

MAIN FINDINGS

2014 Assessment: UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)¹

CONTEXT

UN WOMEN...

...emerged in 2011 from the consolidation of four previously distinct entities: the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), the Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI) and the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

...envision a world free of gender-based discrimination, where women and men have equal opportunities, where women and girls can be active agents of change, and where women's rights are upheld in all efforts to further development, human rights, peace and security.

...focusses on six impact areas: 1. Women lead and participate in decision making at all levels, 2. Women, especially the poorest and most excluded, are economically empowered and benefit from development, 3. Women and girls live a life free from violence, 4. Peace and security and humanitarian action are shaped by women leadership and participation, 5. Governance and national planning fully reflect accountability for gender equality commitments and priorities, and 6. A comprehensive and dynamic set of global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and women's empowerment is in place and is applied through action by Governments and other stakeholders at all levels.

...has a triple mandate that encompasses i) support for inter-governmental bodies in their formulation of policies, global standards and norms, ii) help UN Member States to implement these standards, and iii) to lead and co-ordinate the UN system's work on gender equality as well as promote accountability, including through regular monitoring of system-wide progress.

...was assessed by MOPAN for the first time in 2014.

KEY STRENGTHS OF UN WOMEN

- UN Women has a **clear mandate** to support gender equality and women's empowerment. This mandate is well reflected in its planning and programming. It reflects the recognition of the lack of leadership for UN activities on gender equality and the important challenges persisting across countries.
- The organisation is **pursuing results that are relevant** to its mandate and pertinent at the global and national levels. The rationale for the creation of UN Women – the need for leadership on gender equality at the global level – remains valid.
- UN Women has a strong **commitment to developing a results culture** at the organisational and country levels.
- UN Women has **strong evaluation practices**. Its evaluation function shows a high degree of independence, and has a strong structure and planning system.
- UN Women has a reputation for high-quality and **valued inputs to policy dialogue** and advice at the country, regional and global levels. The organisation often acts as a bridge-builder between stakeholders, for example by providing a platform for discussion between governments and local women's organisations.
- UN Women makes efforts to ensure that its programmes align with and **support national commitments** on gender equality and women's empowerment.
- The organisation's decentralisation process is underway with **clear delegation of decision-making authority**.
- UN Women **uses performance information** for its decision-making.

KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FOR UN WOMEN

- There is room for improved transparency of UN Women's **resource allocation system** to the country level. UN Women does not have a formalised methodology for the allocation of core programmable resources at the country level.
- UN Women's **capacity to lead and co-ordinate the United Nation's work on gender equality is uneven** at the country level. Funding challenges may limit the organisation's ability to implement planned activities.
- UN Women has not yet adopted a formal and systematic approach to **risk management**.
- There is **room for improvement in the results chain**, which translates into difficulties in assessing UN Women's contributions to development.

1. This document presents the main findings from MOPAN's 2014 "Synthesis Report" of the UN Women assessment. The full assessment with technical annexes and the organisation's management response are available at: www.mopanonline.org