

Management Response coordinated by: PPID

Date: 14 January 2021

Overall Management Response

UN Women is committed to leveraging the process of the development of the next UN Women Strategic Plan 2022-2025 to further refine programming instruments and related oversight and accountability systems to implement transformative programmes for women and girls at global, regional and national levels. For that purpose, UN Women welcomes the findings and recommendations of the Corporate Evaluation of the Effectiveness and Efficiency Assessment of UN Women Flagship Programme Initiatives and Thematic Priorities of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021, which sought to analyze whether and how the FPIs have realized their intent to ensure that UN Women fully leverages its triple mandate to become “fitter and funded for purpose” to deliver result for women and girls. The evaluation also provides useful lessons to feed into future corporate programmatic thinking and practice and will serve as a key input to the development of the next strategic plan.

UN Women appreciates this evaluation as the first comprehensive assessment of the Flagship Programme Initiatives (FPIs), and its recognition of the FPIs as a means of consolidating and scaling-up the young Entity’s programming modalities to better respond to the expectations and goals of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda; and other international agreements which have recognized the centrality of gender equality and women’s empowerment (GEWE) in sustainable development. In addition, the evaluation provides useful learnings in the context of the repositioning of the UN development system and other aspects of UN reform.

The overall goal of the FPIs of creating high-impact scalable initiatives is as relevant today as it was in 2015 when the FPI process was initiated. It is important to note that UN Women has significantly grown and matured as an entity since then. It is therefore necessary to situate findings and recommendations in the current reality, which includes ongoing work to strengthen quality of programmes, scale up impact, further enhance accountability and oversight, ensure adequate resourcing, and improve operational effectiveness and efficiency. These processes are all part of UN Women’s endeavor to become an even more effective and efficient

organization in support of women and girls, in line with its change management process and its vision for UN Women 2.0, as the Entity enters its second decade.

UN Women appreciates the evaluation's findings that the FPIs had an overall positive effect on the evolution of the organization's programming and operations and succeeded in providing a coherent framework to operationalize the organization's five thematic priorities across regions. The evaluation also recognizes the significant contribution of the FPIs to better package and brand the organization's programming in ways that could be consistently communicated to donors and stakeholders, in line with UN Women's mandate.

UN Women acknowledges that, while providing a unified framework for programming, there has been a diversified approach to the development and rollout of the FPIs. While some FPIs took a structured approach led by a dedicated global technical team and supported by additional earmarked contributions in support of implementation, others focused on providing an overarching framework for interventions in a specific thematic area without necessarily a structured architecture for technical support, implementation, resource mobilization, etc. The evaluation provides useful lessons in this regard from these various examples. UN Women intends to use this knowledge to harmonize the implementation approaches, building on identified best practices and achievements to date.

UN Women welcomes the evaluation's recommendations for improvement in quality assurance mechanisms, resource mobilization, financial tracking and reporting, corporate performance monitoring and initiatives around structured partnerships. UN Women fully agrees with the evaluation's recommendation for the establishment of clear accountability frameworks and explicitly defined thematic programme focus to amplify UN Women's delivery footprint based on field capacity and resource mobilization targets in the next SP.

At the same time, UN Women wishes to note that several of the conclusions and recommendations which now appear evident may not have been so apparent at the time of FPI development. The FPIs represented a new way of working for the Entity and an unprecedented and innovative programming approach not just for UN Women but for the UN system more broadly. As such, the

Entity was “learning by doing” and, in hindsight, acknowledges that some aspects of the FPI development and management could have been strengthened. The evaluation provides important lessons learned in this regard, which UN Women intends to fully leverage going forward. It should be noted that there are many aspects of the FPIs that have proven a effective modalities of programme implementation, such as clear theories of change, a common results framework and the partnership platform, which UN Women will build on and continue to use in its programming.

Notably, the evaluation recommends the establishment of “second-generation FPIs”. While UN Women is fully committed to refining and developing effective programming instruments and modalities that support the delivery of scalable impact, the development of the new SP currently underway will provide greater detail as to whether these programming instruments will take the form of "second generation FPIs" or other programming modalities. Therefore, UN Women’s acceptance of recommendations referring to “second generation FPIs” should not be understood as an acceptance of a continuation of the FPIs.

A clear roadmap for the development of the next SP has been designed, which contains several consultative processes with the Executive Board and other key partners at global, regional and country levels, as well as internally. Most of the ongoing work of the new SP development is in line with FPI assessment recommendations. The initial work on a corporate Theory of Change aims at sharpening our programmatic focus and addressing cross-cutting issues, such as social norms change, that fully integrate UN Women’s triple mandate and ensure programming impact and effectiveness for delivering high-quality results at scale – a key objective of the FPIs. Similarly, work is ongoing to consolidate our field presence typology and HQ architecture, reviewing and adjusting, as needed, resource allocations, oversight and accountability frameworks in line with the vision of UN Women 2.0.

Evaluation Recommendation 1:

UN Women should explicitly state thematic programme focus, field delivery footprint and reaffirm “second generation FPIs” as a programmatic instrument based on field capacity and resource mobilization targets in the next SP 2022-2025.

Management Response:

UN Women accepts this recommendation with the understanding, as noted above, that the term “second generation FPIs” might not ultimately be used. The nature and title of programming modalities will be defined in the context of the development of the next SP 2022-2025, as such modalities are key means of implementation for the SP.

UN Women strongly agrees that its levels of revenue and programmatic footprint continue to necessitate effective programming instruments and modalities to deliver scalable impacts and enhance operational efficiencies, and that the lessons from implementing FPIs should be used to design such programming instruments. The aspect of alignment between programme development and resource mobilization is an important one. Resource mobilization planning in line with the vision of the UN funding compact is a key element for the implementation of this recommendation. As previously announced, UN Women is, for example, developing a thematic funding approach to ensure better alignment and more flexible funding for programme results.

UN Women also takes note of the recommendation to reduce FPIs to a more pragmatic number and will endeavour to do so in the context of its SP development. This will be determined through the ongoing process of developing the SP and its thematic areas. UN Women fully agrees on the importance of clear theories of change and theories of action to ensure programming impact and effectiveness, as well as measuring and reporting high-quality results. The corporate theory of change under development aims at further sharpening programmatic focus, identifying cross-cutting areas and ensure standardization of the

Accepted

Effectiveness and Efficiency Assessment of UN Women Flagship Programme Initiatives and Thematic Priorities of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021

Management Response



<p>programming with focus on impact and effectiveness for delivering high-quality results at scale.</p> <p>Under the Strategic Plan Task Team on Impact and Programmatic Focus, an Impact and Results Coordination Hub is in place in the Programme, Policy and Intergovernmental Support Division (PPID) for the articulation of development results and programmatic focus in the next Strategic Plan, with Project Teams for each of the identified programmatic areas. These teams also have a focus on resource mobilization and capacity-building to achieve results.</p>					
Key Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsible Unit(s)		Tracking Status	Comments
		Lead	Support		
In the context of the next SP, develop clear thematic Theories of Change and Theories of Action which support the sharpening of thematic programmatic focus.	Q1-2 2021	PPID	ROs		
Clarify SP implementation modalities, ensure they are articulated in the next SP and underpinned by a clear implementation and accountability framework.	Q1-Q2 2021	PPID	SPRED, ROs		
Develop a clear resource mobilization strategy for programme implementation guided by the principles of the UN funding compact, including through thematic funding	Q2-Q4 2021	SPD	PPID, SPRED, ROs		
In the context of the next SP, use the country office typologies to enhance	Q1-2 2021	Change Mgt	SPRED, PPID, ROs		

Effectiveness and Efficiency Assessment of UN Women Flagship Programme Initiatives and Thematic Priorities of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021

Management Response



<p>linkages between results and resources a part of the work planning process to facilitate the aggregation of results.</p>					
<p>Evaluation Recommendation 2: UN Women senior leadership should drive accountability for implementation of agreed corporate programmatic approaches and supporting business processes by clearly anchoring oversight and supervisory responsibilities for the “next generation FPIs” in PPID.</p>					
<p>Management Response:</p> <p>UN Women accepts this recommendation and agrees that PPID plays the lead, in close consultation with Regional Offices, in driving accountability for implementation of corporate programmatic approaches. SPRED, DMA and SPD support these management arrangements through their respective functions of planning, operational support, processes and resource mobilization. The roles and responsibilities will be clearly defined through a Responsibility Assignment Matrix (RACI framework) to clearly document and align respective roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>In addition, UN Women fully agrees with the recommendation to strengthen management arrangements, including the use of effective matrix management elements, particularly between HQ and field offices, to enhance programme delivery, knowledge management and results accountability for programmes. Matrix arrangements should fully leverage and better connect policy expertise at headquarters and regional level. These aspects are a focus of the change management process and among the next steps towards creating UN Women 2.0.</p> <p>In addition, UN Women is undertaking a complete end-to-end re-write of its Project and Programme Life Cycle (PPLC) processes through implementing recommendations from existing gap analyses, evaluations, audits, through application of International best practices, specifically, the Portfolio, Programme & Project Management Maturity (P3M3) model. This process will be key in enhancing programmatic approaches and business processes.</p>				<p>Accepted</p>	

Effectiveness and Efficiency Assessment of UN Women Flagship Programme Initiatives and Thematic Priorities of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021
 Management Response



UN Women suggests that this recommendation be considered in conjunction with recommendation 5.					
Key Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsible Unit(s)		Tracking	Comments
		Lead	Support	Status	
Develop a Responsibility Assignment Matrix (RACI framework) as a comprehensive accountability framework with clear roles and responsibilities for programmatic implementation.	Q4 2021	PPID and SPRED	ROs		
As part of UN Women 2.0, develop a clear concept for a matrixed and networked organization, and related roles and responsibilities.	Q4 2021	Change Mgt	PPID, SPRED, ROs		
Finalize the end-to-end re-write of UN Women's Project and Programme Life Cycle (PPLC)	By Q1 2022	PPID	SPRED, and ROs		
Revise existing quality assurance mechanisms such as the Peer Support Group for approval of Strategic Notes and Project Appraisal Committees for project approval based on coherent quality standards.	On going	PPID and SPRED			

Evaluation Recommendation 3:

UN Women should clearly define how it will leverage its UN coordination mandate and UN reform to amplify GEWE results through its programming and establish its own programmatic footprint, where UN Women is recognized as the key thematic programme leader.

Management Response:

UN Women accepts this recommendation. UN coordination and the partnership approach are key building blocks of the work of UN Women and the next SP.

A lesson learnt from FPIs implementation is that there is greater scope to fully leverage partnerships, as originally intended. The next SP aims to fully integrate UN Women’s triple mandate as part of its programming and establish UN Women as the key knowledge and thematic programme leader on GEWE. As part of this process UN Women aims to refine how its UN coordination mandate supports the delivery of development results. There is a need for further clarification on how UN Women’s coordination role is also operationalized through its development results.

Additionally, UN Women will continue to support greater system-wide accountability for gender equality and enhance gender mainstreaming in the UN System. This will be done inter alia through planned Strategic Coordination Dialogues with other UN entities that aim to expand our partnerships and joint work, both at corporate/HQ, regional and field levels to advance common gender equality goals across a range of areas. The first Strategic Coordination Dialogue took place with UNHCR in October 2020 with joint work already underway at the country and regional levels.

UN Women has already embarked on joint programmatic work with UNICEF, UNDP, and UNFPA, as well as several other UN entities. Close partnership with DPO, DPPA and PBSO is essential to strong implementation of UN Women’s work on women, peace and security across the normative, UN coordination and operational mandate. In December 2020,

Accepted

Effectiveness and Efficiency Assessment of UN Women Flagship Programme Initiatives and Thematic Priorities of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021

Management Response



UN-Women together with UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNOPS hosted the first Executive Board joint briefing on the development of their next Strategic Plans, followed by the first-ever online joint consultations. In the context of their next SPs, UNDP, UNICEF, UNPFA and UN-Women are aiming to further strengthen their joint work in pursuit of strategic and coherent results that are harmonized and standardized. UN-Women also seeks to deepen its collaboration with other UN entities across the system.					
Key Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsible Unit(s)		Tracking	
		Lead	Support	Status	Comments
Specify contribution and results from UN coordination in thematic theories of changes and theories of actions of the next SP	BY Q3 2021	PPID	SPRED, UNSCD & ROs		
Plan a series of Strategic Coordination Dialogues with key UN entities.	Continuous	UNSCD	SPRED, PPID & ROs		
Develop a clear strategy and target for JP as part of the next SP	Continuous	PPID	SPRED, UNSCD, SPD & ROs		
<p>Evaluation Recommendation 4:</p> <p>Develop global, regional and country “second generation” FPI modalities for each of the planned GEWE pillars, with theories of change and analysis of actions that link the normative, coordination and operational aspects of UN Women’s integrated mandate. In addition, differentiate actions and results at the global, regional and country level.</p>					
<p>Management Response:</p> <p>UN Women agrees with the recommendation to ensure clarity on programming modalities, roles and responsibilities between the global, regional and country levels, clear accountability and good internal coordination.</p> <p>As previously indicated, UN Women fully agrees on the importance of clear theories of change and theories of action to ensure programming impact and effectiveness, as well as</p>				Accepted	

Effectiveness and Efficiency Assessment of UN Women Flagship Programme Initiatives and Thematic Priorities of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021

Management Response



<p>measuring and reporting high-quality results. UN Women is currently developing a corporate theory of change as well as thematic theories of change and theories of action, which directly respond to this recommendation which will form the basis of the substantive thematic areas of work in the next Strategic Plan. These theories of change/action also aim to incorporate all elements of UN Women’s triple mandate in an integrated manner.</p> <p>UN Women also agrees that country Strategic Notes could be structured around new programming modalities taking into consideration local context and drawing squarely on United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) priorities. As noted earlier, this may not necessarily take the form of “second generation FPIs” and will be determined as part of the development of the next SP and its section on means of implementation. Nevertheless, UN Women is fully committed to the realization of replicable and scalable results across regions to demonstrate the extent of its impact at a global scale.</p> <p>While UN Women agrees with the need to enhance internal coherence and coordination for programmatic delivery, this may not necessarily take the form of a “Programme Coordination Unit”, as suggested by the evaluation. However, UN Women recognizes the need to review roles and responsibilities of PPID and its constituent programme-related units (PSMU and PAPDU) as part of current change management efforts. The vision for ‘UN Women 2.0’ is firmly anchored in the new Strategic Plan (2022-2025) and explicitly affirms the twin goals of creating a networked and matrixed organization. The SP Theories of change and Theories of Action and the related programming instruments will define the substantive focus, whereas the matrix structure will clarify accountabilities at country, regional and global levels and enhance knowledge sharing across the organization.</p>					
Key Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsible Unit(s)		Tracking	
		Lead	Support	Status	Comments
In the context of the next SP, develop clear thematic Theories of Change and Theories	Q1-2 2021	PPID	ROs		

Effectiveness and Efficiency Assessment of UN Women Flagship Programme Initiatives and Thematic Priorities of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021



Management Response

of Action which support the sharpening of thematic programmatic focus.					
Strengthen the role of thematic policy leads to undertake quality assurance, coherence and standardization in programme implementation.	Q3 2021	PPID	ROs		
Develop a Responsibility Assignment Matrix (RACI framework) as a comprehensive accountability framework with clear roles and responsibilities for programmatic implementation.	By Q4 2021	PPID and SPRED	DMA, SPD and ROs		
<p>Evaluation Recommendation 5:</p> <p>UN Women should establish clear responsibilities and accountability framework for each planned GEWE pillar/impact area across the whole organization.</p>					
<p>Management Response:</p> <p>UN Women agrees with the recommendation and would like to reiterate the importance of the theories of change and theories of action for the substantive focus of the SP and, on this basis, the related accountability framework. UN Women agrees with the need to strengthen thematic coherence, quality assurance, resource mobilization and donor engagement, planning and allocation, monitoring of results and reporting, and knowledge management and communications. This will be done through standardization of processes and products to ensure consistent quality across the organization. This will require global thematic leads to be part of a matrixed and networked organization, where roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and global thematic leads drive programme design implementation, ensure cross-regional fertilization and undertake monitoring of the thematic portfolios.</p>				<p>Accepted</p>	

Effectiveness and Efficiency Assessment of UN Women Flagship Programme Initiatives and Thematic Priorities of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021

Management Response



<p>The accountability framework will include existing tools and internal management structures and will define the responsibilities between PPID, SPRED, Regional Offices and other HQ Divisions/ units, as relevant. Existing mechanisms such as the COAT, DMA Management Report and relevant sections of the Quarterly Business Review will be utilized. In the context of existing monitoring and reporting mechanisms, the Business Review Committee (BRC) will receive updates on the implementation of the accountability matrix and provide recommendations to address potential areas of underperformance, in line with the mandate of the BRC.</p>					
Key Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsible Unit(s)		Tracking	
		Lead	Support	Status	Comments
As part of UN Women 2.0, develop a clear concept for a matrixed and networked organization, and related roles and responsibilities.	By Q4 2021	Change Mgt	PPID, SPRED, ROs		
Building on thematic Theories of Change and Theories of Action and the RACI framework, develop clear internal strategies for all aspects of programme development/delivery within thematic areas.	By Q4 2021	PPID	SPD, UNCD, DMA, SPRED, ROs		
Review and roll out corporate accountability tools such as COAT, DMA Management Report, relevant sections of the quarterly business review.	By Q4 2021	PPID	DMA, SPRED, HR & CM		
Align ToRs of global thematic leads to provide a consistent and coherent level of support to programme implementation.	By Q1 2022	PPID	HR, ROs		

Effectiveness and Efficiency Assessment of UN Women Flagship Programme Initiatives and Thematic Priorities of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021

Management Response



Finalize the end-to-end re-write of UN Women’s Project and Programme Life Cycle (PPLC).	By Q1 2022	PPID	SPRED, and ROs		
<p>Evaluation Recommendation 6:</p> <p>UN Women should implement a full integration of its strategic planning, budgeting, results monitoring and financial systems so that planning, resource mobilization, budgets and expenditure of SP initiatives are clearly reported through the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system.</p>					
<p>Management Response:</p> <p>UN Women accepts this recommendation. However, the project is currently in an early stage and ultimately the extent of integration in the ERP will depend on technological capabilities and resources.</p> <p>The newly established Strategy, Planning, Resources and Effectiveness Division already functionally integrates strategic planning, budgeting, results monitoring and risk management. The new ERP (#NextGenERP) will play a key role in effecting this integration in UN Women’s implementation modalities and systems.</p> <p>With a new modern system, #NextGenERP, UN Women will be able to revisit and redefine many of the business processes which are related strategic planning, budgeting, results monitoring and financial management. This provides UN Women with an opportunity to modernize its business processes, improve efficiency and provide an operational foundation for UN Women 2.0. In addition, the new ERP should also reflect the revisions made in the review of the end-to-end Project and Programme Life Cycle.</p> <p>The new ERP system, #NextGenERP, will be rolled out in phases based on functionality. The</p>				<p>Accepted</p>	

Effectiveness and Efficiency Assessment of UN Women Flagship Programme Initiatives and Thematic Priorities of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021

Management Response



majority of the core ERP functionalities is planned for early 2022. The initial intention is to provide a fully integrated end-to-end system. However, the project is still in the evaluation phase and the scope of this new ERP for planning and results management has not been finalized. The evaluation will determine if all the planning and results management requirements can be accommodated in the #NextGenERP project, which are UN specific business processes and generally not available in off-the-shelf NextGenERP platform.					
Key Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsible Unit(s)		Tracking	
		Lead	Support	Status	Comments
Evaluate technical capability for the full integration of business and programming requirements in NextGenERP and embed the identified solutions in the ERP roll out.	2022	SPRED, DMA and PPID			