



MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO CORPORATE THEMATIC EVALUATION OF UN-WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO HUMANITARIAN ACTION – 2019	
Commissioning Unit:	Independent Evaluation Office (IEO)
Evaluation Title:	Corporate Evaluation of UN-Women's Contributions to Humanitarian Action
Evaluation Type:	Corporate Evaluation
Unit Responsible for Providing Management Response:	Humanitarian Action and Crisis Response Office (HACRO)
<p>Overall Comments</p> <p>UN-Women welcomes the findings and recommendations of the Corporate Evaluation of UN-Women's Contribution to Humanitarian Action. The evaluation assessed UN-Women's contribution to humanitarian action from 2014-2018 at global, regional and country levels. Based on an extensive desk and portfolio review, country visits, online survey and meetings with key stakeholders in Geneva and New York. The evaluation assessed the relevance and effectiveness of UN-Women's contribution in line with rights-based approaches and gender equality principles.</p> <p>UN-Women appreciated the evidence generated from the evaluation which will inform organizational learning and future direction within the framework of organizational-wide efforts to optimize and align presence and engagement, specifically in the context of UN Development System Reform.</p> <p>The evaluation highlights UN-Women's approach of facilitating the centrality of gender equality and women's empowerment considerations to an effective and responsive humanitarian action. It highlights the strong recognition and appreciation of external partners of the relevant and positive contribution of UN-Women in ensuring that gender equality and the empowerment of women remain central to humanitarian action.</p>	

UN-Women welcomes the recognition by the evaluation – including by UN and donor organizations interviewed – of its pioneering and highly effective normative and coordination role at the global level and key regional forums which resulted in the integration of gender equality and women empowerment into framework and policies that guide humanitarian action despite UN-Women’s lack of membership in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). UN-Women agrees with the assessment of the evaluation team that these efforts provide a foundation for stronger engagement and links between UN-Women’s global normative work and humanitarian coordination mechanisms, and efforts at country level.

UN-Women recognizes the opportunities outlined by the evaluation to increase UN-Women’s effectiveness and impact at the country level by building on UN-Women’s strengths in the development side of the nexus, sustaining catalytic transformative programming, and better linking its work to system-wide responses while minimizing small scale humanitarian programming that is not done in partnership or that does not have broader strategic importance.

The evaluation notes that UN-Women’s contributions to humanitarian action have been growing at a fast pace in influence and in budget, with a 700% growth in the past 6 years. UN-Women appreciates the recognition of this growth and agrees with the evaluation that the heavy reliance on non-core funding for humanitarian assistance (currently at 95%) poses significant challenges to UN-Women’s staffing capacities and render it reactive and supply driven at times.

UN-Women recognizes that it has risen to a point where a more strategic and consistent approach is required to strengthen its contributions to humanitarian action, from emergency response to longer-term transformative change. This will require more resources and investment in UN-Women’s humanitarian and nexus capacity to fully implement the recommendations of the evaluation.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Develop a response-level strategy to complement UN-Women’s global humanitarian strategy

Recommendations:	<p>Recommendation 1.1: UN-Women to review the HACRO Humanitarian Strategy and develop a complementary and detailed resource mobilisation strategy that can leverage opportunities at the country level (Humanitarian Needs Overview/Humanitarian Response Plans) and with key donors.</p> <p>Recommendation 1.2: UN-Women to conduct internal annual reviews of Gender in Humanitarian Action/Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in humanitarian action to see how strategies are contributing to demonstrable results.</p>
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Management Response	Accepted
UN-Women accepts this recommendation. UN-Women established the Humanitarian Action and Crisis Response Office (henceforth referred to as HACRO) in 2017 to strengthen its global normative and coordination engagement for greater	

<p>accountability for gender equality and women’s empowerment in crisis settings and to extend support to its regional and field offices.</p> <p>HACRO will finalize the humanitarian strategy and work in close consultation with UN-Women’s regional and field offices to develop a response level strategy with a focus on establishing greater links between UN-Women’s global normative work and humanitarian coordination mechanisms and efforts at regional and country level. A number of processes and tools have been initiated over the course of the past 18 months which will be fine-tuned and capitalized on in the coming 12 months to fulfill this recommendation.</p> <p>UN-Women will build on existing internal and external processes and engagement for an annual review of gender in humanitarian action across the system. This review will be anchored in UN-Women’s annual reporting and its gender desk function to lead on the system-wide monitoring of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (henceforth referred to as the IASC) Gender Policy through its Accountability Framework. The latter provides an annual in-depth review of the collective actions of the IASC with regards to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. It will also build on internal annual reviews of Strategic Notes and Annual Work Plan implementation, UN-Women’s Grand Bargain Annual Reporting, as well as reporting on UN-Women’s Agenda for Humanity commitments.</p>				
Key Action	Time Frame	Responsible Party for Implementation	Status	Comments
<i>Develop resource mobilization strategy in consultation with regional and country offices.</i>	Q1, 2020	HACRO	Not initiated	
<i>UN-Women Humanitarian Strategy finalized and accompanied with detailed response level guidance.</i>	Q1, 2020	HACRO	Initiated	
<i>UN-Women to conduct internal annual reviews of Gender in Humanitarian Action through its internal annual reporting, and IASC accountability framework reporting.</i>	Q2, annually	HACRO	Initiated (First UN-Women led IASC Gender Accountability Framework report forthcoming in September 2019)	UN-Women to continue its function as IASC Gender Desk, UN-Women annual reports, plus reporting on the Grand Bargain

				and Agenda for Humanity. UN-Women/UNFPA Gender in Humanitarian Action funding study underway
RECOMMENDATION 2: Identify the necessary leadership, minimum levels of staffing and office structures for a response-level strategy in humanitarian settings to ensure UN-Women can maximize its influence at the country level.				
Management Response				Partially accepted
<p>UN-Women partially accepts this recommendation. UN-Women is in the process of reviewing its overall human resources, management structures and country typology to be more fit for purpose in the broader efforts of UN system reform. The reality of limited core resources, limited humanitarian and unearmarked funding and heavy reliance on non-core funding to cover core humanitarian capacity pose significant challenges to UN-Women in securing the needed human resources in crisis countries or sustaining core normative, coordination and country support functions at the global level.</p> <p>UN-Women HACRO has launched a number of initiatives to strengthen UN-Women’s humanitarian capacity with the launch of a number of regional and country level Gender in Humanitarian Action trainings and IASC Gender Handbook training targeting UN-Women management and practitioner levels in the field. Additional guidance and practical tools will be developed, finalized and disseminated in various areas recommended by the evaluation including but not limited to humanitarian coordination, Accountability to Affected Populations and Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.</p>				
Key Action	Time Frame	Responsible Party for Implementation	Status	Comments
<i>Capacity development and in-person trainings and thematic webinars convened to address capacity needs, facilitate peer-to-peer learning and promote a</i>	Q2, 2020 with periodic webinars	HACRO	Initiated and ongoing	Gender in Humanitarian Action trainings in Western & Central Africa RO, Eastern and Southern

<i>coordinated, corporate approach to humanitarian action</i>	and annual trainings			Africa RO, Asia Pacific RO, Arab States RO. Country level trainings provided in Turkey and oPt.
<i>Finalize UN-Women’s Crisis Management Protocols and Fast Track processes</i>	Q4, 2019	HACRO, Division of Management and Administration (DMA), and Legal	Initiated	
<i>Development of technical guidance notes on gender responsive localization, cash transfers, participation revolution and harmonized needs assessment, rollout of Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) guidance</i>	Q4, 2019	HACRO	Initiated	
<i>Populate UN-Women’s global knowledge management platform (SharePoint) with guidance notes, programmatic and country case studies, research and reports</i>	Q1, 2020	HACRO	Ongoing	
<i>Strengthen UN-Women internal expert deployment systems at global and regional levels and leverage existing partnerships with emergency standby partners.</i>	Q4, 2019	HACRO	Ongoing	
RECOMMENDATION 3: Develop global partnership frameworks with OCHA, UNHCR and UNFPA building on experience in partnerships in different contexts.				
Management Response				Accepted
UN-Women accepts this recommendation. UN-Women supports and welcomes the focus of the evaluation on partnerships. This focus is in line with UN-Women’s commitment to the new way of working. Since the establishment of HACRO, significant efforts have been placed on building partnerships to maximize impact and reach at normative, policy				

<p>and programmatic levels. As highlighted in the evaluation report, in 2018, UN-Women partnered with 14 UN agencies and 9 international NGOs and Red Cross/Crescent Societies in 30 crisis country contexts. UN-Women recognizes the need for executive leadership engagement to forge global framework for partnerships within the framework of UN reforms and against the backdrop of competition over limited resources. The decentralized nature of some of the entities listed affects country level impact of negotiated frameworks at the global level.</p>				
Key Action	Time Frame	Responsible Party for Implementation	Status	Comments
<p><i>Senior Management Team (SMT) engagement with UN OCHA, UNFPA and UNHCR to clarify roles and mandates and identify incentives to strengthen partnerships at country level.</i></p>	Q2, 2020	Senior Management Team (SMT)	Initiated	
<p><i>Engage with Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) and Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) lead agencies (OCHA, UNHCR, UNICEF) to ensure guidance provides specifics on W&Gs accessing AAP/PSEA in country level strategies.</i></p>	Q2, 2020	HACRO	Ongoing through the IASC Results Group on Inclusion and Accountability	
<p>RECOMMENDATION 4: Increase effectiveness and impact in humanitarian action by better linking UN-Women’s work to system-wide responses while minimizing programming that is not done in partnership or that does not have broader strategic importance.</p>				
<p>Management Response</p> <p>UN-Women accepts this recommendation with a reservation that this shift will be contingent on backing and availability of funding by donors to UN-Women’s normative and coordination work in humanitarian action. UN-Women appreciates that the evaluation highlights the centrality of gender equality and women empowerment considerations to an effective humanitarian action, and the strong recognition of the relevant and positive contribution of UN-Women in ensuring that gender equality and the empowerment of women remain central to humanitarian action.</p>				<p>Accepted with reservation</p>

<p>UN-Women also welcomes the recognition of the evaluation of UN-Women’s effective normative and coordination role at the global and regional level and opportunities to strengthen these functions further at the country level. Despite challenges resulting from UN-Women’s lack of membership in the IASC, UN-Women has been establishing itself over the past years to strengthen accountability for Humanitarian action through its normative and coordination mandate while directly responding to humanitarian needs with catalytic and joint programming. Going forward, UN-Women will consolidate its strength with a focus on bridging the gaps between commitments and implementation, strengthening CO capacities for the rollout of the IASC Accountability Framework on Gender; integrating gender responsive programming throughout the humanitarian programme cycle; developing gender profiles and alerts; promoting women and girl’s participation from the initial assessment stage to management, implementation, and assessment. To make such shift, this will require the backing and funding of an accountability and coordination mechanism for UN-Women in humanitarian action and to reduce dependence on non-core short term project-based resources for key coordination functions.</p>				
Key Action	Time Frame	Responsible Party for Implementation	Status	Comments
<i>Develop field level coordination Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) so that UN-Women’s contributions to official humanitarian coordination and response planning are consistent and anticipated</i>	Q1, 2020	HACRO	UN-Women COs are part of the Gender in Humanitarian Action Accountability Framework monitoring process.	Standard Operating Procedures backed with a funding mechanism for core gender in humanitarian action and coordination capacities
<i>Finalize humanitarian strategy and programme guidance with a clear criteria and checklist for prioritization of programmatic engagement</i>	Q1, 2020	HACRO	Initiated	Mid-term review of UN-Women strategic plan will be an opportunity to make adjustment at the strategic planning level