UN Women to transition from ad-hoc knowledge production and sharing to becoming a knowledge hub on gender equality and women's empowerment. This will create cultural change from a siloed working approach to one where effective knowledge sharing and communication is prioritized. Seven principles for effective Knowledge Management in UN Women, as described in Box 2.1, will guide work in these three areas.

This Strategy proposes to mainstream Knowledge Management into the organization's everyday work as everyone's responsibility. Once the Strategy is approved, every division, section and regional and country office will develop a Knowledge Management plan with the support of the Knowledge Management Specialist. This specific plan will be aligned with the overall strategy and achievable through adequate prioritization with available resources (human and financial). Additional resources will be necessary and will be outlined in the section on implementation.

- **Objective 1:**
Strengthen knowledge production, capture and analysis
- **Objective 2:**
Strengthen knowledge sharing within UN Women and with partners
- **Objective 3:**
Develop a knowledge-sharing culture and better collaboration across sections.

BOX 2.1

UN Women principles for effective Knowledge Management

The following principles will guide the Knowledge Management Strategy and its implementation.

i. Knowledge Management is a core activity for UN Women

Knowledge Management is at the centre of UN Women's work and allows the organization to deliver its triple mandate. Staff and managers at all levels are accountable for Knowledge Management.

ii. Knowledge is an output and a key asset for organizational efficiency

Knowledge Management prevents inefficient use of financial and human resources. The effective sharing of knowledge across the organization and its retention over time can reduce duplication and wasteful 're-invention of the wheel'.

iii. Knowledge Management is people centred

Systems and technology are important for supporting Knowledge Management, but people and an organizational culture in which the production, dissemination and exchange of knowledge are highly valued are the vital components of its success. Organizational culture should support staff to create, systematize and share knowledge within the organization and with external partners.

iv. Knowledge is evidence based and supports the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment

UN Women's knowledge work should be empirically grounded, based on both quantitative and qualitative evidence and on the needs and experiences of stakeholders. The knowledge UN Women produces is practical and action oriented. The implementation of the overarching principle of Leaving No One Behind demands both gender-responsive statistics as well as concrete and in-depth

analytical case studies, documenting stories of success and failure. UN Women understands that stakeholders possess valuable knowledge about their contexts and challenges and supports knowledge production by and for stakeholders. Therefore, UN Women favours demand-driven production of knowledge as well as production of knowledge that supports the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment.

v. Knowledge is contextual

There are no one-size-fits-all solutions. Good practices are models to be contextualized and applied.

vi. Knowledge production and sharing is strengthened through partnerships and networks

Validation of knowledge by partners and networks strengthens UN Women's knowledge products, policy guidance and programme proposals. UN Women benefits from policy-oriented research by dedicated networks that provide access to up-to-date knowledge and analysis as well as advisory and peer review support. Engaging with researchers also enables UN Women to advance gender equality and women's empowerment in research agendas that pave the way for innovative approaches.

vii. Decentralization is key to effective Knowledge Management

Within the framework of the corporate Knowledge Management Strategy and standards, regional and country offices, divisions and sections implement Knowledge Management practices in a decentralized manner to enhance knowledge production and sharing in the organization, fostering organizational culture for Knowledge Management. Knowledge Management facilitates South-South collaboration and exchange.

2.2

Objective 1: Strengthen knowledge production, capture and analysis

Strengthening knowledge production within UN Women will allow the organization to more accurately capture what works to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment. It will also allow UN Women to position itself in the new United Nations Country Team (UNCT) configuration by leading in key UN System planning processes—CCA-UNDAF, MAPS (Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support missions), etc.—on gender equality and women's empowerment issues and efficiently providing evidence-based solutions to address identified gaps. This will be done through two main lines of action: identifying and addressing knowledge gaps by developing key knowledge products; and strengthening knowledge production, including through standardized quality assurance processes.

i. Identifying and addressing knowledge gaps

To be able to provide timely evidence-based guidance and solutions to advance gender equality through policy and programming strategies and intergovernmental support, among others, knowledge gaps will be identified (see Section 3 of this document). Knowledge products, some of which are already being developed, will address existing gaps and needs by providing a comprehensive and standardized understanding of national and regional contexts as well as evidence-based strategies to address gender inequalities, including policy and programming guidance, capacity development needs, advocacy and communications, intergovernmental support and coordination in line with the SDGs

and the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan. These knowledge products will contribute to positioning UN Women as a thought leader in the context of the UNDS reform.

Strengthening knowledge products to address knowledge gaps

Based on the mapping presented above, knowledge gaps will be further identified and defined in collaboration with corresponding sections and regional and country offices. These gaps will be addressed through either strengthening or developing key knowledge products, including programming tools and capacity development modules. These products will strengthen UN Women's provision of two key types of support¹¹ in its operational activities: integrated policy advice and capacity development. The latter will also support dissemination and sharing of evidence-based research, good practices, lessons learnt and policy guidance.

Several good practices already exist, such as *The UN Women Gender and Economics Training Manual* (see Box 2.2), and the Practitioner's Toolkit on Access to Justice Programming (already mentioned in this document).

As part of the work on standardizing knowledge production, a proposed structure, quality assurance criteria and processes and sustainability plan will be defined (see ii. Strengthening processes for developing knowledge products, below) to ensure that programming and capacity development is done in a standardized manner and UN Women can leverage its experience on these issues.

BOX 2.2

Capacity development good practice

The UN Women Gender and Economics Training Manual is intended to provide basic and intermediate-level training to development practitioners, including governments and policy and programme staff in international development agencies, on the importance of gender-responsive economic policy.

The manual was developed jointly by the Economic Empowerment section in the Policy Division, the Training Centre, the Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO) and the Europe and Central Asia Regional Office (ECARO). The Training Centre reviewed the manual and provided inputs from a pedagogical perspective. The production process included piloting of the manual in a face-to-face course. Implementation of the course continues in 2018, with high demand at national level.

The Research and Data section, Policy Division, Training Centre, Regional Thematic Advisors and Knowledge Management Specialists/focal points in the regional and country offices will work to produce high quality programming tools and capacity development modules to address identified knowledge gaps.

These knowledge products will not only consolidate UN Women's programming experience and approach to gender equality in each Strategic Plan Output area—which will have its corresponding programming tool and capacity development module—but also contribute to its work in developing the capacities of governments, UN System partners and civil society at the global, regional and country level.¹²

The Training Centre will continue to revise, update and develop the capacity development modules (curricula) based on existing valuable resources, including those hosted at the UN Women eLearning Campus, which will be easy to retrieve and use in multiple settings. Additionally, the Training Centre will provide guidance on the design, development, implementation and evaluation of training for gender equality,¹³ including quality assurance processes. Training formats will be defined based on audiences, topics and resources.

Country gender equality profiles

UN Women's Global Strategic Plan (2018-2021) commits to increased national-level knowledge production and strengthening of national systems to monitor international, regional and national commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment.

Starting in 2019, UN Women country offices are required to put in place **country gender equality profiles** (CGEPs)¹⁴ developed under the leadership of the country offices in partnership with the national government, UN System and civil society partners and leveraging existing research and reports, especially those produced by the UN System.

Framed under international, regional and national commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment, the UN Women-supported CGEPs are to be in-depth, national-level analyses of the status

of women and men based on both statistical and qualitative data. CGEPs will provide a comprehensive understanding of national contexts in relation to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and Beijing Platform for Action. They will provide a basis for establishing UN Women's position as a knowledge hub and thought leader as well for planning, informing the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and specific baselines for programme and project implementation. CGEPs represent a key tool to mainstream gender equality in the UNDAF in countries where UN Women is a resident agency as well as for supporting policy dialogue on gender equality and women's empowerment in countries where UN Women is a non-resident agency.

The CGEPs will be a primary resource for evidenced-driven advocacy to advance the gains and overcome bottlenecks at the national, regional and global level. Analysis of CGEPs will facilitate understanding of gender equality and women's empowerment issues at a regional and global level, helping to identify trends that can inform needs assessments, planning and resource mobilization. It will also inform knowledge production and sharing, highlighting current and future capacity needs. CGEPs will provide useful information in terms of needed programming tools and capacity development and of training opportunities.

Specific guidance has been developed by the Research and Data section, in collaboration with regional focal points, and will be shared in the third quarter of 2018, to ensure the quality and consistency of CGEPs. Both the guidance and the resulting CGEPs will be made available through the intranet to be easily accessible across the organization.

Strengthen the understanding of programme results to improve programme design

UN Women implements programmes and projects in over 90 countries and on a wide range of themes, many of them over a long period of time. Analysing programme implementation and results enables the organization to identify knowledge gaps and needs and what strategies worked and which ones did not, allowing lessons to be drawn to inform programme design, implementation and evaluation.

Data and information captured through the Results Management System (RMS) and other systems will feed into and shape the programming guidance tools and capacity development modules mentioned above. Collection and discussion of lessons learnt and good practices will be implemented with new programmes and projects.

Yearly analysis of programme results

As part of this Knowledge Management Strategy, Strategic Plan Output results will be examined every year by corresponding sections in headquarters (including Policy sections and the Independent Evaluation Service), in collaboration with the Knowledge Management Specialist, the Strategic Planning Unit (SPU) and regional and country offices, including monitoring and evaluation officers at each level. This analysis will provide a broad overview of what has happened in the different areas across all regions and what have been the main areas of work, with what aims and results. This will allow staff to anticipate possible trends and advance agendas, align policy guidance and support to field needs and mobilize resources. Based on the methodological notes for each Strategic Plan Indicator, specific criteria and methodology as well as dedicated external experts will be needed to carry out this analysis, which will take place following annual reporting by country and regional offices.

The analysis will be based on data retrieved from the RMS. The Independent Evaluation Service already carries out thematic and strategic evaluations of UN Women regional and country offices and headquarters-based sections, including meta-analysis of evaluations, and provides key input for this annual analytical exercise. The results of this analysis will also feed into the country gender profiles.

The RMS is a tool that can support Knowledge Management by providing powerful search and data mining. However, it has been reported that data and information are not consistent and reliable across outputs. Lack of standards in tagging leads to inefficiencies in capturing and analysing information. In 2018, the SPU will implement actions to strengthen quality assurance processes in RMS. The Knowledge Management Specialist will work with the SPU in defining criteria for establishing and using tags across the organization and support efforts to consolidate

all programme and project documents into the Project Management Toolbox (see Box 2.3), which will facilitate access to standard project documents.

BOX 2.3

Project Management Toolbox

The Project Management Toolbox includes templates so that each UN Women project or programme will have a blue file containing the same set of basic documents. The blue files will facilitate analysis of project and programme results and replication of good practices. Access to project documents will also facilitate development of new project documents.

Good practices and lessons learnt to advance gender equality and women's empowerment

Prior to programme closure, programme managers are required to prepare a lessons-learnt document that is validated by the Programme Support Management Unit (PSMU). Upon approval, this document is uploaded to Atlas and managers can proceed with programme closure.

As part of this Strategy, it is proposed that all the lessons-learnt documents uploaded during each quarter are collected and analysed at the end of the quarter and supported by interviews with programme managers. A consolidated version of programme lessons learnt will then be produced by the Knowledge Management Specialist in collaboration with PSMU. These learnings will be shared and discussed throughout the organization so that they can inform programme design, implementation and evaluation.

Critical reflection stories emanating from lessons learnt will support discussion of what did not work, including contextual analysis, decision-making processes and what alternative options could have been adopted within the same situation. These discussions will take place using specific methodologies to enable safe spaces for discussion. This will also require a culture change, one that admits to and accepts 'failure' as part of organizational learning.

Documentation of good practices will happen at the global, regional and national level. There will be a periodic call for good practices. Experiences in programming, policy making, communications, advocacy, coordination and intergovernmental support will be identified by country and regional offices and HQ sections who will be able to propose good practices. Based on the criteria, a selection committee composed of headquarters, regional and country staff will assess and select among the proposed practices. Selected practices will be documented and consolidated into case studies by a consultant/team of consultants. Countries with documented good practices will also host knowledge-sharing events during which other countries will be able to learn more about the experiences (see iii. Strengthening external knowledge sharing and exchange through UN Women's platforms and networks). The resulting case studies will be shared and discussed internally and with key stakeholders and also support resource mobilization processes. Once they are validated, they will be available through an online database and supported by different types of materials, including case studies, videos and templates.

BOX 2.4

Knowledge products

Issue briefs
 Programming guidance/manual/toolkits/tools
 Capacity development modules
 Country gender equality profiles
 Policy brief series
 Discussion paper series
 Flagship reports
 Evaluation reports
 Secretary General/Executive Director reports
 Position papers
 Corporate annual reports

ii. Strengthening processes for developing knowledge products (including quality assurance)

As part of the Knowledge Management Strategy, and building on existing processes, a preliminary knowledge product typology has been defined.¹⁵ This initial typology is summarized in Box 2.4.

Corporate standards will guide the production of knowledge within UN Women, including research products, guidance notes and other publications. These will include criteria for deciding which knowledge products will be developed, identifying and assessing target audiences and programme/project information needs, defining formats, implementing a quality assurance process and sustainability strategy and streamlining design and publishing processes and standards. As part of annual work plans, each section and regional and country office will prepare a knowledge product plan that will facilitate adequate quality assurance and dissemination processes. Results will include different types of products that will respond to partner and stakeholder needs.

Building on existing practices from various teams in both HQ and the field, standardized quality assurance criteria and processes for knowledge products will be defined to ensure that the quality of the information and knowledge produced by UN Women is reliable and supports programme, policy, normative, coordination, communications and advocacy work.

There are different types of validating methods for quality assurance purposes. UN Women will use two types for its knowledge products.

a. Checking against criteria

Specific evaluation criteria will be developed to assess quality of knowledge products. Concept notes, terms of reference and specific knowledge product templates will support compliance with these criteria. UN Women branding guidelines will provide the quality assurance criteria for the production phase.

b. Peer review

A group of internal and external experts will review the knowledge products at different stages: concept note, first draft and final version. For some products, peer review may be done anonymously.

Some knowledge products will undergo both validation methods and others only the first one. Published knowledge products aimed at external audiences should be peer reviewed. Standard, corporate-wide quality assurance processes will be implemented in a decentralized manner by the corresponding regional or country office or headquarter section. Specialists at all levels (HQ, region, country) will be expected to contribute to peer review processes.

2.3

Objective 2: Strengthen knowledge sharing and exchange within UN Women and with partners

Strengthened internal knowledge sharing will enhance understanding and collaboration across sections. It will also prevent duplication of efforts and improve organizational efficiency. Internally, the Knowledge Management Strategy will focus on enhancing knowledge and communications flows between headquarters and regional and country offices. It will also seek to strengthen South-South collaboration by creating opportunities to be led by country offices. Improved internal knowledge sharing will allow UN Women staff to connect with other colleagues working on similar issues and exchange good practices and lessons learnt, as well as access existing knowledge products, guidance and programming tools and capacity development modules¹⁶. These processes will be facilitated through internal communities of practices, the intranet and expertise locators that will use the latest technological tools to facilitate knowledge sharing.

Enhanced external knowledge sharing will allow UN Women to reach out to external stakeholders (including governments, UN System agencies and civil society) to benefit from their expertise and knowledge, increase the impact of results and position the organization as a knowledge hub on gender equality and women's empowerment. UN Women will act as a knowledge curator and knowledge broker,¹⁷ making available its own quality knowledge products but also assessing, recommending and making available existing quality resources produced by other stakeholders and partners.

Making the most of cutting-edge technologies, improved internal and external knowledge sharing will position UN Women as a unique partner and provide timely quality policy advice at regional level.

i. **Internal knowledge sharing: Enhancing design and use of the intranet and preventing knowledge loss with staff/personnel rotation**

An updated intranet will ensure easy access to current information, good practices, lessons learnt and results of evaluations. Under the leadership of Information System and Telecommunications (IST) and using cutting-edge technology for knowledge

storing, retrieving and sharing, guidance for effective use and population of the intranet will be developed and shared. The Knowledge Management Specialist will support this process from a content perspective.

Each division, section and regional and country office will have to update its section in the intranet. With this aim, each section will identify audiences and their knowledge needs. Specific training and dedicated time will be assigned for the organization to be able to complete this task on an ongoing basis.

Knowledge products, including those featured in this Strategy and new and existing ones developed across the organization, will be showcased and shared through the revitalized intranet.

Sharepoint (Delve) profiles (connected with OneApp profiles) will be strengthened to become expertise locators based on staff capacity assessment. Guidance will be provided to ensure standardized approaches. This will support knowing who's who and who knows about what, leading to easier peer-to-peer knowledge sharing and internal communications. It will also allow UN Women to have a clear understanding of its institutional capacity and what types of support it can offer to UNCTs in the context of CCA-UNDAF, MAPS, joint programmes, among others, thus strengthening its positioning vis-à-vis the UNDS reform. Additionally, it will motivate staff to contribute to the knowledge base of the organization as resources are linked to each profile, showing an individual's growing expertise, which can also raise the value of the individual in the organization.

In addition, maintaining a high level of institutional knowledge prevents knowledge loss with staff or personnel rotation. Although handover notes are prepared and are a requisite before transfer or rotation, documenting knowledge and making it easily accessible through the intranet will further prevent knowledge loss. The implementation of this Knowledge Management Strategy will further strengthen capturing knowledge that staff and personnel hold 'in their heads'. Additionally, staff handover notes will be strengthened by clearly identifying what knowledge needs to be transferred;

making a plan for capturing and transferring knowledge; conducting exit interviews; recording a presentation summarizing key stories and recommendations; and creating a relationship map of key contacts that could include photographs. The Knowledge Management Specialist will collaborate with Human Resources in developing recommendations and tips for more effective handover notes that will need to be implemented by each section or unit.

ii. **Internal and external knowledge sharing: Strengthening communities of practice for strategic areas/programmes and other functions**

Communities of practice (COPs) represent a valuable tool to enhance the effectiveness of development work. They allow all stakeholders to meet in the same arena, share their ideas and learn from each other's successful practices and lessons learnt. COPs underscore and enable the sharing of knowledge and collective learning. However, to be fully effective COPs need to be appropriately conceptualized, planned, managed and resourced.

As part of this Strategy, existing COPs will be strengthened by providing clear guidance and support for their design, management and evaluation using cutting-edge technologies. New ones will be created to ensure horizontal knowledge sharing across the organization. Programmes and teams will need to ensure that COPs are properly resourced. COPs will be realigned to the current Strategic Plan according to global programme, topic or function to serve as knowledge-sharing platforms across the organization. Some COPs will be internal and others will involve external stakeholders as needed. Internal COPs will provide a forum for discussion on good practices and lessons learnt that will enhance staff capacities to make decisions about the activities for which they are responsible.

COPs will provide safe spaces for discussion of best practices and lessons learnt as well as enhancing peer-to-peer learning, a potentially powerful way of knowledge sharing. They will coordinate activities aligning topics to COP objectives and identifying knowledge-sharing methodologies to respond to UN Women's knowledge-sharing needs

Creation of COPs will be dynamic and flexible: They will be defined, created, emerge, thrive and disappear as needed by organizational and programme context, objectives and resources.

iii. **Strengthening external knowledge sharing and exchange through UN Women's platforms and networks**

Strengthening knowledge partnerships

UN Women's work with external partners and stakeholders—including gender equality advocates and policymakers in governments, the UN System and other intergovernmental organizations and civil society, notably women's organizations and researchers—is critical to its knowledge work. Such partners are not only the recipients of the organization's knowledge products but are integral to processes of knowledge production. At the global, regional and national level, UN Women uses its convening power to build knowledge partnerships to support its work.

Examples of these knowledge partnerships include the Research and Data section's growing network of around 150 feminist researchers and data analysts, who are commissioned to write policy-relevant research papers that inform UN Women's flagship reports and policy briefs and are selectively published as discussion papers; the Civil Society section's Civil Society Advisory Groups, which provide advice and expertise to inform UN Women's strategies to support women's rights mobilizations; and networks of policymakers and civil society experts that are regularly convened at Expert Group Meetings (EGMs) to inform intergovernmental normative processes, notably those feeding into the Commission on the Status of Women and conventions on climate change and the environment.

Additionally, UN Women leads the gender cluster group of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing (IATF) for Development. This group brings together 17 agencies¹⁷ to compile and publish data and analysis on gender equality across the 7 areas of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and results in an annual gender equality [online annex](#) that features critical knowledge in areas including financial inclusion, gender and trade and gender-responsive planning and budgeting. This serves as a knowledge exchange

partnership among both institutional agencies and external audiences.

As part of the Knowledge Management Strategy, UN Women will continue to use and strengthen these knowledge partnerships, leveraging its convening power to ensure that it is benefitting from cutting-edge knowledge from diverse sources and building engagement among its stakeholders to help communicate and share its knowledge products in ways that make them more impactful. UN Women will leverage knowledge produced by stakeholders and partners, including the UN System.

Centres of Excellence and South-South collaboration

UN Women will explore and seek to strengthen collaboration with Centres of Excellence to enhance the provision of technical support at the regional and country level. Building on existing experience—including Centres of Excellence on Gender Responsive Budgeting in Morocco, Mozambique and Russian Federation and the newly established Centre of Excellence on Gender Statistics (CEGS) in Mexico City—new possibilities for developing and partnering with centres of excellence will be explored to provide timely decentralized policy advice and contribute to South-South collaboration.

To further support South-South and triangular cooperation, UN Women will provide opportunities and methodologies for knowledge exchange between countries based on the experiences and practices already underway, as box 2.5 describes. Knowledge-sharing events will be organized where countries will

be able to learn about and discuss good practices and make field visits. These events will provide opportunities to discuss and analyse innovations and their results.

Strengthening knowledge platforms

Knowledge platforms provide one important way of creating knowledge partnerships. Consolidation and strengthening of all knowledge platforms and resource centres will avoid duplication, improve traffic through the websites and make maintenance and coordination of websites more cost-effective while making documents and resources more accessible. UN Women aims to have a consolidated knowledge platform that will facilitate access to resources on its strategic areas for each of the six types of support it provides: normative support; UN coordination; integrated policy advice; capacity development; advocacy and social mobilization; and technical assistance for essential services.

This consolidated platform will be linked to the corporate website and facilitate access to UN Women's

knowledge resources as well as quality validated resources developed by partners and stakeholders.

The process for consolidating and strengthening platforms will be implemented in successive phases by the Knowledge Management Specialist and IST and will involve the following actions.

- **Assessment and planning**

A mapping of existing platforms has already been carried out. This will be revisited to identify the best long-term options to move towards consolidation of platforms.

- **Creation of a common entry point**

Based on the initial mapping, and while consolidation of platforms is underway, a one-stop entry point for all UN Women resource centres will be developed to showcase and connect different resource hubs. This entry point will be connected to the corporate website, which will also be revamped. The Knowledge Management Specialist will support Communications and Advocacy in this process so that the new website strengthens corporate knowledge production and sharing priorities as outlined in this Strategy.

BOX 2.5

South-South collaboration

In the context of a new partnership with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), UN Women conducted two South-South peer learning events on gender-responsive budgeting that have enabled countries to share experiences, learn from each other and identify opportunities for knowledge development. This experience will be featured in the forthcoming 2018 *Good Practices in South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Development*, published by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation.

- **Development of criteria for platform development**

While UN Women aims to create a consolidated corporate knowledge platform, different programmes or initiatives might need dedicated platforms. To prevent further duplication and ensure coherence,

2.4

Objective 3: Develop a knowledge-sharing culture and better collaboration across sections

Two interlinked factors can support an organizational culture that encourages knowledge sharing: strong leadership and an enabling environment. This objective will focus on promoting an organizational culture within UN Women that fosters knowledge production and sharing and also supports individual, team and organizational learning. The main features of an organization with a strong management culture are outlined in Box 2.6.

BOX 2.6

Key characteristics of an organization with a strong Knowledge Management culture

- Everyone in the organization understands the strategic importance of knowledge.
- Everyone understands knowledge belongs to the organization; it is One UN Women.
- Leadership promotes and celebrates collaboration across sections, knowledge production (including documentation and discussion of good practices and lessons learnt) and sharing throughout the organization.
- Incentive structures that reward knowledge sharing are in place.
- Knowledge management is embedded in the organization's vision and strategy.

Building a safe and conducive environment for knowledge sharing is key to the implementation of this Strategy. Changes in organizational culture are not easy. This Strategy proposes to achieve this through different actions outlined throughout the document:

a set of guidelines and criteria will guide platform creation, development and sustainability from a content point of view. Ensuring that these criteria are followed in proposals for donor funding will be an important step in avoiding further proliferation of platforms.

- Identifying barriers for knowledge sharing
- Changing individual behaviours
- Introducing policies and practices that enable and encourage knowledge production and sharing
- Working with organizational culture to promote knowledge sharing while gradually working to change it.

i. **Creating an enabling environment for knowledge production and sharing**

In the context of the UNDS reform, UN Women will be a relevant actor if it can prove to be a knowledge hub/go-to place for gender equality and women's empowerment. For this reason, everybody should be encouraged and empowered to both produce and share knowledge.

All the initiatives in this Strategy—and particularly in this section—aim to create an enabling environment for knowledge production and sharing. Additionally, the following actions will also strengthen a knowledge-sharing culture within UN Women that will be supported by the Knowledge Management Specialist.

- **Leading for knowledge production and sharing.**

As with any change process, leadership is key in the implementation of the Knowledge Management Strategy. Managers at all levels will be champions for knowledge production and sharing and support an environment where staff feel safe asking for help and sharing knowledge both within their sections or units and across the organization. Asking for help, sharing knowledge, engaging in COPs and networks, as well as identifying and discussing good practices and lessons learnt, will be rewarded as key competencies for good performance.

In addition to the formal recognition system (see ii in this same section), managers will ensure that relevant knowledge production and sharing is recognized in informal ways. The Knowledge Management Specialist, working together with the Human Resources section, will support teams in achieving this.

- **Creating safe spaces for knowledge sharing**

Knowledge sharing is supported by personal relationships and fluent communications. People often prefer to reach out to a colleague for information rather than searching in a database. Distance, hierarchies and technological difficulties might deter knowledge sharing. For this reason, networks around specific topics or issues and connection of staff via a common operating environment—including the intranet, Skype for Business, One Drive and information platforms (such as RMS, Atlas, DAMS, LEADS, etc.)—will be strengthened to make it easy for all personnel to reach out to colleagues and peers for support, as well as facilitating access to knowledge repositories.

Peer processes will also be implemented, including the creation of safe spaces for discussion of programme implementation and other activities, results, good practices, failures and lessons learnt as part of a culture of knowledge sharing, without implicating performance evaluation. Peer processes may include knowledge sharing at the Senior Management Team; peer-review processes for quality assurance; and peer-assists¹⁸ to ensure the right know-how gets to the right place at the right time.

- **Sharing positive results**

Positive results encourage change in an organizational culture as they make it easier for people to adopt new behaviours. Informed by results from different teams within UN Women, the Knowledge Management Specialist will periodically share organizational good practices and experiences that show how knowledge production and sharing can support the advancement of UN Women's mandate.

ii. **Streamlining Knowledge Management in annual work plans and operations**

Working together with other sections, the Knowledge Management Specialist will provide inputs to ensure Knowledge Management is included in major guidance documents such as Policy and Procedure Guidance (PPG), annual work plans and Strategic Notes Guidance. Guidance will include a glossary and promote use of common terminology that will facilitate monitoring and evaluation of Knowledge Management activities across the organization as well as timely technical support.

iii. **Including Knowledge Management indicators in performance management and development**

Including Knowledge Management in performance management and development promotes an organizational culture that supports knowledge sharing by making it part of everybody's work and ensures that Knowledge Management activities are implemented. It also represents the most important formal recognition for implementing Knowledge Management.

UN Women staff and personnel job descriptions include Knowledge Management functions, and these are often also reflected in individual performance plans. This will be strengthened through collaboration between the Knowledge Management Specialist and the Human Resources section. Corporate standards and guidance for Knowledge Management-related indicators will be provided for different functions and levels so that Knowledge Management is more consistently included in performance appraisal and consequently in everyday work by each section. These indicators will include identifying, discussing and applying lessons learnt, availability of updated knowledge assets, engagement in communities of practice and collaboration with other sections, among others.

iv. Strengthening capacity for Knowledge Management in UN Women

Capacity development on Knowledge Management will be designed and implemented by the Research and Data section as part of this Strategy and based on the needs assessment and mapping exercises carried out during its development. Guidance tools, online and face-to-face training and workshops will be implemented to ensure common understanding of Knowledge Management across the organization, including what knowledge sharing means and how it can support the achievement of UN Women's mandate. Training will also include what implementing the Strategy means for staff and managers, including specific tips and recommendations for each role. Capacity development will also tackle specific aspects of the Strategy, including basic concepts in Knowledge Management, COPs, quality assurance processes for knowledge products, knowledge sharing (internally and externally) and other issues related to its implementation.

Additionally, a COP for staff working on Knowledge Management will be created and managed by Research and Data with active engagement of Regional Office Knowledge Management staff. This will enable access to resources and capacity strengthening in Knowledge Management, knowledge sharing, creation and development of COPs and identification of lessons learnt, among others.

3

IMPLEMENTATION

This Knowledge Management Strategy focuses on standardizing existing processes as well as integrating new ones. It also aims to provide criteria for prioritizing activities while supporting UN Women in its transition from process management to focusing on results management.

Implementation will be in phases. While full implementation will start in 2019, the groundwork for this has already been laid, such as the inclusion of Knowledge Management in Strategic Notes and Annual Work Plan Guidance and Policy and Procedure Guidance (PPG) revision.

The **second half of 2018** will focus on updating the intranet and OneApp, definition of Knowledge Management indicators for individual performance plans, initial steps to create an enabling environment for knowledge production and sharing, as well as development of guidance for the production of knowledge products and for development and management of COPs. Initial distribution of functions and timelines for implementation of the activities under each objective are included in this section.

In **2019**, attention will focus on identifying and addressing knowledge gaps (programming guidance, capacity development modules and country gender equality profiles), creating an enabling environment for knowledge production and sharing, as well as COPs to strengthen both knowledge production and sharing (internal knowledge sharing).

During **2020**, the emphasis will be on identifying and incorporating lessons learnt and good practices into UN Women policy, programme, coordination and intergovernmental operations and strengthening external knowledge sharing (knowledge sharing portals), as well as continuing to work on creating an enabling environment for knowledge production and sharing.

In **2021**, all Knowledge Management Strategy activities will be consolidated and assessed for a new Strategic Plan cycle.

The Knowledge Management Strategy will outline a governance structure that will allow oversight and implementation of specific processes. The Divisional Director (D2) will lead the organization in the implementation of the Strategy. During implementation, quarterly meetings will be held with the Assistant Secretary-General to report on implementation progress.

Given the position's key role in knowledge production within UN Women, the Knowledge Management Specialist will be structurally located within the Research and Data section. All UN Women staff and personnel will be responsible for implementing the Knowledge Management Strategy, which will be coordinated by the Knowledge Management Specialist. Dedicated and specialized expertise needed to implement the Strategy will also be convened through consultancies. This includes development of guidance tools on specific Knowledge Management practices and support to initial implementation.

The Training Centre will have a key role in the production of capacity development modules and will work closely with Research and Data. The Centres of Excellence are also expected to play an increasingly important role in the implementation of this Knowledge Management Strategy.

For the development of the Strategy a Knowledge Management Consultation Group was created, integrating all regions and sections in HQ. This group will evolve into a task force to support implementation of the Knowledge Management Strategy, while contributing and providing specific inputs to the change management plan and monitoring and evaluation framework. In the case of the Policy Division, this Strategy recommends that each section has dedicated resources to Knowledge Management and capacity development. This is already the case for most sections.

Given its decentralized approach, dedicated resources at the regional level will be key for implementing the Strategy.

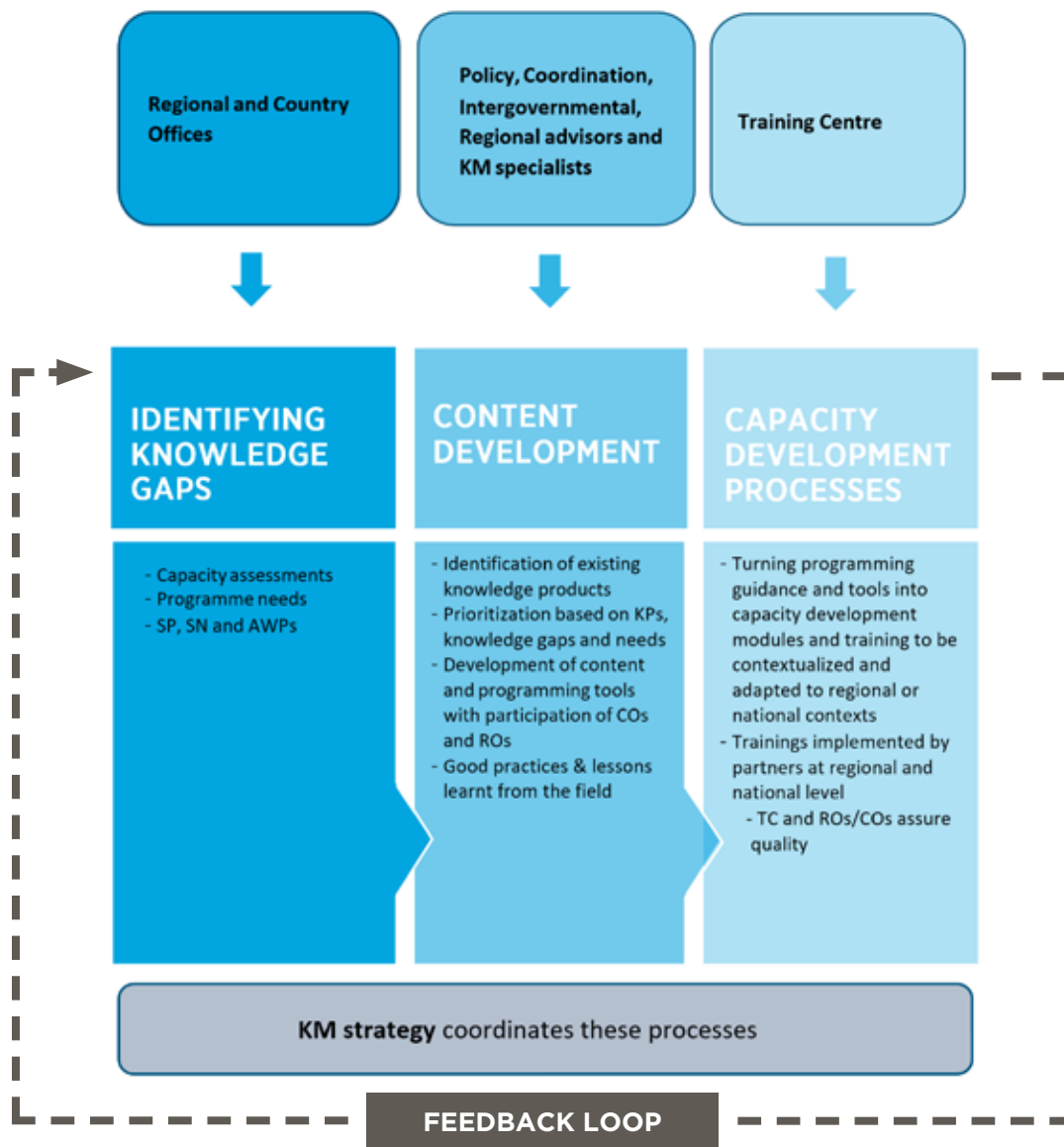
Each division, section and regional and country office will develop a specific work plan with the support of the Knowledge Management Specialist that will allow the organization to implement the current Strategy and move from small, low-impact activities to standardized results-driven Knowledge Management.

Given that the Strategy aims to incorporate Knowledge Management into everyday work and functions, all UN Women staff and personnel will be responsible and accountable for its implementation as related to their job functions.

Figure 3.1 shows a preliminary distribution of roles of different units, division, sections and regional and country offices of UN Women that will be involved in developing knowledge products. This initial outline will be further defined as specific work plans are developed. As mentioned, this will also require reprioritizing knowledge production and knowledge-sharing activities within each section. As mentioned, current and new goals and indicators will be integrated into individual performance plans.

FIGURE 3.1

Overview of knowledge creation to address knowledge gaps

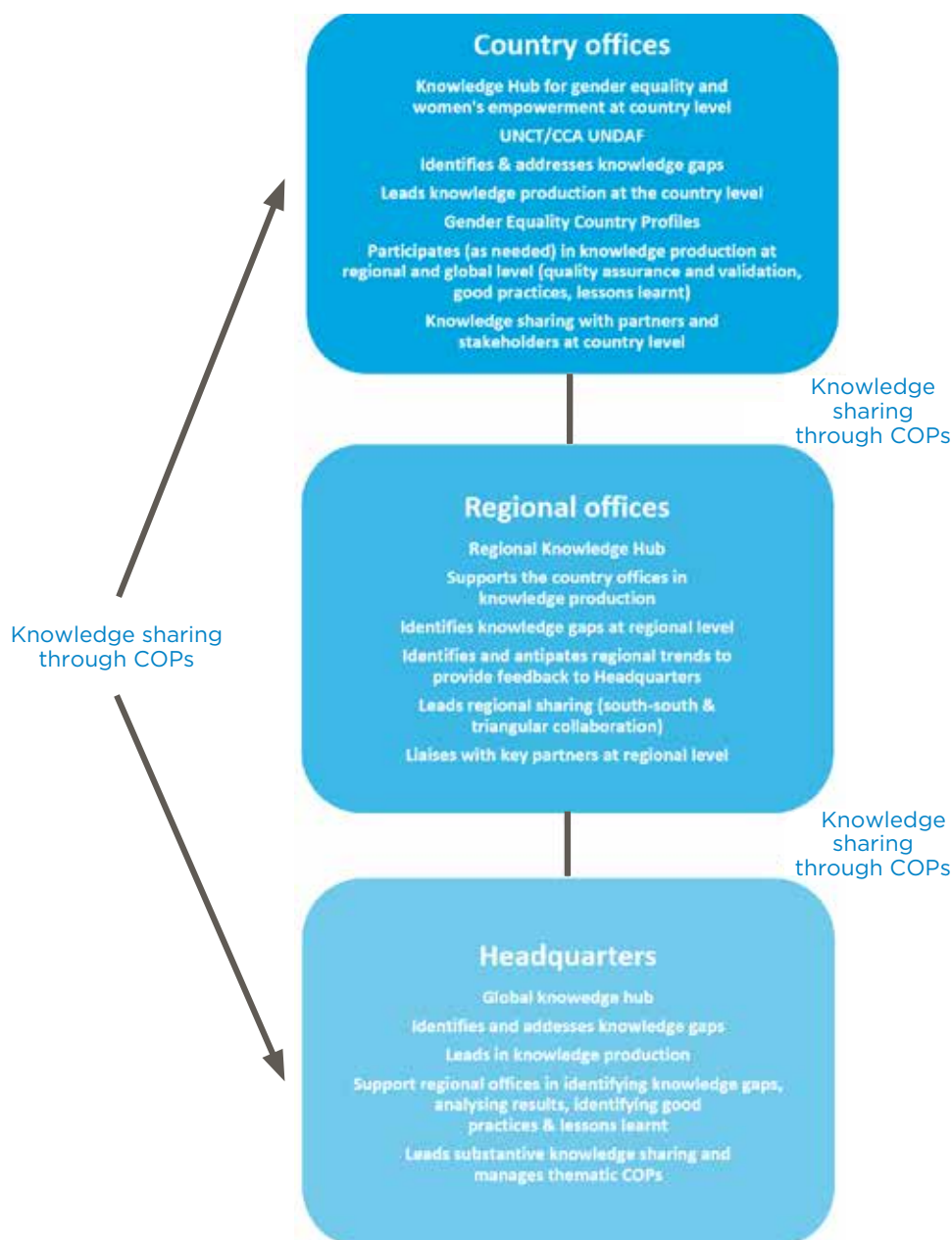


As previously noted, this is an organization-wide Knowledge Management Strategy that will be implemented in a decentralized though coordinated and consistent manner. Its implementation will strengthen the current change management process and better position UN Women in the UNDS reform process. The implementation of this Strategy will allow UN Women to transition from ad hoc, uneven and inconsistent Knowledge Management practices to systematic and consistent approaches that create synergies, provide quality assurance and ensure that the best available knowledge and experience throughout the organization is made available to all

UN Women staff anywhere in the world—whether in HQ, regional or country office or other location—so that they are fully equipped to provide the best available knowledge on gender equality and women’s empowerment in UN Women’s strategic areas to partners and stakeholders.

Figure 3.2 describes the roles of headquarters and country and regional offices for coordinated and enhanced knowledge production and sharing that will allow UN Women to position itself as a knowledge hub for gender equality and women’s empowerment at the country, regional and global level.

FIGURE 3.2
Overview of knowledge production and sharing roles



ENDNOTES

- 1 UN Women's definition of Knowledge Management based on review of existing literature and definitions in the UN System (Dumitru, P. 2016. [Knowledge Management in the United Nations System](#). Geneva: UN Joint Inspection Unit).
- 2 Output 3 OEEF: High quality of programmes through knowledge, innovation, results-based management and evaluation.
- 3 Dumitru 2016.
- 4 See note 1.
- 5 For example, the content in a self-paced module cannot always be transformed easily into a training manual or PowerPoint to use in face-to-face processes.
- 6 From Zack, M. 1999. "Managing Codified Knowledge", *Sloan Management Review* 40, no. 4: 45-58.
- 7 Based on Wenger-Trayner, E. and B. 2015. "Communities of Practice: A Brief Introduction." <http://wenger-trayner.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/07-Brief-introduction-to-communities-of-practice.pdf>. Accessed 25 October 2018.
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- 10 A knowledge curator seeks, validates and shares the best and most relevant knowledge, in this case on gender equality and women's empowerment. Knowledge brokers link communities of stakeholders together to share learning, influence each other's work, and forge new partnerships.
- 11 As stated in [UN Women Strategic Plan 2018-2021](#) and mentioned in this Strategy, UN Women provides six types of support: normative support; UN coordination for gender equality and women's empowerment; integrated policy advice; capacity development; advocacy and social mobilization; and technical assistance for essential services.
- 12 The UN Women 2018-2021 Strategic Plan calls for the consolidation of UN Women's capacity development initiatives: "The UN- Women's Training Centre will remain central to these efforts, developing and offering trainings to diverse partners, including the UN system, and consolidating UN-Women's offerings in support of national capacity development".
- 13 The Training Centre has developed specific guidance for implementing training for gender equality, including a [Training Manual](#) that guides the design, development, implementation and evaluation of training for gender equality courses and tools, along with tools on quality assurance, evaluation of training for gender equality and the working paper series on training for gender equality.
- 14 As an example, see [UN Women Cabo Verde Gender Profile](#).
- 15 This initial typology will be refined and validated with key internal stakeholders.
- 16 To be developed as part of this Strategy Objective 1: Strengthening knowledge production, capturing and analysis.
- 17 Participating agencies are: UN Women, World Bank, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNCDF, ILO, UNFPA, UNAIDS, OCHA, UNIDO, DPAD, ITU, OHCHR, ICAO, OECD, UNCDF, WTO.
- 18 A peer assist is a specific type of knowledge-sharing activity through which peers with relevant experience share their knowledge and experience with a team that has requested help on a specific problem, programme or activity.

**UN WOMEN IS THE UN ORGANIZATION
DEDICATED TO GENDER EQUALITY
AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN. A
GLOBAL CHAMPION FOR WOMEN AND
GIRLS, UN WOMEN WAS ESTABLISHED
TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS ON
MEETING THEIR NEEDS WORLDWIDE.**

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to implement these standards. It stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on five priority areas: increasing women's leadership and participation; ending violence against women; engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes; enhancing women's economic empowerment; and making gender equality central to national development planning and budgeting. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.



**Planet 50-50 by 2030
Step It Up for Gender Equality**

220 East 42nd Street
New York, New York 10017, USA
Tel: 212-906-6400
Fax: 212-906-6705

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