

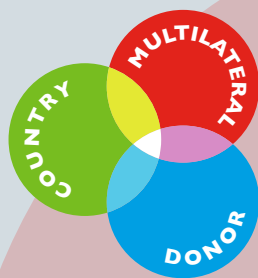
# MOPAN

Multilateral Organisation  
Performance Assessment Network

## **Synthesis report**

### **United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)**

2014



MOPAN

## Preface

The Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) is a network of donor countries with a common interest in assessing the organisational effectiveness of multilateral organisations and their measurement and reporting on development and/or humanitarian results. MOPAN was established in 2002 in response to international forums on aid effectiveness and calls for greater donor harmonisation and co-ordination.

In 2014, MOPAN is made up of 19 donor countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. For more information on MOPAN and to access previous assessment reports, please visit the MOPAN website ([www.mopanonline.org](http://www.mopanonline.org)).

Each year MOPAN carries out assessments of several multilateral organisations based on criteria agreed by MOPAN members. Its approach has evolved over the years, and since 2010 has been based on a survey of key stakeholders and a review of documents of multilateral organisations. MOPAN assessments provide a snapshot of four dimensions of organisational effectiveness (strategic management, operational management, relationship management, and knowledge management). In 2013, MOPAN integrated a component to examine the evidence of achievement of development and/or humanitarian results to complement the assessment of organisational effectiveness.

### MOPAN 2014

In 2014, MOPAN assessed the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women). MOPAN Institutional Leads, i.e. the members responsible for representing the network, liaised with the organisations throughout the assessment process. MOPAN Country Leads monitored the process in each country where the survey was undertaken and ensured the success of the survey.

MOPAN Institutional Leads	Multilateral organisation
Norway and Korea	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
Denmark	United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
Canada and United States	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
Spain and The Netherlands	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)
MOPAN Country Leads	Countries
United States	Bangladesh
Switzerland	Cambodia
France and Belgium	Democratic Republic of Congo
Germany	Ecuador
Finland and United States	Kenya
Ireland	Tanzania

## Acknowledgements

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We thank all participants in the MOPAN 2014 assessment of UN-Women. UN-Women's senior management and staff made valuable contributions throughout the assessment process. They reviewed and provided input to the indicators, organised and participated in interviews, provided key documents, identified the partners to be included in the survey, and provided feedback on draft reports. Representatives of UN-Women's Office of the Deputy Executive Director, Policy and Programmes Bureau, and of the Strategic Partnerships, Coordination and Intergovernmental Support Bureau played an invaluable role as Focal Points for the assessment process. Survey respondents took time to contribute their insights through the survey. The MOPAN Institutional Leads, Spain and The Netherlands, liaised with UN-Women throughout the assessment and reporting process. The MOPAN Country Leads oversaw the survey planning process in the field. Consultants in each country provided vital in-country support by following up with country-level survey respondents to enhance survey response rates.

### **Roles of authors and the MOPAN Secretariat**

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The MOPAN Chair was held by France in 2014 and worked in close co-operation with the MOPAN Technical Working Group to launch and manage the survey. The MOPAN Secretariat, established at the OECD in April 2013, oversaw all related tasks.

MOPAN developed the key performance and micro-indicators, designed the survey methodology, co-ordinated the preparation of the lists of survey respondents, and approved the final survey questionnaire for each agency. MOPAN also directed the approach to the document review and oversaw the design, structure, tone, and content of the institutional reports.

Universalialia and Epinion developed the survey instrument and carried out the survey and statistical data analysis. Universalialia carried out the document review, conducted the interviews with multilateral organisation staff at headquarters and country levels, analysed the data and wrote the institutional reports. Epinion is a Danish market research company that conducts specially designed studies for public and private organisations based on data collected among an organisation's employees, members, customers, partners, and other sources. (Website: [www.epinion.dk](http://www.epinion.dk))

Universalialia Management Group is a Canadian consulting firm established in 1980 that specialises in evaluation and monitoring for international development. Universalialia has made significant contributions to identifying best practices and developing tools in the fields of organisational assessment; planning, monitoring, and evaluation; results-based management; and capacity building. (Website: [www.universalialia.com](http://www.universalialia.com))

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## Acronyms

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DRF	Development results framework
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
GATE	Global accountability and tracking of evaluation
GERAAS	Global Evaluation Report Analysis and Assessment System
KPI	Key performance indicator
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MI	Micro-indicator
MONUSCO	United Nations Mission for the Stabilization of the DRC
MOPAN	Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network
OEEF	Organisational effectiveness and efficiency framework
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
PMD	Performance Management and Development
QCPR	Quadrennial comprehensive policy review
RBB	Results-based budgeting
RBM	Results-based management
SN/AWP	Strategic Note/ Annual Work Plan
SWAP	UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women

## Executive summary

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This report presents the findings of an assessment of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) conducted by the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN). MOPAN reports provide an assessment of four dimensions of organisational effectiveness (strategic management, operational management, relationship management, and knowledge management), an assessment of the evidence of the organisation's relevance and development results, and snapshots of UN-Women's performance in each of the six countries included in the MOPAN survey.

UN-Women envisions 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.

UN-Women was created by the UN General Assembly in July 2010 in response to longstanding challenges faced by the UN in its efforts to promote gender equality, including insufficient funding and the lack of leadership to direct UN activities on gender equality. The new organisation was established by UN Member States at the urging of more than 300 civil society organisations worldwide. It emerged from the consolidation of four previously distinct entities: Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), and United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

UN-Women is the centre of the gender equality architecture of the United Nations system and has a triple mandate that encompasses normative support, co-ordination and operational functions, as spelled out in General Assembly Resolution 64/289, the founding resolution for the Entity. The General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, and the Commission on the Status of Women constitute the multi-tiered intergovernmental governance structure for UN-women's normative support functions and provide normative policy guidance. The General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, and the Executive Board of the Entity constitute the multi-tiered intergovernmental governance structure for the operational activities and provide operational policy guidance. The founding resolution also established the Entity's additional role of leading, co-ordinating and promoting the accountability of the United Nations system in its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women. Towards this end, the Entity operates as part of the UN Resident Coordinator system, within the United Nations Country Team, and the head of the Entity is a full member of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination.

The General Assembly founding resolution called for UN-Women to have universal coverage and established that any expansion of its capacity should build on the field presence and infrastructure of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW). Based on the results of a field capacity assessment completed in February 2011, and taking into account the presence and capacity of other UN agencies, along with criteria from the Strategic Plan 2011-13 (i.e. the situation of gender equality, women and girls; development and income level of the country; active conflict or post conflict or the presence of other insecurities faced by women in the country; and high levels of inequality), by the end of 2013, UN-Women had established a decentralised structure and delegated authority to six regional offices, six multi-country offices, and 48 country offices, in addition to maintaining a programme presence in 28 countries.



Several international agreements frame UN-Women's work, including the Charter of the United Nations; the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, including its twelve critical areas of concern; the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly; and applicable United Nations instruments, standards and resolutions that support, address and contribute to gender equality and the empowerment and the advancement of women. UN-Women is also guided by the recommendations of the General Assembly in Resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.

UN-Women's six impact areas are laid out in its strategic plan.

#### UN-WOMEN'S IMPACT AREAS <sup>1</sup>

<b>Impact 1:</b>	Women lead and participate in decision making at all levels
<b>Impact 2:</b>	Women, especially the poorest and most excluded, are economically empowered and benefit from development
<b>Impact 3:</b>	Women and girls live a life free from violence
<b>Impact 4:</b>	Peace and security and humanitarian action are shaped by women leadership and participation
<b>Impact 5:</b>	Governance and national planning fully reflect accountability for gender equality commitments and priorities
<b>Impact 6:</b>	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

The bulk of UN-Women's funding comes from voluntary contributions from member states and non-governmental partners. In addition, UN-Women is allocated funds from the regular UN budget (approximately 2% of UN-Women's projected funding for 2014-2015) (UNGA, 2013 [02]).<sup>2</sup>

#### MOPAN assessment

This is the first MOPAN assessment of UN-Women. It is based on information collected through a perception-based survey of key stakeholders, document review, and interviews with UN-Women staff. The survey respondents included UN-Women's direct partners, MOPAN donors based in-country and at headquarters, and peer organisations in countries where UN-Women has programming. Six countries were included in the MOPAN survey of UN-Women: Bangladesh, Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Kenya and Tanzania.

A total of 254 respondents participated in the survey (30 MOPAN donors based at headquarters, 29 MOPAN donors based in-country, 141 direct partners, and 54 representatives of peer organisations). The document review examined more than 400 documents. Interviews were held with 61 UN-Women staff members (52 staff members at headquarters, 6 Country Representatives /Officers-In-Charge and 3 Regional Directors).

1. It was agreed with UN-Women to use the formulation of the impacts from the 2014-2017 Strategic Plan

2. The proposed overall resources from the United Nations' regular budget attributed to UN-Women for the years 2014-2015 is 15,257,900 USD before recosting. In addition, extrabudgetary resources amounting to 700,000,000 USD under the UN-Women support budget are projected for the biennium 2014-2015. For more information, please see financial resources overview presented in the "Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015. Part IV: International cooperation for development: Section 17, UN-Women"

The main findings of the institutional assessment of UN-Women are summarised below.

## **Key findings**

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### **Strategic management**

MOPAN established five key performance indicators (KPI) in the area of strategic management, which address the organisation's leadership on the results agenda and capacities for developing and following institutional and country strategies that reflect good practices in managing for results.

UN-Women has drawn on the experiences of other United Nations organisations in results-based management (RBM) and has made consistent efforts to develop, both internally and externally, a culture of RBM. UN-Women's corporate and country strategic planning documents offer evidence of a results focus, are tied directly to the Entity's mandate, and are based on extensive consultations with partners. UN-Women provides staff and partners with RBM training opportunities, although developing staff RBM capacity remains a challenge. Survey scores mostly concurred with the document review, rating UN-Women strong in most areas of strategic management.

UN-Women's strategic plan reflects its mandate and three main roles (operational, normative and co-ordination), identifies the six organisation-wide impact areas and indicates how the mandate will be implemented. The plan is strongly aligned with UN-Women's mandate and with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR). Surveyed stakeholders consider UN-Women's normative and co-ordination roles clear, but are less clear and/or have differing expectations about its operational role.

UN-Women maintains a strong focus on gender equality, good governance and human rights-based approaches in its operations. It undertakes some environmental activities when questions of gender and environment intersect, although environmental sustainability is not identified as an organisation-wide priority.

UN-Women was rated adequate for its corporate and country focus on results. Room for improvement was noted in: distinguishing levels of results (i.e. outputs often describe higher level changes that are typically associated with outcomes), the use of indicators that do not adequately measure UN-Women's outputs, and the lack of explicit and comprehensive theories of change. It is therefore difficult to see a clear link between UN-Women's activities and the outputs on which it reports, which translates into difficulties in assessing its contributions to development results.

### **Operational management**

MOPAN established seven key indicators in the area of operational management, which refers to managing operations in a way that is performance-oriented, thus ensuring organisational accountability for resources and results.

UN-Women has demonstrated a results focus in operational management, adopting monitoring, reporting, evaluation, and auditing strategies and processes that take into account the need to provide senior management with adequate performance information to make informed decisions. Since UN-Women is a new organisation, it is still in the process of setting up practices and policies. However, most systems are now in place, including: annual reporting on expenditures and progress achieved; financial checks and balances such as annual external financial audits and internal audits carried out on countries and procedures identified as "high risk"; strategies to identify and deal with fraud and corruption; a human

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resource performance assessment system applied to all staff; and processes for tracking performance of programmes and projects. It is still too early to assess the effectiveness of these systems in providing useful information to senior management.

In the MOPAN assessment, UN-Women was rated strong for its systems for financial accountability, ensuring that country programming is based on appropriate analysis, its human resource management practices, and its ongoing process of decentralisation and delegation of authority to regional and country offices. There are issues with respect to procurement procedures, risk management strategies and the transparency of UN-Women's system for allocating funding to country offices and partners. UN-Women's process of decentralisation and delegation of decision-making authority is ongoing, but a number of offices are under-staffed due to insufficient funding, thus restricting capacity to carry out plans. Some project audits report insufficient resources and inadequate guidance or supervision at project level. UN-Women has not yet adopted a formal and systematic approach to risk management, although it is making progress in that direction.

### **Relationship management**

MOPAN established six key performance indicators (KPI) in the area of relationship management, which refers to how the organisation is working with others at the country level. This focuses on how it works with direct partners, peer organisations, and other donors at the country level in ways that contribute to aid effectiveness and that are aligned with the principles of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation and previous aid effectiveness commitments.

UN-Women is guided by the principles set out in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR). It supports the aid effectiveness agenda through its participation with other entities of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) in efforts to adhere to QCPR directives, such as simplification of the programming process (to allow the strengthening of national ownership and a closer alignment of the UNDAF with national priorities) and a stronger focus on joint programming.

UN-Women is perceived to be adequate or strong in all areas of relationship management, including in supporting national priorities, adjusting procedures, using country systems, contributing to policy dialogue, and harmonising procedures. UN-Women is effective in aligning its programming at the country level with both national priorities and other UN programming. Country offices develop multiyear country planning documents in consultation with country stakeholders and these are aligned with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and national priorities on gender equality. The organisation is generally seen as flexible and responsive to changing circumstances. UN-Women offers technical support to strengthen national government capacity for data collection and provides a platform for discussion and negotiation between government and civil society. Its inputs to policy dialogue are seen as strong by survey respondents.

In accordance with its mandate to lead and co-ordinate UN system-wide efforts on gender equality, UN-Women is particularly involved in co-ordination and partnership initiatives. The Entity's co-ordination role is reflected in its leadership of the UN System-wide Action Plan (SWAP) on gender equality and its co-ordination of gender theme groups and other initiatives (gender equality markers, co-ordination of UN country team initiatives on gender mainstreaming, etc). However, both thematic evaluations and staff interviews indicate that its co-ordination capacity has been uneven across country offices and there has been uncertainty among country staff about how to operationalise the Entity's co-ordination mandate at the country level. On the partnership side, UN-Women has participated in more than 100 joint programmes

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with other UN agencies and has developed joint initiatives with private sector and civil society organisations in line with wider UN system efforts to strengthen joint programming processes and improve coherence. As with its co-ordination role, UN-Women's ability to lead joint initiatives (particularly among the UN agencies) in some countries has been limited by capacity constraints and inadequate strategic planning.

### **Knowledge management**

MOPAN established three key performance indicators (KPI) in the area of knowledge management, which refers to developing feedback and reporting mechanisms and learning strategies that facilitate the sharing of knowledge and performance information. UN-Women was rated strong in evaluating results and adequate in presenting performance information and disseminating lessons learned.

While reporting and evaluation systems are in place, reporting is affected by lack of baseline data and identification of results and performance indicators, which do not yet present a complete picture of UN-Women's expected contributions to the outcomes identified in its development results framework.

A strong evaluation function is in place but is not yet fully used to capture and report on lessons learned. Although interviews confirmed UN-Women senior management's recognition of and commitment to a results-based management approach, its implementation across the organisation, particularly at the country level, is dependent on the availability of resources and an organisational culture that consistently supports evaluation and monitoring. UN-Women's systems for internal knowledge dissemination and communication of lessons learned between headquarters and country offices require improvement. UN-Women assigns importance to stakeholder participation in evaluations as an important empowerment tool, but stakeholder participation in all stages of the evaluation process is not well documented.

### **UN-Women's relevance and development results**

The MOPAN assessment found that UN-Women's work is relevant, particularly in terms of pursuing results that are in line with its mandate and functions and with global trends and priorities in the development field. The rationale for the creation of UN-Women remains valid (e.g. one of the main reasons for the creation of UN-Women was the need for leadership on gender equality at the global level). Survey respondents concurred on the relevance of UN-Women's key areas of work, noting particularly the relevance of its work in the areas of women's economic empowerment, women's political participation, and ending violence against women.

At the country level, the assessment found some, but still limited, documentary evidence that UN-Women's work responds to local needs and priorities. Since UN-Women is a relatively new entity, few corporate or decentralised evaluations have been conducted so far, and of these, only a small number address its relevance to country beneficiaries.

Document review and survey results suggest that UN-Women is making progress towards its expected organisation-wide results. Evidence is strongest for the three UN-Women impact areas for which corporate evaluations have taken place: advancing global norms, policies and standards (for example, through its support to the Commission on the Status of Women), ending violence against women, and peace and security. UN-Women's contribution in these areas has been recognised as effective and significant in corporate evaluations.

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The survey results and document review considered UN-Women's progress towards its stated country-level results as adequate in the six countries included in the assessment. Evidence of progress is stronger in Kenya (and to a somewhat lesser extent, Tanzania), where UN-Women made key contributions in the areas of women's political leadership and participation in decision making, and in ending violence against women.

Survey respondents in Kenya and Tanzania considered that UN-Women is making strong contributions to the achievement of national goals and priorities, including the MDGs. In the other countries, UN-Women's contribution is perceived as adequate. Although there is still a limited body of decentralised external evaluations to validate UN-Women's contributions, the document review noted that UN-Women's work is aligned with national goals and priorities.

## Conclusions

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UN-Women's clear mandate to promote gender equality and women's empowerment is a key strength of the organisation. The mandate is reflected in its planning and programming and is understood by most surveyed donors, direct partners and peer organisations, although surveyed stakeholders appear to be less clear or have differing expectations about UN-Women's operational role.

UN-Women's mandate and key functions are relevant. They are linked to the rationale for the creation of UN-Women and continue to be pertinent at the global and national levels.

Since its creation in 2010, UN-Women has had considerable success in setting up its operational infrastructure but more remains to be done to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of its operations. Funding challenges may limit UN-Women's ability to implement plans.

UN-Women has developed a focus on results and has set up relevant performance management systems. However, problems with the definition of results prevent UN-Women from identifying and assessing the contributions of its own activities. In addition, there are challenges with ensuring that a results-oriented culture and systems permeate the entire organisation.

UN-Women has made progress in fulfilling its function of leading and co-ordinating United Nations strategies, policies and actions to promote effective system-wide gender mainstreaming. However, its capacity to play this role is uneven at the country level due to funding and capacity constraints.

UN-Women has adopted good practices that are likely to enhance its contributions to development results. Despite resource mobilisation challenges, the organisation has set up global, regional and country strategic plans; put in place the necessary policies, systems and procedures for a decentralised organisation; expanded its presence at country level and delegated authority in order to improve the effectiveness of its country programming; and established knowledge management practices.

It is too early to assess in any comprehensive way UN-Women's development results. However, available evidence shows that UN-Women has made progress in three of its six impact areas: ending violence against women, women's leadership in peace and security, and advancing global norms and standards on gender equality. Overall achievements with respect to development results and the sustainability of results remain to be assessed.

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## Overall MOPAN ratings of UN-Women

Strategic management	Survey respondents	Document review
KPI-1 Providing direction for results	4.35	6
KPI-2 Corporate strategy based on clear mandate	4.73	5
KPI-3 Corporate focus on results	N/A	4
KPI-4 Focus on cross-cutting priorities	4.63	6
KPI-5 Country focus on results	4.73	4
<b>Operational management</b>		
KPI-6 Transparent and predictable funding	4.34	2
KPI-7 Results-based budgeting	4.13	4
KPI-8 Financial accountability	4.52	5
KPI-9 Using performance information	4.40	5
KPI-10 Managing human resources	4.08	5
KPI-11 Performance oriented programming	N/A	5
KPI-12 Delegating authority	3.59	5
<b>Relationship management</b>		
KPI-13 Supporting national plans	4.63	5
KPI-14 Adjusting procedures	4.22	N/A
KPI-15 Using country systems	4.53	N/A
KPI-16 Contributing to policy dialogue	4.87	N/A
KPI-17 Harmonising procedures	4.34	5
KPI-18 Co-ordination on gender equality	4.54	N/A
<b>Knowledge management</b>		
KPI-19 Evaluating results	4.76	5
KPI-20 Presenting performance information	4.08	4
KPI-21 Disseminating lessons learned	4.13	4
<b>Legend</b>		
Strong or above	4.50–6.00	
Adequate	3.50–4.49	
Inadequate or below	1.00–3.49	
Document review data unavailable	◆	
Not assessed	N/A	

**Relevance and evidence of progress towards results – overall ratings****Relevance and results****Assessment Rating**

KPI A: Evidence of UN-Women's relevance

Strong

KPI B: Evidence of progress towards organisation-wide results

Adequate

KPI C: Evidence of progress towards UN-Women's stated country-level results

Adequate

KPI D: Evidence of contribution to national goals and priorities, including Millennium Development Goals

Adequate

 Weak  Inadequate  Adequate  Strong





# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 PURPOSE OF MOPAN ASSESSMENTS

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MOPAN assessments are intended to:

- Generate relevant, credible and robust information MOPAN members can use to meet their domestic accountability requirements and fulfil their responsibilities and obligations as bilateral donors
- Provide an evidence base for MOPAN members, multilateral organisations and their partners/clients to discuss organisational effectiveness and reporting on development and/or humanitarian results
- Support dialogue between individual MOPAN members, multilateral organisations and their partners/clients to build understanding and improve organisational performance and results over time at both country and headquarters level.

MOPAN's assessment methodology is evolving in response to what is being learned from year to year, and to accommodate multilateral organisations with different mandates (e.g. global funds, organisations with significant humanitarian programming, organisations with a predominantly humanitarian mandate).

## 1.2 PROFILE OF UN-WOMEN

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The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) was created by the UN General Assembly in July 2010 in response to longstanding challenges faced by the UN in its efforts to promote gender equality, including insufficient funding and the lack of leadership to direct UN activities on gender equality. The new organisation was established by UN member states, at the urging of more than 300 civil society organisations worldwide, which united through the Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) campaign to call for a more coherent way to address gender equality in the UN's reform process. The creation of UN-Women represents an important step towards correcting the historic under-resourcing of work on gender equality and is part of the UN's broader efforts to increase effectiveness and efficiency by rationalising the structure of the UN and maximising its impact.

UN-Women emerged from the consolidation of four previously distinct entities:

- Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW)
- International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW)
- Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI)
- United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

### **Mission and mandate**

UN-Women envisions 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 (UNGA, 2010 [01]).

In order to make this vision a reality, the Entity provides guidance and technical support to all UN Member States on gender equality and the empowerment and rights of women and gender mainstreaming, through its normative support functions and operational activities, as per its founding resolution (General

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Assembly Resolution 64/289). The Entity is also called to lead to more effective co-ordination, coherence and gender mainstreaming across the UN system.

Resolution 64/289 determined that UN-Women's mandate and functions should consist of the consolidated mandates and functions of the four predecessor entities, to function as a secretariat of the Commission on the Status of Women and also to carry out operational activities at the country level. The resolution also provided UN-Women with the additional role of "leading, consolidating and promoting the accountability" of the UN system in its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

### **Governance and structure**

UN-Women is the centre of the gender equality architecture of the United Nations system and has a triple mandate that encompasses normative support, co-ordination and operational functions, as spelled out by the General Assembly in the UN-Women founding resolution. The General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, and the Commission on the Status of Women constitute the multi-tiered intergovernmental governance structure for UN-Women's normative support functions and provide normative policy guidance. The General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, and the Executive Board of UN-Women constitute the multi-tiered intergovernmental governance structure for the operational activities and provide operational policy guidance. The founding resolution also established the Entity's additional role of leading, co-ordinating and promoting the accountability of the United Nations system in its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women. Towards this end, the Entity operates as part of the UN Resident Coordinator system, within the United Nations Country Team, and the head of the Entity is a full member of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination.

The Executive Board is formed of representatives of 41 member states, elected for three-year terms. The allocation and number of representatives on the Board varies depending on the region: there are ten members from the Group of African States, ten from the Group of Asian States, four from the Group of Eastern European States, six from the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, five from the Group of Western European and Other States, and six from contributing countries. The composition of the Board was established in UN-Women's founding resolution 64/289.

The Board meets three times a year to oversee UN-Women's programme of work and approve its policies and approach. The Board is responsible for approving UN-Women's Strategic Plan and its integrated budget, adopting corporate policies and regulations (such as the financial regulations), and taking other decisions related to its oversight role. It co-ordinates with other UN agencies through, for example, annual joint meetings of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN-Women, and the World Food Programme (WFP).

UN-Women is led by an Executive Director/Under-Secretary-General supported by three divisions: (1) Intergovernmental Support and Strategic Partnerships Bureau, (2) Policy and Programme Bureau, and (3) Division of Management and Administration. UN-Women's Evaluation Office also reports directly to the Executive Director.

### **Strategy in place**

Several international agreements frame UN-Women's work, including the Charter of the United Nations; the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, including its twelve critical areas of concern; the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly; and applicable United Nations instruments,

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standards and resolutions that support, address and contribute to gender equality and the empowerment and the advancement of women.

UN-Women is also guided by the recommendations of the General Assembly in its resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. The QCPR expressed support for UN-Women's mandate to lead and co-ordinate UN system-wide efforts on gender equality and provided guidance on efforts to strengthen the links between UN-Women's operational, normative and co-ordination roles.

UN-Women's goals and principles are laid out in its strategic plan, informed by the aforementioned agreements and recommendations. The first strategic plan was produced for the 2011-2013 period. The second, for the period 2014-2017, updated and reiterated the key objectives identified in the first. As per its current strategic plan, UN-Women's programme focuses on the following six impact areas:

1. Increasing women's leadership and participation at all levels, including in political and economic areas

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2. Increasing women's access to economic opportunities, especially for those who are living in poverty

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3. Preventing and eliminating violence against women and girls

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4. Increasing women's leadership in peace, security and humanitarian response

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5. Strengthening the responsiveness of plans and budgets in the area of gender equality

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6. Supporting the development of global norms and policies on gender equality and women's empowerment.

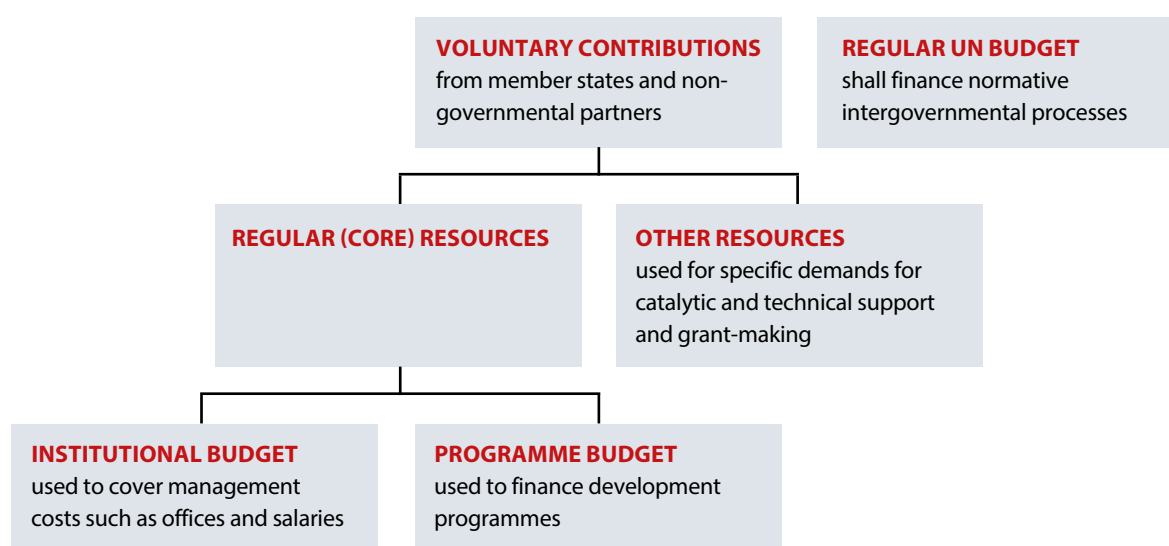
### **Finances and funding**

The bulk of UN-Women's funding comes from voluntary contributions from member states and non-governmental partners. These include untied contributions (known as regular or core resources) and contributions for specific programme purposes (known as Other Resources); these resources are used for both operations and programming as shown below. In addition, UN-Women resources required to service the normative intergovernmental processes are funded from the regular budget and approved by the General Assembly (these resources currently represent approximately 2% of UN-Women's projected funding for 2014-2015) (UNGA, 2013 [02]).<sup>3</sup>

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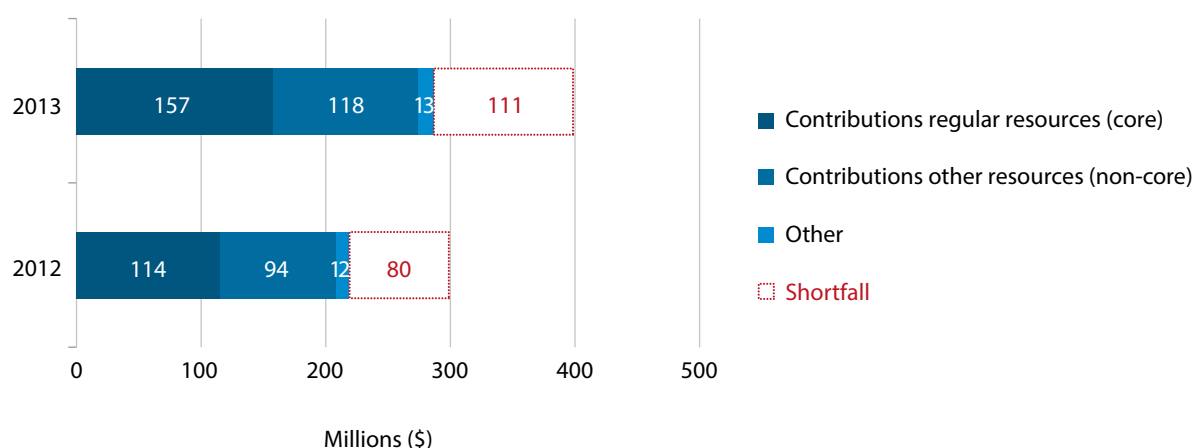
3. Please see footnote 2.

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**Figure 1.1 | Understanding UN-Women's budget structure**

\*Note: Some salaries are covered by the Programme Budget.<sup>4</sup>

The *Comprehensive Proposal for the Composite Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women* identified that total annual funding requirements for the initial phases were approximately USD 500 million (UNGA, 2010 [01]). Resource mobilisation remains a key priority for UN-Women, given that this level of resources has not yet been achieved and that UN Women is a new organisation, still in the process of setting up. The organisation recorded a revenue shortfall of almost USD 200 million for the biennium 2012-2013<sup>5</sup> compared to its projections of USD 700 million, as illustrated below.

**Figure 1.2 | Actual vs. projected revenue for 2012 and 2013**

Source: Assessment team compilation using financial data from the 2012 Audited Financial Statements and the 2013-2014 Annual Report of UN-Women

4. The institutional budget covers a fixed number of posts (431 for the biennium 2014-2015); additional salaries must be covered by the Programme Budget.

5. Initial request was \$500 million per year. These projections were revised to \$300 million in 2012 and \$400 million in 2013, for a total of \$700 million for the biennium 2012-2013. UN-Women's actual revenue for this period (2012-2013) was \$509 million (\$220 million in 2012, and \$289 million in 2013). However, it should be noted that the 2013 numbers are based on un-audited data.

**Decentralisation**

Resolution 64/289 called for UN-Women to have universal coverage and established that any expansion of its capacity should build on the field presence and infrastructure of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW).

To ensure adequate institutional capacity to meet partners' expectations, UN-Women launched a field capacity assessment (completed in February 2011), the results of which were intended to be used to: (a) enable UN-Women to propose a standard model of support to Member States; (b) outline the minimum capacities required at country level to deliver this support; and (c) develop an analysis and baseline of what was required to meet this minimum capacity. UN-Women's decision to expand its capacity in countries and regions was based on the results of the field capacity assessment, and also took into account the presence and capacity of other UN agencies, as well as criteria from the Strategic Plan 2011-13 (i.e. the situation of gender equality, women and girls; development and income level of the country; active conflict or post conflict or the presence of other insecurities faced by women in the country; and high levels of inequality).

In its *Regional Architecture Plan* (2012), UN-Women identifies the need to increase its country presence and delegate greater authority to the field as its highest priority in an effort to improve its effectiveness and presence on the ground and to address weaknesses associated with the centralised structure inherited from predecessor entities (these included, but were not limited to, uneven capacities, overly centralised decision and approval mechanisms, and high transaction costs).

The decentralisation process is well underway. By the end of 2013, six regional offices, six multi-country offices, and 48 country offices were in place. UN-Women also has a programme presence in 28 countries. At the time of the Executive Director's most recent annual report, 38 offices had received full delegation of authority (UN Women, 2014 [08]). From 2012 to 2013, the percentage of field positions increased from 54% (298) to 62% (413) while headquarters positions decreased from 46% (256) to 38% (244). As part of the decentralisation process, the regional offices have taken on more important managerial and administrative roles, including programme oversight, quality assurance, technical and operational support, policy advice, and support to knowledge-sharing and inter-agency co-ordination. UN-Women headquarters in New York continues to fill a high-level strategic oversight role, in addition to playing a normative role and supporting country and regionally focused inter-agency processes.

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## 2. Methodology

## 2.1 OVERVIEW

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The detailed MOPAN methodology – “the Common Approach” – is presented in the Technical Report, Volume II, Appendix I. The following is a brief summary.

MOPAN assessments examine:

- Organisational effectiveness: Organisational systems, practices, and behaviours that MOPAN believes are important for managing for results, and that influence an organisation’s ability to achieve its strategic objectives and contribute to its proposed development or humanitarian results at the country level; and
- Humanitarian and/or development results: Evidence of an organisation’s contributions to development and/or humanitarian results at both the organisation-wide level and the country level, as well as the relevance of the organisation’s work.

Refinements that have been made in the methodology over time should be taken into consideration when comparing MOPAN assessments of an organisation across years.

### **Data collection methods and sources**

Over the years, MOPAN developed a mixed-methods approach to generate relevant and credible information that MOPAN members can use to meet their domestic accountability requirements and support dialogue with multilateral organisations that they are funding.

MOPAN uses multiple data sources and data collection methods to triangulate and validate findings. This helps eliminate bias and detect errors or anomalies.

In 2014, the two primary sources of data were perception-based surveys of the multilateral organisation’s stakeholders (see respondent groups in Section 2.2 below) and a review of documents prepared by the organisations assessed and from other sources. Interviews with staff of multilateral organisations contributed to contextualising data and helped clarify findings emerging from other data.

### **Assessment of organisational effectiveness**

MOPAN examines performance in four areas of organisational effectiveness: strategic management, operational management, relationship management, and knowledge management. Within each performance area, effectiveness is described using key performance indicators (KPIs) that are measured through a series of micro-indicators (MIs) using data from the survey and document review.

For organisational effectiveness, survey respondent ratings are shown as mean scores and are presented alongside document review ratings based on criteria defined for each micro-indicator. Not all micro-indicators are assessed by both the survey and the document review. The charts show survey scores and document review scores for the relevant key performance indicators or micro-indicators.

### **Assessment of development and/or humanitarian results**

MOPAN also examines the concrete evidence of results achieved and the relevance of country-based activities through four key performance indicators:

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- Evidence of the multilateral organisation's relevance.
- Evidence of the multilateral organisation's progress towards its organisation-wide results.
- Evidence of the multilateral organisation's progress towards its stated country-level results.
- Evidence of the multilateral organisation's contribution to national goals and priorities, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

In this component of the assessment, a “best fit approach” is used in determining the ratings for the KPIs above. This approach is used because it is better suited when criteria are multi-dimensional, there is a mix of both qualitative and quantitative data, and it is not possible to calculate a simple sum of the data points. Based on an analysis of all lines of evidence (document review, survey and interviews), each KPI is given a preliminary rating (strong, adequate, inadequate, weak) based on performance descriptors. A panel of experts reviews and validates the preliminary ratings and draft findings.<sup>6</sup> The criteria used as a basis for judgement and the process followed to arrive at a final rating are described in the Technical Report, Volume II, Appendix I.

## 2.2 DATA SOURCES AND RATINGS

### Survey

MOPAN gathers stakeholder perceptions through a survey of MOPAN members (at headquarters and in-country) and other key stakeholders of the multilateral organisation such as direct partners and peer organisations. Donor respondents are chosen by MOPAN member countries; other respondents are identified by the multilateral organisation being assessed.

The survey questions relate to both organisational effectiveness and to the achievement of development and/or humanitarian results. Survey respondents are presented with statements and are asked to rate the organisation's performance on a six-point scale where a rating of 1 is considered “very weak” up to a rating of 6 which is considered “very strong.” A mean score is calculated for each respondent group (e.g. donors at headquarters).

MOPAN aims to achieve a 70% response rate from donors at headquarters and a 50% response rate among respondents in each of the survey countries (i.e. donors in-country and other respondent groups such as direct partners/clients).

All survey respondents are also required to answer two open-ended questions:

- What do you consider to be the organisation's greatest strength?
- What do you consider to be the area where it most needs improvement?

Responses are reviewed using content analysis based on the themes of the micro-indicators and then categorised by common themes that emerge from the comments. Percentages are calculated based on

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6. The panel is composed of the Senior Methodological Advisor, the senior consultants involved in each of the assessments, and external peer reviewers with knowledge of the particular agency, the UN system, or expertise in managing for results.

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the total number of people who responded to the MOPAN survey for each organisation and the number of responses on each theme. The themes that respondents note most frequently are cited in the report, when relevant.

### UN-Women survey respondents

In the 2014 assessment, the survey results for UN-Women reflect the views of 254 respondents on UN-Women's performance in the areas of organisational effectiveness and contribution to development results.<sup>7</sup> The respondent groups for UN-Women included representatives of:

- donors at headquarters
- donors in-country
- direct partners
- peer organisations.<sup>8</sup>

**Figure 2.1 | Number of survey respondents and total population for UN-Women by country and respondent group (n=254)**

Actual number of respondents (total population)					
Geographic focus	Donors at HQ	Donors in country	Direct partners	Peer organisations	Total
Bangladesh	–	5 (7)	25 (35)	10 (11)	40 (53)
Cambodia	–	3 (7)	27 (36)	8 (11)	38 (54)
Democratic Republic of Congo	–	4 (9)	22 (32)	10 (17)	36 (58)
Ecuador	–	5 (9)	21 (30)	6 (6)	32 (45)
Kenya	–	6 (10)	22 (34)	5 (10)	33 (54)
Tanzania	–	6 (12)	24 (37)	15 (16)	45 (65)
Global	30 (42)	–	–	–	30 (42)
<b>Total</b>	<b>30 (42)</b>	<b>29 (50)</b>	<b>141 (204)</b>	<b>54 (71)</b>	<b>254 (371)</b>
Response rate	71%	58%	69%	76%	69%

7. See Technical Report, Volume II, Appendix I (methodology) for an explanation of the weighting formula and scheme.

8. Peer organisations may include: UN organisations or international NGOs that have collaborated with the MO in its thematic area of work in the countries included in the assessment. These organisations collaborate with but do not receive any direct funding from the organisation assessed.

### Document review

The document review considers different types of documents: multilateral organisation documents; internal and external reviews of the organisation's performance; and evaluations, either internal or external, of the achievement of results at various levels.<sup>9</sup> The MOPAN assessment of UN-Women reviewed more than 400 documents, most of which were publicly available.

Document review ratings are based on a set of criteria that MOPAN considers to represent good practice in each area. The criteria are based on existing standards and guidelines (for example, UNEG or OECD-DAC guidelines), on MOPAN identification of key aspects to consider, and on the input of subject-matter specialists. The rating for each micro-indicator depends on the number of criteria met by the organisation.

### Interviews

Semi-structured interviews are conducted at headquarters, regional offices (in some cases), and country offices of multilateral organisations with staff members who are knowledgeable in areas that relate to the MOPAN assessment. The interviews provide the assessment team with i) the most accurate information about a multilateral organisation's on-going reform agenda and the key documents that explain the various systems and practices that have been established to support it; and ii) contextual insight to clarify, refute and/or validate observations emerging from other lines of evidence/data sources.

Interviews were held with 61 UN-Women staff members: 52 staff members at headquarters, 6 Country Representatives /Officers-In-Charge and 3 Regional Directors.

## 2.3 STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE MOPAN COMMON APPROACH

MOPAN continues to improve its methodology based on experience each year. The following strengths and limitations should be considered when reading MOPAN reports.

### Strengths

- The MOPAN Common Approach is based on existing bilateral assessment tools with the intent to reduce the need for other assessment approaches by bilateral donors.
- In line with donor commitments to aid effectiveness and ownership, it seeks perceptual information from different stakeholder groups.
- It uses multiple sources of data to increase the validity of the assessment, enhance analysis, and provide a basis for discussion of agency effectiveness.
- MOPAN reports are validated and reviewed by the MOPAN members, the multilateral organisation being assessed and the MOPAN Secretariat.

### Limitations

- Although MOPAN uses recognised standards and criteria for good practice, such criteria do not exist for all indicators. Many document review criteria were developed by MOPAN; these are a work in progress and not definitive standards.

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9. MOPAN does not use bilateral assessments of multilateral organisations as a source of data because some of these assessments draw on MOPAN as a source of data.

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- The countries selected for MOPAN assessments comprise only a small proportion of each institution's operations, thus limiting generalisations.
- The survey covers a broad range of issues and individual respondents may not have the knowledge to respond to all the questions relating to a given organisation. In addition, survey rating choices may not be used consistently by all respondents. Some respondents may tend to avoid extremes on a scale and respondents in some cultures may be unwilling to criticise or too eager to praise.
- While the use of multiple sources of data strengthens the validity of MOPAN assessments, there are often differences between the findings from different data sources. Some differences may be explained by the fact that document review ratings are based on very specific criteria while survey results are determined by the perceptions of a wide range of stakeholders with different levels of knowledge of UN-Women. Interviews often provide important context for the assessment, but may not be sufficient to explain any differences between the survey and document review ratings.
- In the survey at the country level, there are sometimes only a few respondents in a particular respondent group. To ensure confidentiality in such cases, the Technical Report does not provide a breakdown by respondent group. In addition, if the evaluation team identifies outliers whose survey responses are shifting the trend in the mean score, the report presents the mean score with and without the outlier ratings.

### **Challenges in applying the MOPAN Common Approach to UN-Women**

- This is the first MOPAN assessment of UN-Women and one of the first multi-donor reviews of UN-Women's organisational effectiveness and results, since the Entity was established. While this presents some challenges, it also means that many UN-Women systems, processes and practices have been recently documented, providing recent secondary data for the review.
  - While UN-Women uses many of UNDP's systems (e.g. performance management, internal audit) it was not always possible to determine which activities were defined by UN-Women policies and which by UNDP policies and practices. The document review did not always include UN-Women-specific documents on the use of UNDP systems.
  - Although the majority of survey respondents were familiar with and had regular contact with UN-Women, over half had previous experience with one or more of UN Women's predecessor entities. As a result, it is possible that some respondents may have been thinking of these previous entities (notably UNIFEM) when replying to the UN-Women survey.
  - Some countries selected for this year's MOPAN assessment, such as Tanzania and Kenya, are part of the UN Delivering as One initiative or incrementally moving in that direction. The current MOPAN methodology does not allow for a careful examination of how UN-Women is contributing to or participating in Delivering as One.
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- Although efforts were made to include questions in the perception-based survey related to UN-Women's intergovernmental role, the current MOPAN framework does not adapt easily to organisations that have a strong normative mandate (such as UN-Women). Therefore, data collection methods provided limited information on UN-Women's efforts to support implementation of the global normative framework at the global, regional, and country levels.

The large amount of data and the efforts to explore convergence of the different sources help to mitigate the limitations. Interviews at headquarters and with some decentralised staff enrich the analysis beyond document reviews and survey responses. The reports thus provide a reasonable picture at a particular point in time of both the systems associated with the organisational effectiveness of multilateral organisations and the evidence of development and/or humanitarian results achieved.

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### 3. UN-Women's organisational effectiveness

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a summary of UN-Women's performance in four performance areas (strategic, operational, relationship, and knowledge management) as well as findings on each of the key performance indicators (KPI) in each area. The assessment draws on document review, survey results, and interviews. Data on the specific micro-indicators that were assessed in each KPI are presented in the Technical Report.

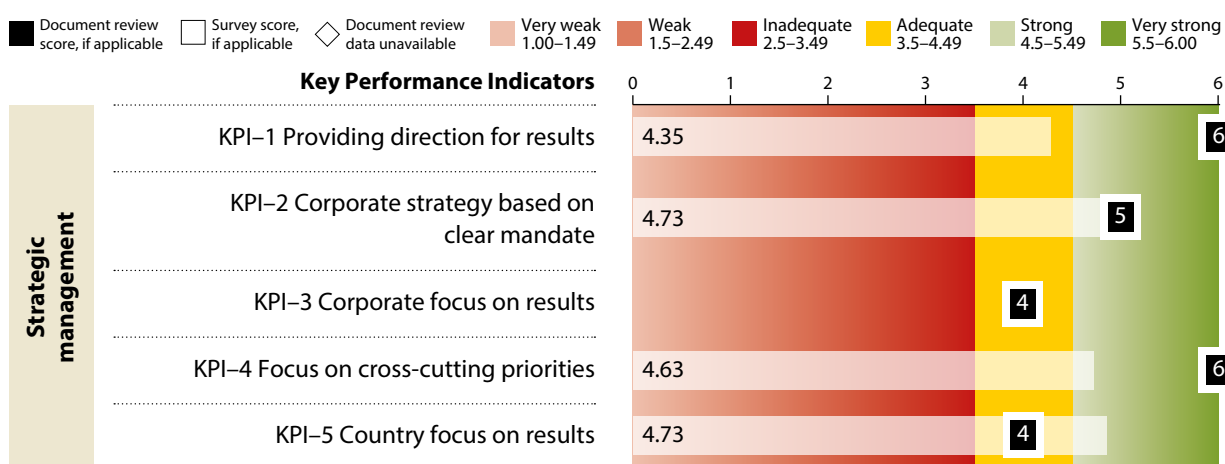
### 3.2 STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

#### 3.2.1 Summary

Survey respondents perceived UN-Women to be strong in its strategic focus on a clear mandate, its focus on cross-cutting priorities and results at the country level, and adequate in providing direction for the achievement of results. The document review ratings ranged from adequate to very strong.

Figure 3.1 shows the overall survey and document review ratings for the five KPIs in the strategic management performance area.

**Figure 3.1 | Performance area I: Strategic management, survey and document review ratings**



#### 3.2.2 Findings on each key performance indicator

##### KPI 1: Providing direction for results

**Finding 1:** UN-Women promotes a culture of results-based management among staff and partners, although there is a need for sustained investment in capacity building in this area.

UN-Women was created in 2010 with the expectation of strengthening UN system-wide capacity to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women. From the outset, UN-Women has tried to meet the expectation that it will demonstrate results in this area and on the ground. Survey respondent ratings and the document review indicate that UN-Women is on the right track in meeting these expectations; donors at headquarters rated UN-Women's management strong for providing leadership on results

management and the document review rated the organisation very strong for applying an organisation-wide policy on results management.

Senior management has given clear direction for the development of a comprehensive system supporting the application of an RBM approach by staff. Examples of this results focus can be found in the results-based orientation of corporate and country-level strategic planning documents.

In its Programme and Operations Manual, the Entity defines the concept of results-based management (RBM) and its various elements (results, indicators) in alignment with UNDG's Results-Based Management Handbook. UN-Women provides capacity building opportunities to its staff, both through training activities and through the review process for country planning. UN-Women also promotes a culture of results-based management among implementing partners through the provision of training and the requirement for results-oriented reporting. The 2014-2017 Strategic Plan recognises the need for continuous investment in capacity building of staff in this area, and senior managers at UN-Women acknowledge the importance of RBM and confirm that staff capacity building is an area requiring further attention.

## **KPI 2: Corporate strategy based on clear mandate**

**Finding 2:** **UN-Women's Strategic Plan 2014-2017 is strongly aligned with its mandate and with the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR). UN-Women's normative and co-ordination roles are considered clear by surveyed stakeholders, although they are less clear on, and/or have differing expectations of, UN-Women's operational role.**

Survey respondents rated UN-Women strong on most components related to the alignment of the strategic plan and mandate. In response to an open-ended question of the perception-based survey, 28% of survey respondents commented that the Entity's greatest strength is its global mandate to defend and promote women's human rights; this was the most frequently cited strength of UN-Women. The establishment of a UN agency dedicated to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment (and the fact that the head of UN-Women also holds the influential position of Under-Secretary-General) was noted as a major step forward in ensuring that gender equality remains a priority of the UN system.

The document review rated UN-Women strong in alignment of its strategic plan with its mandate. UN-Women's Strategic Plan 2014-2017 is clearly focused on the organisation's mandate, described in the General Assembly Resolution 64/289. The Strategic Plan 2014-2017, which reflects UN-Women's three main roles (operational, normative support and co-ordination), operationalises the organisation's mandate by identifying and articulating six impact areas and by providing a clear indication of how the mandate will be implemented (UN-Women, 2013 [03]).

In addition, UN-Women used the update of the 2011-2013 Strategic Plan as an opportunity to integrate key Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) directives in its strategic plan, namely: i) harmonisation and strengthening of joint programming and results-based management, ii) mutual accountability within the framework of the resident co-ordinator system, iii) increased investments in gender equality, iv) more reliable tracking of resource allocation, and v) expertise to enhance gender mainstreaming in programme planning and implementation.

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However, the perception-based survey reflected different levels of understanding of UN-Women's main roles. Survey respondents rated it strong for the clarity of its normative and co-ordination roles, but average for the clarity of its operational role (see sidebar). There are three plausible explanations for this result. The first, supported by the corporate thematic evaluations, is that while its predecessor in the field (UNIFEM) had a strong project-based operational presence, UN-Women now has to mesh its operational role with its normative and co-ordination roles. Indeed, the 2014 meta-analysis of evaluations indicated that UN-Women is facing the challenges of a new organisation, especially in terms of clarifying its role and mandate, and developing synergies across components (UN-Women Evaluation Office, 2014 [04]). The second is that survey respondents may have different expectations of the Entity and its various mandates. Again, the evaluations reviewed in the 2014 meta-synthesis also support this explanation. They found that UN-Women's enhanced visibility has brought with it high expectations that are proving to be a challenge for the organisation, especially at the country level (UN-Women Evaluation Office, 2014 [04]). Finally, it may also be possible that UN-Women has not adequately communicated the components of its triple mandate to its stakeholders.

**Illustrative survey respondent views reflecting limited clarity of and/or differing expectations vis-à-vis UN-Women's operational role**

*"I think the organisation is still in a transition from staff working directly with implementing partners (local governments and NGO's) on project activities to an organization with staff focussing on upstream advocacy, policy influence and contributing to outcomes at the national & international level."*

(Donor at headquarters respondent)

*"It is unclear whether UN Women should primarily be [an] implementing agency or expertise agency or both."*

(Peer organisation respondent)

*"[UN-Women should] provide more technical and financial support to national and county level organizations working on gender issues, and engage in less implementation."* (Direct partner respondent)

*"[UN-Women should be] highlighting what exactly it does (implementation and policy dialogue) at [the] country level."* (Donor in- country respondent)

Two recent thematic evaluations noted the challenges associated with this shift of mandate. The evaluation of UN-Women's contribution to preventing violence against women reported that "the adoption of project approaches in several countries did not allow a timeframe long enough to see through policy and implementation" (UN-Women, 2013 [51]). Similarly, the evaluation of UN-Women's contributions to peace and security and humanitarian responses noted that "the case studies highlighted a lack of clarity, including among some UN Women staff, of how UN Women's operational role would differ from the project-based work of its predecessor, UNIFEM" (UN-Women, 2014 [03]).

### KPI 3: Corporate focus on results

**Finding 3:** **UN-Women's development results chain and performance indicators do not yet present a complete picture of UN-Women's expected contributions to the outcomes identified in its development results framework. A review of strategic plans for 2011-2013 and 2014-2017 shows that UN-Women is nonetheless making progress in its corporate focus on results.**

According to the document review, UN-Women's corporate focus on results is adequate. UN-Women's Strategic Plan 2014-2017 includes results statements and performance indicators at all three levels of the results chain (outputs, outcomes and impacts) and, in the majority of cases, indicators are measurable

and time-bound. However, the assessment team has some concerns with regard to the results outlined in the development results framework (DRF).

The first is that output statements are often presented as changes in behaviour and strengthened collective capacities (see sidebar) that are closer to outcome-level results, as defined in RBM guidelines in the Programme and Operations Manual (UN-Women, n.d. [02]).<sup>10</sup> For example, outputs in capacity development tend to focus on the consequences of capacity strengthening (e.g. policies approved, new legislation) rather than on the capacities that are strengthened (e.g. skills acquired, tools developed). In other words, UN-Women is pushing its accountability for capacity development to a level that is beyond its immediate control, rather than measuring and reporting on the direct results of its own activities.

**Examples of UN-Women output statements from the 2014-2017 development results framework:**

*The following are examples of output statements that the assessment team judge to be statements of outcomes (consequences of activities) and not outputs (changes directly under the control of UN-Women):*

*National institutions produce disaggregated data and statistics for gender responsive policy-making and service delivery*

*Member States more accountable for WPS [women, peace and security] commitments*

*Gender equality and women's empowerment fully reflected in the future development agenda*

The second concern relates to the narrow focus of the indicators used to measure outputs and outcomes. Current indicators are designed to measure desired results in quantitative terms (e.g. number of laws approved, number of countries with national dialogues and policies, etc.), but not in terms of the desired or expected qualitative changes that would be associated with those results (e.g. more comprehensive legal frameworks). This makes the assessment of progress difficult because the indicators measure only one aspect of the planned result. In addition, some indicators measure progress at the global level (e.g. number of countries that have adopted temporary special measures), but do not capture improvements within countries over time.

A third concern is the availability of baseline information. Although UN-Women has made commendable progress in gathering and reporting baseline data since its creation, one-third of performance indicators in the 2014-2017 Development Results Framework initially lacked baseline data. However, UN-Women generally specifies how the missing data will be gathered for each indicator (e.g. with an internal survey of UN-Women's country offices). Interviews with UN-Women indicated that all baseline data have been recently updated (although the corresponding document is not yet publicly available).

A last concern is that UN-Women does not provide explicit theories of change for its impact areas that explain how outputs are intended to contribute to the outcomes identified in its development results framework, although it is in the process of developing theories of change. A recent corporate evaluation notes that although UN-Women is guided by international frameworks and resolutions that reflect a high-level theory of change about the importance of women's participation in decision making, "the results chains and theories of change underpinning UN Women's activities are, for the most part, implicit and rarely documented" (UN-Women, 2014 [03]).

10. UN-Women defines outcomes as "changes related to: (1) Adoption of implementation of strengthened or revised laws and policies (e.g. the normative framework); (2) Improved service delivery and budgets for gender equality concerns; (3) Enhanced collective capacities and influence of government and non-government organisations, gender equality advocates and specialists, including groups representing women who are marginalised; and (4) Increased political will and expanded constituencies to advance gender equality." Outputs of a programme or project are defined as "concrete results that UN-Women is wholly responsible to deliver with Implementing Partners... These are changes in capacity (knowledge, awareness, advocacy skills, resources, tools) and changes in the availability of relevant knowledge, including of data and evidence about gender issues." (UN-Women, n.d. [02])

**KPI 4: Focus on cross-cutting priorities**

**Finding 4:** UN-Women maintains a strong focus on gender equality, good governance and human rights-based approaches. It was given lower ratings for its focus on the environment, as environmental considerations are not a central part of its work.

The document review and survey respondents both rated UN-Women strong for its focus on gender equality, good governance and human rights-based approaches. Gender equality and human rights are an integral part of its work, as is good governance given that the organisation advocates for accountability and transparency on the realisation of gender equality commitments.

UN-Women was rated adequate for promoting environmental sustainability in its work. Environment is not identified as a priority area in its corporate strategic documents and the type of work carried out by the organisation does not have strong environmental implications. However, it does undertake some environmental activities when questions of gender and environment intersect. At the global level, UN-Women contributes to strengthening intergovernmental normative frameworks on gender equality, sustainable development, and climate change. For instance, UN-Women is engaged in the Conference of Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP) process, which resulted in the first ever resolution on gender balance in the climate change negotiations, and has also contributed to highlighting the gender specific implications of climate change and the need to address those in future climate agreements (ECOSOC, 2014 [01]; UNGA, 2014 [04]). In some countries, UN-Women works on integrating gender concerns in disaster risk reduction, climate change mitigation and renewable energy initiatives (for instance, it supports women's participation in renewable energy initiatives in Tanzania; in Bangladesh, it provides support to local women's organisations to build vulnerable women's capacities to adapt to climate change).

**KPI 5: Country focus on results**

**Finding 5:** At country level, UN-Women's approach is adequately results-focused and strongly consultative.

UN-Women has adopted a results-based multi-year approach to country level programming which ensures that the country programme document (called Strategic Note), the corresponding development results framework (DRF) and the organisational effectiveness and efficiency framework (OEEF) are aligned with the organisation-wide DRF and OEEF. All of the most recent country strategies sampled have development results frameworks (DRF) in which there is a logical progression from activities through to outputs, outcomes and impact. However, in the document review, a rating of adequate was given for UN-Women's country focus on results, since the country-specific planning documents present the same limitations as the corporate strategic plan and corporate results framework, including problems with the identification of results at output level, and the lack of a clear and explicit theory of change.

As with the corporate documents, in the country strategic plans/results frameworks, it is difficult to pinpoint UN-Women's specific contributions to expected results at each level of the results chain because some output-level results appear to be formulated at the outcome level rather than at actual output level (UN-Women, 2013 [37]; UN-Women, 2013). Most output indicators are often indicators of the consequences of the increased capacity (e.g. policies adopted, reforms undertaken etc.), rather than a measure of the increase in capacity. In addition, a number of output statements lack specifics: they measure "strengthened capacity" without specifying whose capacity, what capacity, for what purposes, or the extent of the strengthening.

In terms of consultative processes, surveyed direct partners and peer organisations rated UN-Women strong for consulting partners in developing its country strategies. While host governments do not sign off on the strategic notes/annual work plans that guide UN-Women's programming and operations at country level, these documents take into account national priorities as set out in national development plans. In addition, when UN-Women developed the organisation-wide 2011-2013 Strategic Plan, which set thematic priorities and other strategic directions for country strategies, it carried out more than 120 consultations with partners in 71 countries (including civil society organisations and Member States) and conducted a global partner survey (UN Women, 2011 (01)).

### 3.3 OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

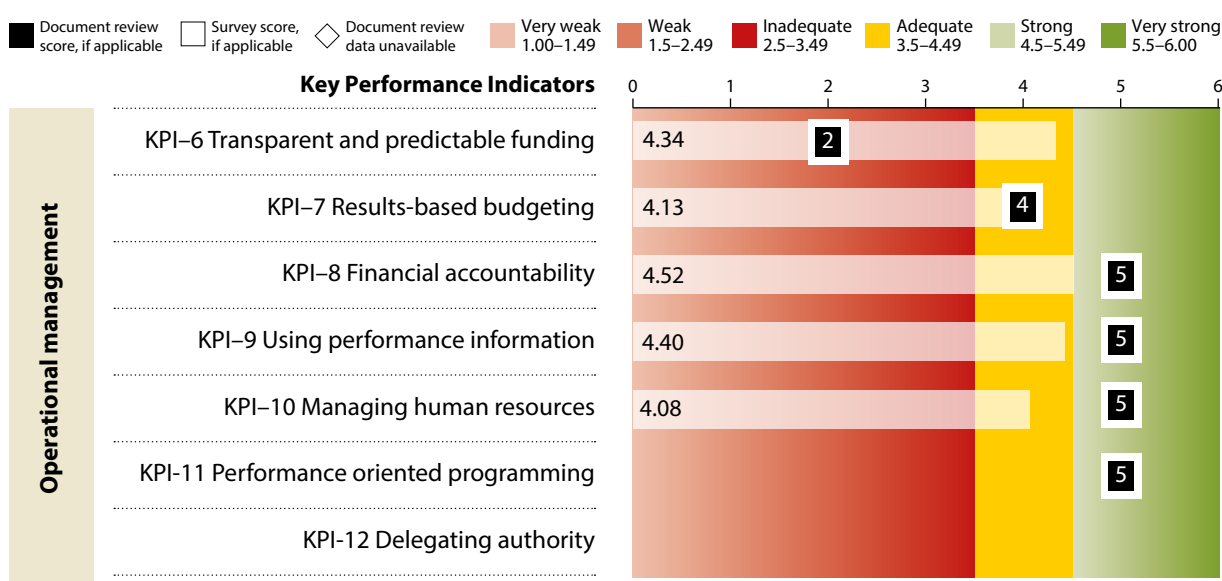
#### 3.3.1 Summary

**UN-Women's practices and systems are considered to be adequate to strong in most areas of operational management: survey respondents rated the Entity adequate for the predictability of resource allocation, results-based budgeting, use of performance information, management of human resources and delegation of authority. According to the document review, UN-Women was rated strong for its financial accountability, use of performance information, its performance-oriented programming, management of human resources, and its delegation of authority.**

UN-Women has adopted appropriate strategies and processes that take into account the need to provide senior management with performance information to make decisions, although it is still in the process of setting up a number of practices and policies. The transparency of the criteria for resource allocation was rated weak in the document review.

Figure 3.2 shows the overall survey and document review ratings for the key performance indicators (KPI) in the operational management performance area.

**Figure 3.2 | Performance area II: Operational management, survey and document review ratings**



### 3.3.2 Findings on each key performance indicator

#### KPI 6: Transparent and predictable funding

**Finding 6:** UN-Women's resource allocation system is transparent at the regional level, but less so at the country level. The transparency of the criteria for allocating resources was rated weak in the document review due to the lack of a formalised methodology for resource allocation at the country level. Survey respondents consider the transparency of resource allocation decisions and predictability of UN-Women's funding to be adequate.

With regard to the transparency of resource allocation criteria, the method for allocating programmable regular resources to the regions is clear. UN-Women allocates programmable regular resources to regions on the basis of percentages identified in the UNIFEM resource allocation formula (UNDP, 2009 [01]). In addition, UN-Women's Executive Board approves the allocation of resources across the six impact areas and across the harmonised cost categories, which are set out in the biennial Integrated Budget for 2014-2015 (UN-Women, 2013 [10]). However, resource allocation at country level appears to be less transparent since UN-Women does not have a formalised methodology for allocation of core programmable resources at the country level. According to UN-Women staff, the allocation of core programmable resources to country offices is determined on a year-to-year basis. UN-Women Headquarters informs the Regional Directors of the regional allocation of resources and then asks them to make proposals for allocation among country offices, presenting any deviation from the previous year's allocation, along with a justification for changes. The Director of UN-Women's Division of Management and Administration may approve the decrease or increase in allocation, as needed. UN-Women corporate documents do not define how the criteria for resource allocation at country level should be applied or prioritised. For this reason, while survey respondents gave the Entity a rating of adequate on the question of transparency of resource allocation criteria, the document review rated UN-Women weak on this aspect.

In addition, there is room for improvement in UN-Women's resource allocation system, given that the regional percentages and the criteria for country allocation are still based on UNIFEM's system and may not fully respond to the needs of a new organisation, with a regional decentralised structure and a different mandate. UN-Women plans to revise the methodology for determining the percentage share of programmable regular resources to each programming category in time for the integrated budget 2016-2017, coinciding with the mid-term review of the strategic plan (UN-Women, 2013 [10]).

With regard to the predictability of funding, MOPAN donors at headquarters and direct partners considered UN-Women adequate in predicting its development co-operation funding and in providing funding to countries and other partners according to schedule. However, the predictability of funding provided by UN-Women to implementing partners depends, in part, on the predictability of external resources provided by UN-Women's donors. Since its creation, UN-Women has recorded important revenue shortfalls (see Section 1.2). Its heavy reliance on voluntary contributions makes it difficult for the organisation to predict its funding, which is affected, not only by the difficulties in mobilising the required level of resources to carry out its mandate, but also by the limited number of donors providing multi-year contributions (less than 15% of member states in both 2012 and 2013).

The UN-Women's Executive Board has emphasised the importance of the 'minimum core funding' needed to deliver the Entity's mandate and noted the need for early pledges followed by early payments (UN-Women, 2013 [14]). This was echoed by members of the UN-Women Executive Management consulted for this assessment. In response to an open-ended question in the perception-based survey, 18% of respondents (including 22% of direct partners and 17% of peer organisations) commented that one of the greatest areas in which UN-Women needs to improve is its ability to mobilise more financial and human resources (see sidebar). This was the third most frequently cited area for improvement. To address this situation, UN-Women has requested that all decentralised offices mobilise additional resources to fund country/regional programmes, and is attempting to diversify its resource base by seeking funding from the private sector and charitable foundations.

#### Illustrative survey respondent views on UN-Women's ability to mobilise financial and human resources

*"[UN-Women needs] a higher profile, on a par with other UN agencies, with more resources and staff in countries where gender equality and women's empowerment is still a substantial challenge."* (Peer organisation respondent)

*"It has limited budget and human capacity to embark on anything substantial."* (Peer organisation respondent)

*« El área de levantamiento de fondos. Las expectativas de financiamiento de los proyectos locales muchas veces superan la capacidad de la entidad por financiarlos. »*  
*[One of UN-Women's areas for improvement is] in the area of fundraising. The funding expectations of local projects often surpass the Entity's capacity to fund them.]*  
 (Direct partner respondent)

### KPI 7: Results-based budgeting

**Finding 7: UN-Women's approach to results-based budgeting is perceived to be adequate. The Entity is making progress in its preparation of results-based budgets, yet there is still room for improvement in linking expenditures to results.**

UN-Women's approach to results-based budgeting is aligned with UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA's harmonised approach but its cost structure is not quite the same due to its unique mandate and composite nature. UN-Women presents a single integrated budget that provides clear links between planned results and budgetary allocations and that aligns planned results presented in budgetary documents to the organisation's strategic plan (UNDP-UNFPA-UNICEF, 2012 [01], p. 3).

Survey respondents rated UN-Women adequate on results-based budgeting. The document review found that UN-Women is making progress in the way it engages in results-based budgeting. The Entity has been commended by its Board for developing an integrated budget for the biennium 2014-2015 which presents planned expenses by impact area in the development results framework (DRF) and by output area in the organisational effectiveness and efficiency framework (OEEF). In addition, according to interviews with UN-Women staff, the Atlas system allows for tracking the link between allocations and expenditure with development results. While there is a link between budget allocation and results, budgets are not yet allocated to each outcome of the DRF, but just to the six impact areas.

Additional efforts will be required to link allocations and expenditures with development results at the outcome level. Results-based budgeting is an important instrument for the promotion and operationalisation of a results-based orientation, and to demonstrate efficiency and effectiveness. In the case of UN-Women, results-based budgeting (RBB) is a work in progress, as reaching an optimal level



of RBB requires a major investment, which may lead to difficult choices as the Entity focuses on raising enough funds to cover a minimum level of activity.

### **KPI 8: Financial accountability**

**Finding 8:** **UN-Women's policies and practices in financial accountability are considered generally strong, with room for improvement with regard to procurement procedures and risk management strategies.**

In the document review and the survey, UN-Women received an overall rating of strong for its policies and practices to ensure financial accountability. UN-Women's strongest areas of financial accountability are the conduct of external and internal financial audits at the corporate level, as well as the conduct of processes to investigate reports of fraud and corruption. UN-Women's external and internal auditing practices at corporate level, which are the remit of the UN Board of Auditors (BOA) and UNDP's Office of Audit and Investigation (OAI) respectively, are sound. In addition, in September 2012, UN-Women created an Audit Advisory Committee which provides advice to the Executive Director on the adoption and use of best practices in risk and financial management (UN-Women, 2014 [06]). The audits conducted by the BOA and the OAI have not identified any major or systemic irregularities, but have made recommendations to strengthen UN-Women's financial accountability.

UN-Women has systems in place to implement its policy on anti-corruption, OAI has the mandate to investigate all reports of alleged wrongdoing, as well as allegations of fraud and corruption, involving UN-Women staff, other UN personnel, and other persons or entities. In November 2012, OAI established an anti-fraud hotline for UN-Women to ensure that persons wishing to report fraud, corruption or other wrongdoing may do so at any time, confidentially. UN-Women reports annually to the Executive Board on its internal audit and investigation function (UN Women, 2013 [50], p. 8).

UN-Women's weakest areas of financial accountability are the conduct of external financial audits at programme/project levels, management of procurement processes, and management of risks. Although recent audit reports have not identified systemic irregularities in the use of resources, there is room for improvement in terms of oversight by headquarters, setting timelines for responding to irregularities identified in audits, and timely implementation of audit recommendations.

With regard to the procurement processes, the process of decentralisation and delegation of authority to the field has not been promptly followed by the development of procedures guaranteeing adequate oversight by headquarters of compliance at the field level with procurement rules and regulations (UNGA, 2013 [01]).

With regard to risk management, UN-Women has not yet adopted a formal and systematic approach, but it is making progress in that direction through the development of an Enterprise Risk Management Policy and a Strategic Risk Register, which will complement the existing Internal Control Framework (ICF) Policy (UN Women, 2014 [05]). The ICF currently requires UN-Women to identify and assess the various risks against UN-Women's objectives as the basis for determining how these risks should be managed (UNDP, 2014 [01]).

**KPI 9: Using performance information*****Finding 9:***

**It is still early to assess UN-Women's capacity to use performance information to inform decision making, but there are signs that it is able and willing to adopt a results-based approach when planning new interventions and revising its policies and strategies.**

The document review rated UN-Women strong for its use of performance information and survey respondents rated it adequate. Overall, there is evidence that UN-Women has the required systems to use performance information for decision making, but because it has only been operational since 2011, there are few documented examples of the use of performance information for revising strategies, policies, or country-level interventions. However, interviews with staff and comments from survey respondents confirm that UN-Women senior management are providing leadership for adopting and strengthening a results-based approach.

UN-Women is adopting systems and practices that will likely support management's use of performance information. Monitoring, reporting, evaluation, and auditing processes are taking place, though at different degrees, at both global and country levels and there is reportedly good follow-up on recommendations from evaluations and audits (UN-Women, 2014 [07]; UN-Women, 2014 [05]; UNGA, 2013 [01]). UN-Women has adequate systems in place to identify problems with projects and programmes, including online monitoring and reporting tools, Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Plans (MERPs) at country level, and check-ins between country offices, regional offices and headquarters. UN-Women also developed systems such as the Global Accountability and Tracking of Evaluation (GATE) and the Global Evaluation Report Analysis and Assessment System (GERAAS) to enhance the systematic use of evaluation findings and lessons learned for decision making.

**KPI 10: Managing human resources to improve performance*****Finding 10:***

**The document review found that UN-Women's human resources management practices are strong overall, in particular with regard to the use of results-focused performance assessment systems to make decisions on human resources. In the survey, 80% of respondents indicated that they are not familiar with UN-Women's use of its staff performance assessment system.**

UN-Women was rated strong on this area in the document review. In January 2013, UN-Women switched from the previous Results and Competency Assessment (RCA) to the Performance Management and Development (PMD) system developed by UNDP to ensure that staff performance is assessed on an annual basis (this system applies to all staff including senior staff). According to interviewed staff, 96% of staff now have performance management work plans in place and the Entity is continuing to improve the use of the PMD system. UN-Women follows UN staff rules stating that salary increments must take into account performance reviews and, following a practice established by UNDP, it also plans to set up a Talent Management Review Group to validate performance ratings and recognise strong performers. Although no evaluation has yet been undertaken to assess UN-Women's performance management system, a workforce survey conducted by UN-Women in 2014 showed a generally strong level of satisfaction among staff.

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The majority of survey respondents (80%) did not know whether UN-Women uses staff performance review information to make human resource decisions.

### KPI 11: Performance-oriented programming

**Finding 11:** UN-Women ensures that country programming is based on adequate and appropriate analysis prior to approval and that detailed annual work plans include targets to monitor project implementation.

In the review of documents, UN-Women received an overall rating of strong for ensuring that country programmes are performance-oriented in terms of having country strategic notes that are developed through a process that involves appropriate analyses (situation analysis, risk analysis), as defined in the Programme and Operations Manual, and that have milestones/ targets to assess implementation. The strategic notes are subject to systematic review at the regional and headquarters levels to ensure alignment with the global strategies. All country strategic notes are reviewed by senior management (Peer Review Group) to ensure that UN-Women remains accountable and is able to measure and report on results. The most recent strategic notes/ annual work plans (generally for 2014-2015) set output targets and dates for expected implementation of said targets, as well as describing the implementing partners, estimated timeframe and budget allocated for each activity proposed.

### KPI 12: Delegating authority

**Finding 12:** UN-Women's process of decentralisation and delegation of decision-making authority is ongoing. Survey respondents considered staff deployment in-country to be inadequate for the implementation of UN-Women's mandate.

UN-Women was rated strong by the document review in delegating decision-making authority. However, findings from the perception-based survey show that respondents rated the organisation inadequate for the delegation of aid reallocation decisions to the local level, and adequate for the delegation of project approval decisions to the local level (within a budget cap). A plausible explanation for the differences between document review and survey ratings is that while UN-Women has developed a Delegation of Authority Framework that clearly defines the delegation of authority to the different levels (UN-Women, 2013 [64]), it may take time for this to be implemented. The organisation has decentralised several decision-making areas to the regional and country levels, including aid reallocation decisions and the approval of new projects and programmes, although the process is not yet complete. This new division of responsibilities marks a shift from UNIFEM's centralised approach to decision making (programmes/ projects of USD 100 000 had to be approved by UNIFEM headquarters). Interviewed UN-Women staff mentioned that the delegation of authority is making a significant difference in the ability of regional and country offices to carry out their programmes and projects.

Although direct partners indicated that UN-Women's country office staffing is adequate to implement its mandate, donors in-country and peer organisations considered it inadequate. One of the issues flagged in audit reports (and confirmed by interviews) is the issue of vacancies in country offices, which may affect UN-Women's performance. The UN Board of Auditors reported deficiencies in human resources management at UN-Women field offices visited in 2012 and vacancies in key positions (including programme advisor, operations manager and national programme co-ordinator), and warned that inadequate deployment of key staff in field offices could affect the delivery of UN-Women's mandate. Independent audits at project

level also reported weaknesses such as insufficient resources and inadequate guidance or supervision at project level, which may lead to increased risks of errors in financial reports, and even increased risks of fraud (UNGA, 2013 [01], pp. 25-29). Interviews with UN-Women staff confirmed that some offices do not yet have the minimum expected number of staff (e.g. five staff per country office) due to insufficient funding, thus restricting capacity to carry out planned activities. Nonetheless, UN-Women has implemented UNBOA's recommendation to expedite the process of filling posts at country and regional offices so that they have adequate staffing (UNGA, 2014 [04]).

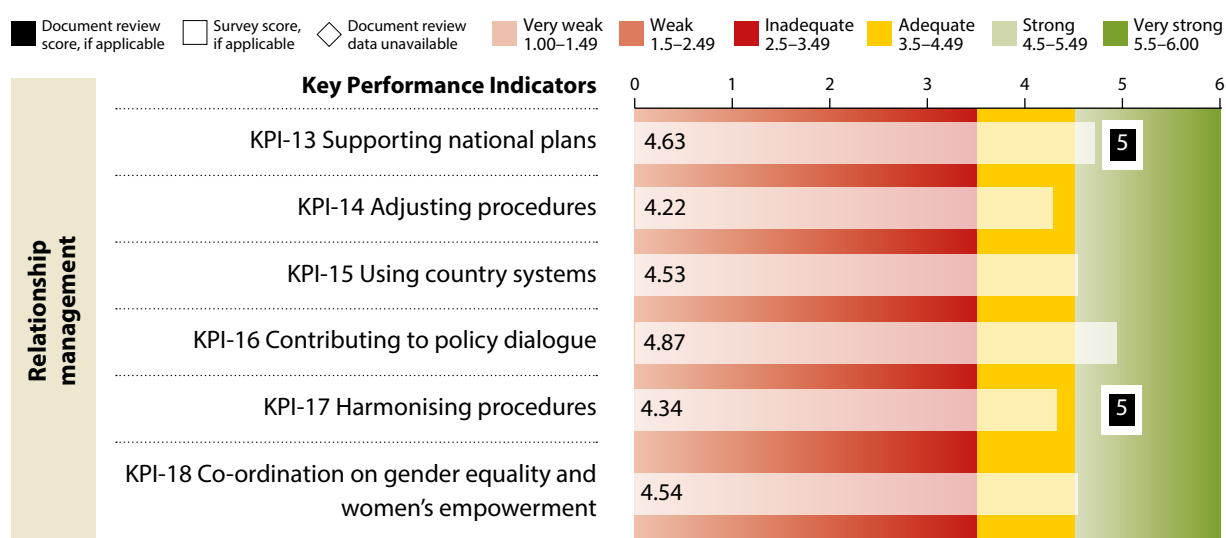
### 3.4 RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

#### 3.4.1 Summary

**Overall, survey respondents considered UN-Women to be adequate or strong in all areas of relationship management, including in supporting national priorities, adjusting procedures, using country systems, contributing to policy dialogue, harmonising procedures and co-ordination on gender equality. The document review provided ratings of strong on supporting national plans and harmonising procedures.**

Figure 3.3 shows the overall survey and document review ratings for the key performance indicators (KPI) in the relationship management performance area. Many indicators analyse the extent to which the organisation is engaging in relationships with direct partners, peer organisations, and other donors at the country level in ways that contribute to aid effectiveness and that are aligned with the principles of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation ("Global Partnership") and previous aid effectiveness commitments.

**Figure 3.3 | Performance area III: Relationship management, survey and document review ratings**



### 3.4.2 Findings on each key performance indicator

#### KPI 13: Supporting national plans

**Finding 13:** By aligning its country planning documents with national priorities and UN system-wide plans (UNDAFs), UN-Women makes efforts to ensure that its programmes support national commitments on gender equality.

UN-Women was rated strong on supporting national plans. By linking country programming objectives with national priorities, UN-Women is taking steps to ensure support for national ownership of development efforts, a key principle of the aid effectiveness agenda.

UN-Women's Country Offices develop their multiyear country planning document (Strategic Note) in consultation with country stakeholders, including government, civil society organisations, and UN agencies. UN-Women's Programme and Operations Manual requires that Strategic Notes be aligned with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and with national priorities on gender equality.

Indeed, UN-Women's Strategic Notes are aligned with national plans, since they make explicit reference to both the national development strategies (and/or sectoral strategies) and the UNDAF. Furthermore, the Strategic Notes identify, for those of UN-Women's impact areas that fit with country priorities, the specific objectives of the national development strategies (and/or sectoral strategies) and the UNDAF to which they are aligned. In addition, the report on the 2013 meta-analysis of evaluations managed by UN-Women found that 10 of the 23 evaluation reports reviewed had confirmed the alignment of the evaluated programmes with national policies and their relevance to the needs of women on the ground (UN-Women Evaluation Office, 2014 [04]). However, it is too early to validate the extent to which UN-Women supports national priorities due to the limited availability of evaluations of UN-Women's programming.<sup>11</sup>

#### KPI 14: Adjusting procedures

**Finding 14:** Overall, UN-Women is perceived to be adequate in its operational flexibility, responsiveness to changes in circumstances, and the ease with which implementing partners can complete procedures.

The majority of survey respondents considered that UN-Women's procedures adequately take into account local conditions and capacities. When asked in an open-ended question to identify UN-Women's main areas for improvement, less than 10% of all respondents expressed concerns about procedures. However, approximately one-third of surveyed donors in-country and direct partners identified room for improvement in the length of time required to complete UN-Women's procedures, which are felt to have a negative impact on programme/project implementation.

A factor that may partially explain this result is linked to the capacity gaps of implementing partners. The UN Board of Auditor reports indicate that UN-Women should work closely with implementing partners on the ground to address recurring problems identified in independent audit reports, including inadequate

11. The 2013 meta-analysis report notes that the synthesis of findings from decentralised evaluations managed by UN-Women "draws on a comparably small number of evaluation reports in particular areas, and thus there are limitations on the potential to generalize [...] the findings should be used with caution and compared with other sources of evidence where possible" (UN-Women Evaluation Office, 2014 [04]).

procedures, inadequate guidance or supervision at project level, and insufficient resources (UNGA, 2013 [01], pp. par. 88-94).

Survey respondents perceived UN-Women's ability to respond quickly to changing circumstances on the ground to be adequate. A number of evaluations of country programmes and projects have found that UN-Women's approach to implementing programmes and working with other partners is flexible (Peebles, 2013 [01]; UN-Women, 2012 [20]). The thematic evaluation of UN-Women's contributions in areas of peace and security noted however that UN-Women does not sufficiently document lessons learned on how to achieve operational flexibility, particularly in volatile, conflict-affected environments (UN-Women, 2014 [03], p. 52).

### **KPI 15: Using country systems**

***Finding 15:* UN-Women's use of country systems for operations is perceived to be strong. The Entity works with government and other UN system partners to build national capacity to collect and use gender statistics. In addition, UN-Women engages partners in annual programme reviews.**

Overall, survey respondents considered that UN-Women practices in using country systems (both financial and non-financial) are strong.

On the question of mutual assessments of progress, implementing partners are encouraged to participate in annual reviews of UN-Women's country programme, to assess programme performance and identify any implementation problems. Findings from UN-Women's annual programme reviews are used to prepare for the mandatory UNDAF annual review meeting and UNDAF progress report (UN Women, n.d.[02]). Survey respondents gave UN-Women's participation in mutual assessments of progress a rating of strong.

Aid effectiveness principles include the use of country systems (financial and non-financial) as a first option for aid programmes that are managed with the aid of public funds (OECD-DAC, 2011). However, UN-Women's corporate documents do not discuss the use of public financial management systems for disbursements, procurement and other financial operations. The use of such systems may be less relevant in the case of UN-Women, because the nature of its work usually means that UN-Women provides technical rather than financial assistance to its country partners. With regard to non-financial operations, such as monitoring and reporting on progress made on specific programmes related to women's empowerment and gender equality, the use of country systems is often hindered by the availability of country data on sensitive issues such as violence against women or women's economic empowerment, and by the capacity of national partners to develop and use reliable systems. For this reason, UN-Women works with government partners, UN agencies, and other partners to strengthen systems on data collection on women's empowerment and gender equality. For instance, in partnership with the UN Statistics Division, UN-Women is jointly managing the Evidence and Data for Gender Equality (EDGE) Initiative, which is currently working to build national capacity to access and use gender statistics (UN-Women, 2012 [24]; UNSTATS, 2012).

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**KPI 16: Contributing to policy dialogue**

**Finding 16:** Survey respondents strongly agreed that UN-Women has a reputation for high-quality, valued policy dialogue input at different levels and highlighted UN-Women's ability to convene partners with different perspectives.

Survey respondents were positive about UN-Women's capacity to provide high-quality inputs to policy dialogue (73% rated UN-Women strong or very strong), and about the respectful process through which these inputs are provided (58% rated this strong or above).

Interviews with UN-Women staff at headquarters and in country and regional offices indicated that one of UN-Women's main value-added services is to provide high-level policy advice to government partners and to UN agencies on how to promote gender equality and women's empowerment at country, regional and global levels. In response to an open-ended survey question about UN-Women's greatest strength, survey respondents noted that in the last few years UN-Women has played a major role in raising the level of conversation about the role of women, particularly around sensitive yet important topics such as eliminating violence against women (this was the sixth most frequently cited strength). Respondents noted that UN-Women acts as a bridge-builder between various stakeholders, providing a platform for discussion and negotiation between the government and local women's organisations.

Examples of UN-Women's contribution to high-level dialogue include its supporting role at the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), as well as its contribution to discussions around the post-2015 development agenda. UN-Women reports that its substantive preparations for the 57<sup>th</sup> session of CSW (including mobilisation, alliance-building and technical support) were instrumental in enabling the adoption of the agreed conclusions (UN Women, 2014 [08]). This was also confirmed by the Thematic Evaluation of UN-Women's contribution to preventing violence against women (UN-Women, 2013 [51], p. 8). Furthermore, UN-Women is part of the UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda and has advocated for a stand-alone goal to achieve gender equality and women's rights, which addresses violence against women, women's equal opportunities, and women's voice within the private and public decision-making spheres (UN Women, 2013 [63]).

At the country level, the 2013 meta-analysis of evaluations managed by UN-Women noted that at least 33% of decentralised evaluations found that UN-Women contributed to shaping policy and norms at the national levels through "collecting data, generating evidence, bringing it to the attention of decision makers, and successfully contributing to changes in legislation or policy." (UN-Women Evaluation Office, 2014 [04]).

**KPI 17: Harmonising procedures**

**Finding 17:** In line with wider UN system efforts, UN-Women has undertaken several harmonisation initiatives and its efforts have largely been seen as positive by survey respondents. Its ability to promote initiatives to harmonise gender mainstreaming efforts at country level remains a work in progress.

There is evidence that UN-Women harmonises arrangements and procedures with other programming partners (donors, UN agencies, etc.). Key factors enabling the organisation to do so, as identified by survey respondents and the document review, are its ability to reflect its comparative advantage in its work, and its ability to co-ordinate planning, programming, monitoring and reporting with other partners.

At the country level, UN-Women has carried out more than 100 joint programmes in partnership with other UN agencies, such as the Safe Cities Initiative,<sup>12</sup> in line with wider UN system efforts to strengthen joint programming processes and improve effectiveness and coherence on gender equality programming. However, staff interviews highlighted concerns about UN-Women's ability to lead joint initiatives in some countries (particularly among the UN agencies). The thematic evaluation of UN-Women's contributions to peace and security in humanitarian responses also noted that "Inadequate strategic planning at country level also limits the possibility for joined programming (within and beyond the peace and security section within a country) and for UN Women to concentrate resources on its areas of comparative advantage." (UN-Women, 2014 [03]). The joint evaluation of joint gender programmes also found that "UN-Women's technical input to programme activities depended largely on the extent to which other United Nations entities were open to their involvement" (UN-Women, 2014 [09]).

UN-Women participates in many initiatives to develop joint reporting and evaluation with partners. One quarter of UN-Women evaluations in 2013 were joint evaluations, and the Entity collaborated on a joint corporate evaluation of joint gender programmes in 2013-2014 (UN-Women, 2014 [09]). In addition, UN-Women supports UNDAF evaluations and UN country team task forces on monitoring and evaluation at the country level (UN Women, 2014 [07]).

UN-Women has joined UN system-wide efforts to harmonise business practices, with the aim of increasing efficiencies and reducing administrative costs, thus increasing the proportion of resources available for programming activities on the ground. The Entity has tried to simplify its business processes around operations, programme implementation and management, for instance by taking part in a pilot project to implement the UN's new business operations strategy. UN-Women produces an integrated budget which uses results-based budgeting, in line with its sister agencies, UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF. It continues to use UNDP systems for several administrative and management functions, including human resources performance management, payroll, treasury and internal audits. Finally, UN-Women participates in joint procurement activities, leveraging more than 30 long-term agreements issued by other UN entities (UN Women, 2014 [08], p. 32).

#### **UN-Women's Co-ordination Role: Leading the System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women**

*One of UN-Women's key functions is to promote greater coherence and accountability in the work of the UN on gender equality and women's empowerment. In 2012, the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination approved the UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (SWAP), mandating UN-Women to provide support to the UN system entities in their reporting on and assessment of progress on the Action Plan. The SWAP sets common standards and provides a monitoring framework for UN entities, and is expected to motivate these entities to meet those standards. All UN entities are expected to periodically report on how they meet the SWAP requirements, and must submit remedial plans (including timelines, resources, and responsibility for follow-up action) where indicators are not met.*

*UN-Women's role in the SWAP goes beyond co-ordinating and collecting reports on how UN entities are meeting SWAP requirements. UN-Women is supporting capacity development efforts across the UN system, for instance supporting the development of specific training modules that address agency-specific needs and tools related to the mandate of each organisation. UN-Women also provides guidance and support to other entities through the SWAP Help Desk. In addition to preparing the UN Secretary General's report on the SWAP, UN-Women has developed a web-based reporting tool on the UN SWAP Performance Indicators.*

*Sources: (ECOSOC, 2013 [01]) (UN Women, 2013 [01]) (UN Women Coordination Division, 2012 [01])*

12. The Safe Cities global initiative was initially launched by UN-Women and UN-Habitat and has grown from five pilot cities to more than 20. This project aims to make public spaces safe and free of harassment for women and girls, through innovative projects such as women's safety audits and the use of mobile technology to stop sexual harassment and violence in participating cities.



According to staff interviews, UN-Women has played a role in ensuring that gender equality considerations are central to discussions on the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation ("Global Partnership"). Indeed, the Global Partnership encourages donors to report on whether they (1) track allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment, and (2) make such allocations public. These considerations are aligned with UN-Women's efforts to improve reporting on budget allocations for gender equality (OECD-DAC, 2014). In addition, UN-Women makes its aid spending data publicly available, in line with guidelines established by the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI).

### **KPI 18: Co-ordination on gender equality and women's empowerment**

**Finding 18:** **UN-Women is perceived to be strong in co-ordinating UN system-wide efforts to meet gender equality commitments. UN-Women was rated adequate for its partnerships with the private sector, but strong for its partnerships with civil society.**

UN-Women has a unique mandate to co-ordinate UN system-wide actions in favour of gender equality and women's empowerment.

Survey respondents had generally favourable impressions of UN-Women's capacity to lead, co-ordinate and promote accountability for the implementation of gender equality commitments across the UN system.

At the global level, UN-Women co-ordinates, promotes, and provides guidance and reporting on two initiatives that aim to harmonise how UN entities report on their commitments on gender equality. The first of these is the UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (SWAP) (see sidebar). The second is the Gender Equality Marker which provides an account of how UN entities implement their commitments on gender equality through their spending. Other examples of co-ordination work at the UN system-wide level include contributions to the quadrennial comprehensive policy review and the co-sponsorship of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS. At the country level, UN-Women works closely with the Resident Coordinator system and the UNCT, and is responsible for the leading/co-leading 62 of the 104 active gender theme groups.

Despite evidence that UN-Women fulfils an important co-ordination role at the global level, the Entity's capacity to co-ordinate with its partners is somewhat challenged (particularly at the country level) by the limited resources available to it, according to corporate evaluations and interviews with UN-Women.

Survey results were mixed on UN-Women's ability to maintain effective partnerships with civil society and the private sector. Most respondents feel that UN-Women works well with its civil society partners, but not so well with partners from the private sector. These results may be due to the fact that UN-Women's work with the private sector is fairly recent, while its work with the civil society sector is well established, in part due to good working relationships established under predecessor entities (particularly UNIFEM).

UN-Women collaborates with civil society advisory groups (CSAG) and works with civil society organisations at the country level. CSAGs are independent advisory groups that advise UN-Women on programming that relates to socio-economic and political questions in the country/region in which they are located. To date, 33 groups have been set up. In addition, UN-Women facilitates the participation of NGOs (with ECOSOC status) in the work of the Commission on the Status of Women. UN-Women is

also developing partnerships with the private sector and charitable foundations (Coca-Cola, the Loomba Foundation, Microsoft, the Rockefeller Foundation, TAG Heuer, the Women's Self Worth Foundation and Zonta International) (UN Women, 2014 [08]).

In open-ended questions on UN-Women's strengths and areas for improvement, respondents had diverse views on UN-Women's ability to build effective partnerships, with some commenting that UN-Women has recognised the importance of building strategic partnerships with governments and NGOs (13% of respondents; this was the third most frequently cited strength). Others noted however that UN-Women could improve its collaboration, communication and information-sharing with its partners (27.6% of respondents; this was the most frequently cited area for improvement).

The effective operationalisation of UN-Women's co-ordination mandate, especially at the country level, remains a work in progress. As noted in thematic evaluations and by staff interviewees, co-ordination capacity has been uneven across country offices due to their different stages of readiness (some are not yet adequately staffed) and there is uncertainty among country staff about how to operationalise this dimension of the mandate. The case studies for the evaluation of UN-Women's contributions to eliminating violence against women "illustrated the potential and the demand for UN Women to play a greater coordination role, but it was unclear both internally and externally, what this role would look like given the current resourcing and capacity of the country offices." (UN-Women, 2013 [51]). Similarly, the evaluation of its contributions to peace and security in humanitarian responses noted that "country offices now need greater support if they are also to ... make more effective use of UN Women's coordination role and catalytic potential." (UN-Women, 2014 [03]).

#### Illustrative survey respondent views on UN-Women's partnership abilities

*"UN Women's management of UN-SWAP has been as successful as it has because of its excellent relationship management, fostering and building with UN Entities."*  
(Donor at headquarters respondent)

*« Il faut améliorer la coordination inter agence sur les questions de genre » [Inter-agency co-ordination on gender issues should be improved.]*  
(Peer organisation respondent)

*« Muy especialmente la coordinación y grado de interlocución en terreno con las delegaciones del resto de donantes así como el intercambio de información y rendición de cuentas a los donantes para la visibilización y difusión de los logros alcanzados. » [(UN-Women should particularly improve) coordination and dialogue with other donors on the ground as well as the exchange of information and accountability to donors to increase the visibility and dissemination of achievements.]*  
(Donor at headquarters respondent)

*"Its ability to work through other UN agencies and national authorities/ civil society depends on great communication skills at all levels. The country level is the weakest link, and hugely dependent on personal qualifications of the staff."*  
(Donor at headquarters respondent)

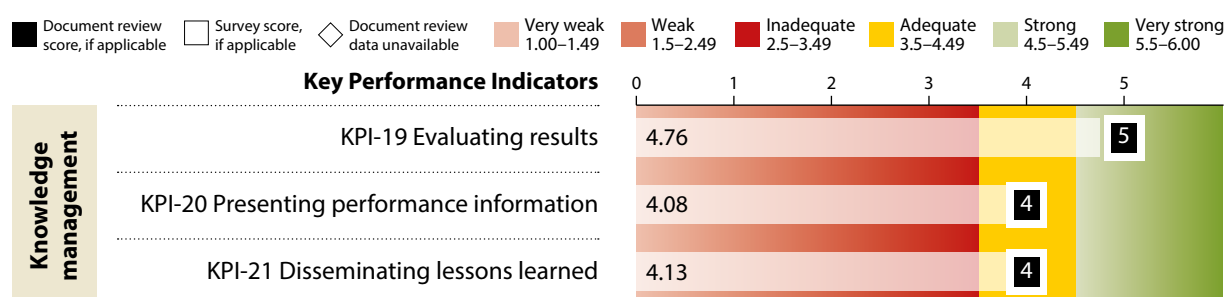
## 3.5 KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

### 3.5.1 Summary

**The document review and survey respondents both rated UN-Women strong in evaluating results, and adequate in presenting performance information and disseminating lessons learned.**

Figure 3.4 shows the overall survey and document review ratings for the three KPIs in the knowledge management performance area, which examine an organisation's evaluation function, feedback and reporting mechanisms, as well as the practices and systems that facilitate the sharing of knowledge and performance information.



**Figure 3.4 | Performance area IV: Knowledge management, survey and document review ratings**

### 3.5.2 Findings on each key performance indicator

#### KPI 19: Evaluating results

**Finding 19:** UN-Women's evaluation function has a strong structure, planning systems, and an operational framework geared to promote accountability and learning at both corporate and decentralised levels. Its effectiveness, however, varies across country offices depending on the availability of resources and the organisational culture in each country office.

Both the survey results and the document review indicate that UN-Women has strong evaluation practices. The evaluation function, which is carried out by the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO), shows a high degree of independence from the organisation's management given that the Office has direct reporting responsibility to the Executive Director. Its work is guided by a comprehensive framework that includes the recently approved (2013) Evaluation Policy, the Evaluation Corporate Strategic Plan, and guidelines for ensuring adequate evaluation coverage of its programming and for conducting gender equality and human rights responsive evaluations. The evaluation function is strongly supporting organisation-wide accountability and learning through a variety of strategies, including:

- Strengthening evaluation capacity at the field level through the creation of positions for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) specialists and focal points in regional and country offices – As of September 2014, there were 5 regional evaluation specialists, 12 country-level M&E officers/specialists, and 45 M&E focal points. Three offices/countries did not have an appointed M&E focal point or specialist.
- Systematic planning for monitoring, evaluation, and research at the regional and country levels through the development of monitoring, evaluation, and research plans (MERPs) that accompany the Strategic Notes.
- Supporting national evaluation capacities through global partnerships with EvalPartners and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) (IEO co-led the UNEG Task Force on National Evaluation Capacity Development), and through bilateral partnerships with regional and national evaluation associations, governments, and parliamentarians.
- Tracking the implementation of management responses to evaluations through the Global Accountability and Tracking of Evaluations (GATE) system, which is available online.

- Assessing the quality of its evaluations through the Global Evaluation Reports Analysis and Assessment System (GERAAS)<sup>13</sup> – According to the 2013 GERAAS Meta-Evaluation Report (UN-Women Evaluation Office, 2014 [03]), 85% of the assessed reports satisfactorily met UNEG standards and 15% were rated as unsatisfactory.
- Requesting, as per its evaluation guidelines and principles, the involvement of key stakeholders in evaluation processes.

The IEO also has the role of leading and promoting gender responsive evaluation in the UN system, for example, by chairing UNEG in 2011-2012, co-leading two task forces, developing evaluation indicators for the System Wide Action Plan on gender mainstreaming (SWAP), and leading the production of the UNEG guidance document on integrating gender equality and human rights into evaluation and of the accompanying Handbook (UNEG, 2011 [01]).

Yet there are areas for improvement. The first is that the evaluation function does not yet have the highest degree of independence, since the corporate evaluation plan and corresponding budget are approved by the Executive Director, rather than by the Executive Board. Another area for improvement is country office evaluation capacity. Given the decentralised structure of the organisation, country office evaluation capacity becomes key in ensuring the gathering of systematic and consistent assessments of UN-Women's development work. While UN-Women has a comprehensive framework guiding the planning of decentralised evaluations (constituted by the requirements and criteria set out in the Evaluation Policy and Evaluation Corporate Plan, and by the MERP system), decision making around the implementation of evaluations remains at the decentralised level, which means that it is strongly dependent on the organisational culture, leadership, and availability and quality of human and financial resources in the country offices.

Finally, the level of participation by key stakeholders in all the stages of evaluation processes remains inadequately documented in evaluation reports. In light of the importance assigned by UN-Women to stakeholder participation, which is seen as an empowerment tool (UN-Women, n.d. [03]), and of the fact that UN-Women's evaluation guidelines specify that key beneficiaries should be actively involved in evaluations (UN-Women, n.d. [03]; UN Women, 2012 (06)), the GERAAS Meta-Evaluation Report of 2013 concluded that "UN Women can afford to, and needs to, aim higher than the minimum standards, and learn from the best reports in its portfolio to push the boundaries of participation at all stages of the evaluation process" (UN-Women Evaluation Office, 2014 [03]).

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13. GERAAS aims to: improve the quality and utility of evaluation reports; strengthen internal capacity on gender responsive evaluation; improve UN Women's performance and organisational effectiveness; and promote learning and knowledge management.

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**KPI 20: Presenting performance information**

**Finding 20:** UN-Women's system for reporting on performance is based on monitoring data collected from decentralised offices and on the use of performance indicators in its results frameworks. However, reporting on corporate performance does not yet provide a comprehensive or evidence-based picture of UN-Women's contributions to development results.

UN-Women's primary vehicle for reporting on progress towards development results is the Executive Director's annual report and a Data Companion on progress made on the implementation of the organisation-wide strategic plan.

At the time of this MOPAN assessment, the capacity of UN-Women to present systematic and reliable performance information on its organisation-wide effectiveness was considered adequate by both the document review and surveyed donors at headquarters. Since its establishment, UN-Women has provided an annual update on progress toward outcomes and outputs for each impact area, and has reported on the activities and results achieved in the promotion of global norms and standards on gender equality and the promotion of women's empowerment, on capacity development for gender equality, and on advocacy, partnership and knowledge-sharing. Progress is reported against the annual targets set in the strategic plan, and is based on data obtained from measuring indicators included in its development results framework (DRF) and monitoring data from country offices. In addition, the annual Executive Director's report provides some indication of the organisation's contribution to development effectiveness by reporting on UN-Women's key principles, such as its focus on results and the ownership of development priorities by developing countries.

UN-Women country offices report annually on their country strategies to the Executive Director, and this is used as input to the ED's organisation-wide annual report. However, country-level monitoring data are not shared with external audiences and thus it is not surprising that this practice is not fully recognised by donors at headquarters – almost one-third of survey respondents in this category rated UN-Women adequate or lower in reporting against its country strategies and 40% answered 'don't know'.

Over the period 2011-2013, UN-Women's reporting on development effectiveness was constrained by the following factors, some of which are likely to be overcome in the 2014-2017 strategic plan period:

- No baseline data had been collected at the time of developing the 2011-2013 DRF and, as a consequence, the Executive Director's annual reports for that period do not present progress against baseline, but only against targets. Given that the 2014-2017 DRF includes baseline data and, where this is not available<sup>14</sup>, indicates that data collection processes have been put in place to collect them, the assessment team expects that the Executive Director's annual report for the year 2014 will show progress made towards development results by presenting variances from baseline data.

14. According to UN-Women interviews, as of September 2014, UN-Women has finished gathering all the baseline data for 2014-2017 Strategic Plan (however, at the time of writing the report, these were not yet publicly available).

- Because UN-Women is relatively new, there are few evaluations of its contributions to development results, with only two corporate evaluations completed by end of 2013. If the current evaluation plan is implemented, evaluation reports should provide the Executive Director with better evidence of UN-Women's development effectiveness.
- UN-Women's contributions to development results are often difficult to pinpoint because it does not report on its 'low-level' outputs (e.g. what UN-Women "actually does") but instead reports on the capacity development consequences of those outputs. Its output indicators are situated at a higher level.
- In interviews, UN-Women staff noted the difficulty in developing specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely (SMART) results and indicators for the co-ordination work conducted by the organisation.

### **KPI 21: Disseminating lessons learned**

***Finding 21:* UN-Women's knowledge management practices are considered adequate and are stronger at the corporate level than at the decentralised level.**

Document review and survey results indicate that UN-Women's knowledge management practices are adequate overall. The Entity, which wishes to become a "hub/centre of knowledge and experience on gender equality", is indeed perceived to be a knowledge leader on issues of gender equality and women's empowerment, according to independent thematic evaluations from 2013 (UNGA, 2010 [01]; UN-Women, 2013 [03]; UN-Women, 2013 [51]; UN-Women, 2014 [03]). UN-Women has developed platforms to share lessons learned both internally and externally (e.g. the Knowledge Gateway for Women's Economic Empowerment) and independent corporate evaluations have concluded that UN-Women's knowledge management capacity at global level is quite strong. However, its systems for internal knowledge dissemination and communication of lessons learned between headquarters and country offices require improvement. Interviews with staff based at headquarters indicated that internal knowledge dissemination requires further attention, particularly at the country level. At the time of the MOPAN assessment, UN-Women was drafting a knowledge management strategy that will guide the work on lessons learned and internal knowledge sharing.

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## 4. Evidence of UN-Women's relevance and development results

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This section presents the results of the 2014 Common Approach assessment of evidence of the relevance of UN-Women's programming and of its contributions to results. It includes four key performance areas:

- Section 4.2: Evidence of the multilateral organisation's relevance (KPI A).
- Section 4.3: Evidence of the multilateral organisation's progress towards its organisation-wide results (KPI B).
- Section 4.4: Evidence of the multilateral organisation's progress towards its stated country-level results (KPI C).
- Section 4.5: Evidence of the multilateral organisation's contribution to national goals and priorities, including the MDGs (KPI D).

The assessment of this component uses the same "traffic light" colours used in the organisational effectiveness component. However, the overall rating is based on a simplified four-point scale and reflects the assessment team's judgment after considering all of the evidence from documents, survey, and interviews. (See detailed methodology in the Technical Report, Volume II, Appendix I.)

It is important to consider the context in which this assessment took place as UN-Women is a new organisation, created in 2010 and operating since 2011. Since the MOPAN methodology does not adapt the scale of ratings/descriptors to the stage of development of an organisation, the assessment team analysed the evidence in light of the stage of development of the Entity.

## 4.2 EVIDENCE OF UN-WOMEN'S RELEVANCE (KPI A)

This section presents an analysis of the relevance of UN-Women's work (programming), based on documents reviewed and survey data.

**Figure 4.1 | Evidence of UN-Women's relevance, overall rating**

<div> <div>Weak</div> <div>Inadequate</div> <div>Adequate</div> <div>Strong</div> </div>	
<b>Overall rating:</b>	<b>STRONG</b>
<b>Justification of the rating for UN-Women</b>	MOPAN perception data and documents consulted present evidence that UN-Women is pursuing results relevant to its mandate, aligned with global trends and priorities, and that respond to the needs and priorities of beneficiaries. Because UN-Women is a relatively new entity, limited evidence is available on its relevance because few corporate or decentralised evaluations have been conducted so far, and of these, only a small number address this criterion.
<b>MOPAN description of this rating</b>	There is clear evidence of the congruence/alignment between the organisation's stated results and partner country priorities, beneficiary needs and priorities, global trends and priorities in development or humanitarian field, and the organisation's mandate. Consistent data emerges from corporate (organisation-wide) and country-level sources.

**Finding 22:** There is evidence that UN-Women is pursuing results relevant to its mandate, and that these are aligned with global trends and priorities and respond to the needs and priorities of beneficiaries.

Survey respondents agreed that, in addition to having a relevant mandate, UN-Women is pursuing results that are in line with its mandate and with global trends and priorities. They noted in particular the relevance of UN-Women's work in the areas of women's economic empowerment, women's political participation, and ending violence against women.

The document review found that UN-Women's planned results are closely aligned with its mandate and highly relevant to global trends and priorities in the development field (UN-Women, 2013 [51]; UN-Women, 2014 [09]). These two aspects are closely linked since UN-Women's mandate reflects the UN's recognition of the longstanding lack of leadership for UN activities on gender equality and the important challenges to gender equality persisting across countries. UN-Women has aligned its Strategic Plan and development results framework (DRF) to its mandate, therefore ensuring that the organisation remains relevant to global trends.

Corporate evaluations have recognised that the newest United Nations entity has made progress towards filling the need for greater coherence and co-ordination on gender equality commitments at the global/ UN system-wide level, although resource constraints and other factors have limited UN-Women's ability to play a co-ordination/leadership role in some countries. For instance, the *Thematic Evaluation of UN-Women's contribution to preventing violence against women* noted that UN-Women builds on the EVAW-related work of its predecessor entities and remains relevant in the context as it is still aligned with global and national commitments to respect women's human rights (UN-Women, 2013 [51], p. 7).

At the country level, there is some early evidence that UN-Women's work responds to local needs and priorities, including the finding (from the 2013 meta-analysis of evaluations managed by UN-Women) that ten out of the 23 reviewed evaluation reports commented positively on the relevance of UN-Women's programmes to local needs and priorities (UN-Women Evaluation Office, 2014 [04]). Survey respondents rated UN-Women as adequate overall for its responsiveness to needs and priorities of beneficiaries (and direct partners rated it strong), and for its ability to adapt to changing needs. A review of documents provides some evidence of relevance at country level: Country planning documents (i.e. strategic notes) take into account national priorities as set out in national development plans as well as expected results from the UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs). A peer review process ensures the alignment of country-level DRFs with organisation-wide objectives. Few independent evaluations have been conducted since UN-Women's creation; those that were reviewed confirm the relevance of UN-Women country programming to country priorities and partners, though they usually do not mention relevance to beneficiaries.

#### 4.3 EVIDENCE OF PROGRESS TOWARDS ORGANISATION-WIDE RESULTS (KPI B)

This section provides an assessment of evidence of progress towards UN-Women's stated organisation-wide objectives (impacts) from 2011 to 2013 (see sidebar). The assessment takes into account that UN-Women only became operational in 2011 and was still in an 'incubation' stage during this three-year period. Some UN-Women country representatives were not in place until 2012 or 2013, and the Entity was in the process of setting up its monitoring, reporting and evaluation systems. At the time of this assessment, the Entity lacked the extent of baseline and evaluative data available to other agencies. Performance indicators

for the period 2011-2013 were updated in the 2014-2017 Strategic Plan. Finally, as pointed out by many corporate and decentralised evaluations reviewed through the 2013 meta-analysis, availability of funds is a constraint to UN-Women's effectiveness at all levels.

The assessment is based on evidence presented in the Executive Director's annual reports for 2011, 2012, 2013); internal performance inputs submitted to headquarters by country offices; independent thematic evaluations (which, at the time of the assessment, had only been produced for two of the five thematic areas and covered the work conducted also by UN-Women's predecessor entities); and the 2013 meta-analysis of evaluations managed by UN-Women.

UN-Women received an overall rating of adequate on this KPI for the 2011-2013 period under review.

#### UN-Women Impacts<sup>15</sup>

**Impact 1:** Women lead and participate in decision making at all levels

**Impact 2:** Women, especially the poorest and most excluded, are economically empowered and benefit from development

**Impact 3:** Women and girls live a life free from violence

**Impact 4:** Peace and security and humanitarian action are shaped by women leadership and participation

**Impact 5:** Governance and national planning fully reflect accountability for gender equality commitments and priorities

**Impact 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

**Figure 4.2 | Evidence of UN-Women's progress towards organisation-wide results, overall rating**

Weak Inadequate Adequate Strong

Overall rating:	ADEQUATE
Justification of the rating for UN-Women	The survey results and the document review concur that UN-Women's contributions are most evident in advancing global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and women's empowerment (impact 6), ending violence against women (impact 3), and promoting women's leadership and participation in peace and security processes (impact 4), UN-Women has made progress in reporting on results and is developing practices and systems to provide quality assurance of the reported results. UN-Women's performance reporting is affected by some shortcomings of its DRF and the lack of theories of change at the global and programme levels
MOPAN description of this rating	The organisation is demonstrating progress towards most of its planned organisation-wide results. Although the organisation does not yet have a strong evidence base that describes progress or contributions towards all outcomes, it does clearly explain where progress has been significant or where progress has been slower, as well as the factors that have affected that progress. The organisation provides evidence that is supported by reliable data on its contributions to the majority of planned outcomes. Theories of change exist in different areas and are understandable. There may be some inconsistency across data sources (survey respondents, evidence from documents).

15. It was agreed with UN-Women to use the formulation of the impacts from the 2014-2017 Strategic Plan.



**Finding 23:** Document review and survey results suggest that, given its stage of organisational evolution, there is adequate evidence of UN-Women's progress towards its expected results. Evidence is stronger in the impact areas of advancing global norms, policies and standards, ending violence against women, and peace and security. In these areas, UN-Women's contribution has been recognised as effective and significant by available corporate evaluations.

Overall, there is adequate evidence that UN-Women has made progress towards expected organisation-wide results.

Taking into consideration both survey results and documentary evidence, UN-Women's most evident contribution has been in developing global norms and standards (Impact 6). Survey respondents rated UN-Women strong for promoting the establishment of a comprehensive set of global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and women's empowerment, and for ensuring that these address current issues and opportunities. UN-Women's contribution to the adoption of agreed conclusions on ending violence against women at the 57<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission of the Status of Women is shown in the sidebar. The 2013 meta-analysis of evaluations managed by UN-Women also found that UN-Women has played a pioneering role in bringing the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 to realisation and enhancing other global-level normative frameworks.

The *Thematic Evaluation on the Contribution of UN-Women to Prevent Violence Against Women and Expand Access to Services* (UN-Women, 2013 [51]) and the *Thematic Evaluation on the Contribution of UN-Women to increasing Women's Leadership and Participation in Peace and Security and in Humanitarian Response* (UN-Women, 2014 [03]) noted that UN-Women and its predecessor entities<sup>16</sup> were effective in shaping global policy and norms in ending violence against women (Impact 3) and in advancing women's leadership and participation in peace and security (Impact 4). The evaluations

**UN-Women's normative support mandate:  
Supporting the Commission on the Status on  
Women [Impact 6]**

One key UN Women contribution in the establishment of norms and standards is the provision of substantive and co-ordination support for the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), which formulates policies and sets global standards to promote gender equality across the world. Since its creation, UN-Women serves as the substantive Secretariat to CSW, which entails UN-Women's responsibility for comprehensively preparing the CSW session (including all mandated parliamentary documentation) and supporting Member States to reach consensus outcomes. However, after the failure of Member States at the CSW 56 (2012) to achieve Agreed Conclusions on the topic of rural women, UN-Women increased its advocacy and leveraging of all parts of the organisation to build global consensus prior to subsequent CSW meetings.

The Thematic Evaluation on the Contribution of UN-Women to Prevent Violence Against Women and Expand Access to Services noted particularly that its substantive preparations for the 57th session of CSW were instrumental in enabling the adoption of agreed conclusions. This support included preparing documentation based on research and expert group meetings; reaching out to multiple stakeholders prior to the meeting to ensure they were mobilised on priority theme issues; and contributing to a conducive environment for negotiations. It also assisted deliberations by drafting the Secretary-General's two reports on prevention of VAW, and services and responses, as well as organising two expert panels during the formal session of the CSW. UN-Women organised an expert group meeting and an online discussion. Finally, it successfully advocated for many innovative elements in the agreed conclusions document (UN-Women, 2013 [51]).

UN-Women's expanded advocacy and outreach strategy also seems to have effectively supported the adoption of the agreed conclusions for CSW 58 (2014) on the theme of challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls (UN-Women, 2014 [18]).

16. Most evaluations reviewed for this assessment covered both UN-Women's work and the work carried out by predecessor entities, particularly UNIFEM which was the only predecessor entity to have a presence at the country level.



also highlighted UN-Women's important contribution at country level in supporting the adoption of new or revised national legal frameworks, policies and action plans related to these two thematic areas. Results from the survey and document review suggest that further efforts are needed in supporting the implementation of these frameworks, policies and action plans. The thematic evaluations noted that UN-Women may still need to clarify its co-ordination mandate at the global level, especially in areas where other UN entities already play a major leadership role (such as ending violence against women).

Another major challenge identified in the thematic evaluations is linking UN-Women's policy dialogue/normative support role at the global level with lessons learned and operations at the regional and country levels. The Executive Director's (ED) annual reports show that UN-Women made progress towards results in all outcome areas and that it had met or surpassed targets for most outcome-level results. This is supported, to some extent, by the 2013 meta-analysis of evaluations managed by UN-Women, which found that the 23 reviewed evaluation reports provided evidence of UN-Women's contributions to "direct changes in women's lives in some countries and across some thematic areas. This has included an increase in women's leadership and participation in peace and security; important changes in laws relating to housing, property and citizenship; and legal counsel to thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and conflict-affected communities." In addition, at least 25% of decentralised evaluations found that programmes and projects had achieved results in terms of strengthening gender equality within national governance systems (UN-Women Evaluation Office, 2014 [04]).

However, UN-Women staff acknowledged that some targets established in the 2011-2013 DRF were not sufficiently ambitious, mainly because baseline data was often unavailable. It is also difficult to validate the data in the annual reports of the ED because there have been independent evaluations of only two of UN-Women's six impact areas and, at country level, decentralised evaluations reviewed by the 2013 meta-analysis determined that the timing of the evaluative process was too early to assess impacts on the lives of women (UN-Women Evaluation Office, 2014 [04]). As a result of the shortcomings in the DRF it is also difficult to pinpoint UN-Women's specific contributions to reported results. This was echoed by the thematic evaluations, which noted that a more exhaustive and robust assessment of UN-Women's contributions to the impact areas under review was hindered by weaknesses in the programme results frameworks and in outcome-level reporting, and by the lack of explicit programme-level theories of change.

#### **4.4 EVIDENCE OF PROGRESS TOWARDS STATED COUNTRY-LEVEL RESULTS (KPI C)**

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This section presents a high level summary of the evidence of UN-Women's progress in achieving its stated country-level results in each country in which the MOPAN 2014 assessment was carried out. More detailed analysis is provided in Chapter 5 below on country level performance.

In addition to the issue of limited availability of funding at all levels of UN-Women (including country level), it is also important to consider the stage of development of country offices at the time of this assessment. Some country offices had only been recently set up. Some had previously been a UNIFEM project office (e.g. Bangladesh) and others had been UNIFEM sub-regional offices (e.g. Ecuador). Many were still in the process of recruiting and not all had obtained full delegation of authority. Many country programmes were ongoing and external end-of-programme evaluations had not yet been conducted. In addition, most evaluations reviewed for this assessment covered periods prior to the establishment of UN-Women and therefore encompassed work carried out by UNIFEM.

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**Figure 4.3 | Evidence of UN-Women's progress towards stated country-level results, overall rating**

Weak Inadequate Adequate Strong

Overall rating:	ADEQUATE
Justification of the rating for UN-Women	Bearing in mind that UN-Women is a new organisation and that most of the past three years were used to establish decentralised offices, systems and practices, the assessment team considers that survey results and reviewed documents provide adequate evidence of progress towards country-stated objectives. In the six countries assessed, survey respondents rated UN-Women's contributions to results as strong in Tanzania and Kenya, adequate in Bangladesh, Cambodia and Ecuador, and inadequate in DRC. Limited external validation of country-level results was available at the time of the assessment, but evidence of progress is strongest in Kenya and Tanzania.
MOPAN description of this rating	The organisation is demonstrating progress towards most planned results in all countries assessed (taking into account their context). Although the organisation does not yet have a strong evidence base that describes progress or contributions towards all outcomes, it does clearly explain where progress has been significant or where progress has been slower, as well as the factors that have affected that progress. The organisation provides evidence, which is supported by reliable data, of its contributions to the majority of planned outcomes. Theories of change exist in different areas and are understandable. There may be some inconsistency across data sources.

**Finding 24:** UN-Women's progress towards its stated country-level results was considered adequate by survey respondents and the document review. Evidence of progress is uneven for the six countries where the assessment took place, although it is strongest in Kenya and Tanzania.

The review of the inputs that UN-Women Country Offices provide to the organisation-wide report indicate that in the six countries where the assessment took place, UN-Women is making progress in all impact areas, to different degrees depending on the country. The quality of reporting also varies by country, and UN-Women's contributions and the factors affecting performance are explained more clearly in some countries than in others.

In most cases, the results of the survey concur with the data reported by country offices. This is particularly true in Kenya and Tanzania where respondents felt that UN-Women has made strong contributions to the stated country-level objectives, in line with progress noted by UN-Women in these countries. In DRC, survey respondents felt that there has been inadequate progress by UN-Women towards the majority of its objectives. The instable political and social context of DRC, coupled with the organisational issues of the UN-Women Country Office (explained in the Technical Report, Volume I), may help to explain, at least to some extent, the reason for such perceived poor performance (UN-Women Evaluation Office, 2012 [01]).

Because the body of external evaluations in the six countries is still small (some countries have not yet undertaken external evaluations) and covers only one or two years of UN-Women's work, the assessment team was able to gather limited external validation of the progress reported by some country offices (CHIKOORE, 2012 [01]) (MDGF, 2012) (Peebles, 2013 [01]) (UN-Women, 2012 [19]) (UN-Women, 2012 [20]).

Most country offices have adopted a good practice that helps validate their reported information. They attach, for instance, copies of the surveys conducted at the end of workshops, copies of policies or action plans developed with UN-Women's support, self-evaluations of training events, official documents on the participation and elected candidates. This practice provides supporting evidence that backs up country office progress reporting.

The assessment team found strong evidence of progress in reviewing independent evaluations and survey results for UN-Women's work in Kenya, particularly in the areas of women's political participation and ending violence against women (see sidebar on the Kenya Women's Situation Room as an example) (Peebles, 2013 [01]; UN-Women, 2012 [19]). Evidence of progress from independent evaluations was not as strong in the other countries where the assessment took place, although this may be due to variances in capacity to monitor, report on and evaluate UN-Women's work at the country level.

**Illustrative survey response: Evidence of UN-Women's progress/ contribution to women's participation in decision making**

*"[UN-Women's greatest strength is its] ability to engage with gender issues both at the national and community level (through its partners) in a way that is quite practical and sensitive to the varying situations in a bid to bring gender equity. UN-Women has been able to bring gender perspectives on [sic] the table within varying government levels and influenced implementation of gender related policies within different sectors. In particular, during the last election period in Kenya, UN-Women was able to bring women leaders to effectively influence political parties and governance systems to promote gender equality in leadership and participation."*  
(Direct partner respondent)

**Women's participation in peace building: The Women's Situation Room in the 2013 Kenyan elections**

*UN-Women and its partners supported the implementation of a platform to engage women as proactive agents of peace prior to and during the 2013 elections in Kenya. A virtual "Women Situation Room" (WSR) was created, in which election observers and the general public were invited to call a toll-free hotline to report issues ranging from questions about the elections to cases of gender-based violence. Three experts in political science, law and gender and media were engaged to reply to the 1,200 calls received and then report the issues to the appropriate authorities to mitigate potential conflict (UN-Women, 2013 [60]). The goal of the WSR was to mitigate violence against women and create an opportunity for more women's leadership in peace and security processes.*

*UN-Women staff reported that the WSR project was considered a success and that other African countries (e.g. Malawi) have considered replicating this model. (UN-Women, 2013 [60]).*

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## 4.5 EVIDENCE OF CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL GOALS AND PRIORITIES, INCLUDING THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (KPI D)

This section presents a summary of the evidence of UN-Women's contribution to national goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in the countries that were part of the assessment. It draws on document review and survey data. The details on each country are provided in Chapter 5.

**Figure 4.4 | Evidence of UN-Women's contribution to national goals and priorities, including MDGs, overall rating**

<div> <div>Weak</div> <div>Inadequate</div> <div>Adequate</div> <div>Strong</div> </div>	
<b>Overall rating:</b>	<b>ADEQUATE</b>
<b>Justification of the rating for UN-Women</b>	The majority of survey respondents in the six assessed countries provided ratings of either adequate or strong for UN-Women's contribution to national goals and priorities, including MDGs. There are no external assessments of UN-Women's contributions to national goals and priorities or MDGs, but the reviewed documents point to the strong alignment of UN-Women's work with national priorities and goals and to the relevance of its work to country stakeholders.
<b>MOPAN description of this rating</b>	The organisation provides some evidence of contribution to the achievement of national goals and priorities, including relevant MDGs, in some countries assessed. It provides some evidence of contributions that have been significant and where they have been less successful, as well as the factors that have affected that contribution. The description of contribution is supported by some reliable data from measuring indicators, evaluations, or other sources. The organisation's key stakeholders perceive that it is contributing to the achievement of national goals and priorities, including the MDGs, and that partner countries positively benefit from the organisation's work. There is some consistency across the different data sources, including the perceptions of the organisation's key stakeholders.

**Finding 25:** Survey respondents in Kenya and Tanzania suggested that UN-Women is making strong contributions to the achievement of national goals and priorities, including the MDGs. In the other countries, UN-Women's contribution is perceived as adequate. Although there are not yet any country programme evaluations to validate UN-Women's contributions, the document review noted that UN-Women's work is aligned with national goals and priorities.

Survey respondents in the six countries included in the MOPAN survey provided ratings of adequate or above on UN-Women's contribution to national goals and priorities, including the Millennium Development Goals. In Kenya and Tanzania, survey respondents felt that the work conducted by UN-Women makes a strong contribution to national priorities and MDGs, and that it benefits the country overall. A plausible explanation for the strong ratings in Kenya and Tanzania is that UN-Women has a large portfolio in these two countries, compared to Bangladesh, Ecuador, DRC and Cambodia. Although UN-Women's contribution to national goals or MDGs has not yet been validated by external sources, as UN-Women has not yet conducted any country programme evaluations, the review of the country strategic notes/annual work plans and of the 2013 meta-analysis noted the alignment of UN-Women's work with national goals and the relevance of UN-Women's programmes to country-level stakeholders (UN-Women, 2014 [09]; UN-Women, 2013 [37]; UN-Women, 2013 [26]; UN-Women, 2013 [19]; UN-Women, 2013 [33];

UN-Women Evaluation Office, 2014 [04]). UN-Women also presents a web page on how it works in each MDG area (e.g. UN-Women supports women's role in food security through more equitable distribution of credit, seeds and fertilizers) (UN-Women, 2014 [12]).

Finally, there is evidence that UN-Women is making contributions in areas that are aligned with national goals and priorities as well as MDG #3 on promoting gender equality and empowering women, since: i) UN-Women's Executive Director annual reports and independent evaluations provide evidence that UN-Women country offices are making progress (to varying degrees) on their planned development results, which, as noted above, are aligned to national priorities and UNDAF outcomes; and ii) two of the three indicators [3.2 – *Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector*; and 3.3 – *Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament*] used to measure progress towards Target A of MDG #3 directly relate to UN-Women's strategic objectives on women's political participation and women's economic empowerment. For these reasons, the overall rating provided on this KPI is adequate.

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## 5. UN-Women performance at the country level

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The sections below provide an overview of the UN-Women's organisational effectiveness and evidence of results and relevance in each of the countries participating in the MOPAN assessment. Detailed country data is presented in the Technical Report, Volume I.

## 5.2 BANGLADESH

### COUNTRY CONTEXT

- Bangladesh has a population of 156 million and is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. The fertility rate declined from 6.3 children per woman in 1975 to 2.7 in 2007.
- Women hold only 20% of seats in Parliament (and some of these are reserved seats not linked to a geographic constituency).
- Months of political unrest in 2013 were followed by the opposition party's withdrawal from the national elections held in January 2014.
- Women in waged labour earn an estimated 52% of men's salaries and are concentrated in a few sectors, particularly the garment industry.
- Climate change is an important concern, as about 70% of the population lives in rural areas and relies on agriculture and fishing, thus making them vulnerable to flooding during heavy monsoons and other manifestations of climate change.
- Coordination of UN and donor agencies can be challenging in Bangladesh due to the sheer number of actors involved. Bangladesh has one of the largest UN country teams in the world with representation from at least 23 agencies.

### UN-WOMEN'S STRATEGY AND RESULTS AREAS

- The Bangladesh Country Office (BCO) is active in all six impact areas of UN-Women, especially women's economic empowerment.
- Major themes/focus areas include: gender and climate change; women's economic empowerment; preventing violence against women; gender-responsive policies, plans and budgets; and, to a lesser extent, women's political participation and leadership. (UN-Women, 2012 [08]).
- A UNIFEM Bangladesh project office was established in 2005. The office was upgraded to a UN-Women country office in January 2013. The current UN-Women Country Representative has been in place since January 2013 and, as of April 2014, there were 12 full-time staff members. The size of the country portfolio (in 2012-2013) was USD 3 million.

## UN-Women's organisational effectiveness – some highlights from the MOPAN survey

### Strategic management

- Respondents in Bangladesh rated UN-Women strong for its clear normative mandate, and adequate for having a clear operational mandate and a clear co-ordination mandate. Respondents also thought UN-Women's mainstreaming of gender equality and human rights-based approaches in its work is strong,



and considered that the organisation is strong at consulting with direct partners and UN Country Teams to develop its country strategy.

### **Operational management**

- Survey respondents rated UN-Women strong for its processes to quickly follow up on financial irregularities at country level (although 60% responded 'don't know'). They considered UN-Women's delegation of authority to country level in Bangladesh inadequate. UN-Women was rated adequate overall on other areas of operational management (transparent and predictable development co-operation funding; procurement procedures; using performance information for decision-making).

### **Relationship management**

- Areas rated strong include: adding value to policy dialogue with partners (consistent with a strong rating provided by surveyed respondents from all countries); alignment of UN-Women's country programme documents with national development strategies (this is consistent with the document review which found that all Strategic Notes sampled referred to UNDAF and national plans); effective partnership with civil society. Other areas, including UN-Women's capacity to harmonise and co-ordinate initiatives with other development partners, were rated adequate.

### **Knowledge management**

- Survey respondents in Bangladesh considered UN-Women adequate in involving key partners and beneficiaries in evaluation processes. (These questions were part of the only micro-indicator on knowledge management that was assessed at country level.)

## **UN-Women's relevance and development results – some highlights from the assessment**

### **Relevance**

- Survey respondents rated UN-Women adequate for all aspects of relevance (pursuing results in areas within its mandate, aligning its results with global trends and priorities, responding to the needs of its beneficiaries, and adapting its work to the changing needs and priorities of the country).

### **Progress towards UN-Women's stated country-level results**

- Survey respondents in Bangladesh rated UN-Women strong for its contribution to strengthened implementation of the National Women's Development Policy through its support for the development and implementation of a National Action Plan. They rated the Entity inadequate for its contribution to developing the capacity of key stakeholders to implement concrete steps to increase women's participation in the 2014 national elections, as well as for its progress towards developing the capacity of women members of Parliament to raise priorities for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in Bangladesh.
  - The pace of progress towards UN-Women's stated country-level results, in particular in the area of women's leadership and political participation, should be contextualised, given the political instability and months of civil unrest that characterised 2013, as well as the short time-span since the establishment of a UN-Women country office in Bangladesh.
  - UN-Women supported the integration of gender equality provisions into two new policies (the Overseas Employment & Migrants' Welfare Act 2013, and the Overseas Employment Policy) to address the employment and social protection needs of women migrant workers; and, through its partnership with the Government of Bangladesh, contributed to increasing recognition of the needs of women workers and protection of their rights.
-

- UN-Women's contribution to results on ending violence against women was noted in the 2013 evaluation of the Joint Programme to Address Violence Against Women in Bangladesh. Because this is a joint programme, it is difficult to trace UN-Women's specific contribution to results, but the evaluation found that the programme made some progress towards expected outcomes (MDGF, 2012). Surveyed stakeholders rated UN-Women adequate with regard to the implementation of national and/or local policies and programmes to reduce violence against women.

#### **Contributions to national priorities and MDGs**

- Survey respondents generally perceived UN-Women to be adequate in its contribution to development results that support the achievement of Bangladesh's national priorities and in delivering positive results in Bangladesh.

### **5.3 CAMBODIA**

#### **COUNTRY CONTEXT**

- Cambodia has a population of 15 million. It is a low income country
- Progress towards gender equality in Cambodia is challenged by high levels of poverty and the legacy of conflict, including high levels of violence against women, gang violence, trafficking, illiteracy and maternal mortality.
- There is significant occupational segregation and women are concentrated in low-wage and unskilled labour sectors.
- The national strategy for gender equality, Neary Rattanak III (2009-2013), prioritises women's economic empowerment.

#### **UN-WOMEN'S STRATEGY AND RESULTS AREAS**

- UN-Women in Cambodia works on five of the six UN-Women impact areas (peace and humanitarian action are not a focus area) but has focused especially on ending violence against women and on increasing women's participation in decision-making processes (UN-Women, 2014 [14]).
- Other areas of work have included: strengthening the economic empowerment of migrant women workers and rural women, HIV-positive women, and women with disabilities; integrating gender principles into national planning and policy-making; and expanding democratic governance.
- The UNIFEM Cambodia office was established in 2004 and became a UN-Women country office in late 2010. The UN-Women's Country Representative has been in place since 2010. The total core and non-core budget for 2013 was USD 1.7 million.

#### **UN-Women's organisational effectiveness – some highlights from the MOPAN survey**

##### **Strategic management**

- Survey respondents in Cambodia rated UN-Women strong for its clear normative, operational and co-ordination mandate, and for mainstreaming gender equality and human rights in its work. They rated it strong for consulting with partners and UN Country Teams to develop its country strategy in Cambodia, but adequate in applying results-based management in its work.

**Operational management**

- Survey respondents considered country office staffing inadequate for the implementation of the UN-Women's mandate in the country. They rated UN-Women strong for providing funding to countries and other partners according to schedule. In other areas, including use of performance information to make decisions, and procurement procedures, UN-Women was rated adequate.

**Relationship management**

- UN-Women Cambodia was rated strong for its contribution to policy dialogue with its partners. It received an inadequate rating for the length of time to complete procedures, although 43% of respondents did not know whether this affects implementation. UN-Women received ratings of adequate for its co-ordination and harmonisation, and its use of country systems for disbursements and operations.

**Knowledge management**

- UN-Women received a rating of strong from respondents in Cambodia for involving key partners in evaluations of its projects or programmes, and a rating of adequate for involving key beneficiaries. (These questions were part of the only micro-indicator on knowledge management that was assessed at country level.)

**UN-Women's relevance and development results – some highlights from the assessment****Relevance**

- Survey respondents perceive UN-Women to be adequate in adapting its work to the changing needs and priorities of the country and in its responsiveness to beneficiary needs. It was rated strong for pursuing results in areas within its mandate, and aligning its results with global trends and priorities.

**Progress towards UN-Women's stated country-level results**

- Survey respondents rated UN-Women strong for its contribution to increasing knowledge and best practices to end violence against women in Cambodia. They rated it adequate for progress made towards all other stated objectives in Cambodia.
- UN-Women Cambodia carried out a self-assessment of its work on the National Action Plan on violence against women (NAPVAW) in which 100% of respondents from the Ministry of Women's Affairs said that UN-Women's work was 'extremely important' to the increased capacity in policy formulation, particularly by introducing global best practices and offering practical expertise on managing large consultations (UN-Women, 2014 [13]).
- UN-Women provided its government counterparts with technical assistance for the integration of CEDAW provisions in national development plans. In addition, UN-Women convened a civil society dialogue event attended by over 100 people who came to share their knowledge and views on the CEDAW Concluding Observations.

**Contributions to national priorities and MDGs**

- Survey respondents rated UN-Women adequate in (a) contributing to development results that support the achievement of national priorities; (b) supporting progress on the MDGs in Cambodia; and (c) implementing programmes and initiatives that have resulted in positive benefits for Cambodia.
-

## 5.4 DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

### COUNTRY CONTEXT

- Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has a population of 65 million and is a low income country. Following the 1996-2001 conflicts there has been a fragile peace.
- The 2006 Constitution enshrines gender equality, but remains contradictory and discriminatory towards women on several issues, such as denial of pensions and inheritance rights for women (*UN-Women Evaluation Office, 2012 [01]*).
- There are high levels of violence and sexual abuse committed against women and authorities have failed to prioritise protection.
- Women's participation in political and public life is extremely low.

### UN-WOMEN'S STRATEGY AND RESULTS AREAS

- UN-Women works in the DRC on all six of its impact areas.
- The size of the programme portfolio in 2013 was USD 2.4 million. An office was established under UNIFEM in 2004 and was upgraded to a UN-Women country office in 2010. UN-Women also has a satellite office in Bukavu in addition to its central office in Kinshasa.
- In terms of staffing, there are currently eight full-time staff and one under recruitment. The Country Office Representative has been in place since 2012.

### UN-Women's organisational effectiveness – some highlights from the MOPAN survey

#### Strategic management

- UN-Women was rated strong by respondents in DRC in most areas of strategic management, including: application of results-based management in its work; clear operational, normative and co-ordination mandates; focus on the cross-cutting thematic priorities (gender equality, human rights, good governance) except on promoting environmental sustainability (rated inadequate); country strategies that are developed in consultation with partners and UN Country Teams.

#### Operational management

- Survey respondents rated UN-Women adequate in most areas of operational management, including: provision of predictable funding, use of performance information for decision making, and adequate staff deployment in-country for implementing UN-Women's mandate. They rated it inadequate for delegating sufficient decision-making authority to make decisions on aid reallocation at the country level, and for being able to approve funding for new co-operation areas locally.

#### Relationship management

- Survey respondents rated UN-Women strong in the following areas: country programme documents are aligned with national development strategies; UN-Women's procedures are easy to understand and follow by partners; UN-Women participates in mutual assessments of progress in implementing agreed commitments with national partners; UN-Women maintains effective partnerships with the civil society. Respondents considered UN-Women inadequate for having procedures that take time to

complete and thus affect implementation. All other areas were rated adequate, including adding value to policy dialogue, using country financial and non-financial systems in its work, and demonstrating capacities for more effective co-ordination on gender equality.

### **Knowledge management**

- UN-Women was rated adequate for involving key beneficiaries and partners in evaluation processes. (These questions were part of the only micro-indicator on knowledge management that was assessed at country level.)

## **UN-Women's relevance and development results – some highlights from the assessment**

### **Relevance**

- Surveyed stakeholders rated UN-Women strong for pursuing results in areas within its mandate. UN-Women was rated adequate in adapting its work to the changing needs and priorities of the country, for its responsiveness to beneficiary needs, and for aligning its results with global trends and priorities.

### **Progress towards UN-Women's stated country-level results**

- Survey respondents rated UN-Women's progress inadequate for 5 of the 11 expected outcomes, and adequate for another 5 out of 11 expected outcomes. One area was rated weak, namely, UN-Women's progress towards "gender-responsive infrastructure and services (transport, utilities, water, energy, etc) [that] enhance women's sustainable livelihoods". These results may plausibly be due to the significant challenges identified below.
- Challenges in meeting country-level results in the DRC identified in the survey and interviews include the implementing partners' need for training/capacity-building; a fragile country context; geographic constraints given the size of the DRC; changes in government; and need for better delegation of authority at the local level.
- Despite little evidence of progress in addressing the multiple challenges faced by women in DRC (e.g. the systematic exclusion of women from processes of peace and security), UN-Women's country office in the DRC has had some success in collaborating with civil society and government to push for parity in parliament (a Parity Law was passed in 2013 which set a quota of 30% women's participation in political leadership) and in collaborating with UN agencies on the Stabilization and Reconstruction Plan for Eastern Congo (STAREC) Programme aimed at ending sexual violence against women, and on the establishment of reconciliation commissions.

### **Contributions to national priorities and MDGs**

- UN-Women was rated inadequate for programming that has resulted in positive benefits for the DRC.
  - Survey respondents considered UN-Women adequate in contributing to the achievement of national priorities and MDGs.
-

## 5.5 ECUADOR

### COUNTRY CONTEXT

- Ecuador has a population of nearly 16 million. It is an upper middle-income country that has experienced significant and steady economic growth.
- Ecuadorian women, especially indigenous women and women of African descent, face persistently high levels of poverty and social exclusion.
- The persistence of structural, political, cultural and socio-economic obstacles prevent the participation of women in many spheres of public life.
- A National Council for Gender Equality (Consejo Nacional para la Igualdad de Género) was created in 2014 to replace the National Council for Women (CONAMU, the national government commission previously in charge of women's empowerment)
- Ecuador recently adopted the National Agenda of Women and Gender Equality 2014-2017.

### UN-WOMEN'S STRATEGY AND RESULTS AREAS

- The transition from the UNIFEM sub-regional office to the UN-Women country office was completed in 2013. The position of Country Representative was still under recruitment in early 2014. The total programme portfolio was USD 2.1 million for 2012-2013.
- From 2011 to 2013, UN-Women's work in Ecuador focused on four of the six impact areas, i.e. women's political participation, women's economic empowerment, violence against women, and gender sensitive national and local planning and budgeting.

### UN-Women's organisational effectiveness – some highlights from the MOPAN survey

#### Strategic management

- UN-Women was rated strong by respondents in Ecuador in many areas of strategic management, including a clear normative mandate; mainstreaming of gender equality and human rights-based approaches; and the development of the Ecuador Strategic Note (country strategy) through consultation with direct partners.

#### Operational management

- Survey respondents in Ecuador considered the delegation of authority to the country office to make decisions on aid reallocation and for approving funding for new areas of co-operation locally to be inadequate. Other areas of operational management were rated mostly adequate, including: provision of development co-operation funding to countries and other partners in a transparent and predictable manner; procurement procedures providing effective control on purchases of goods and services; use of performance information to make decisions (including addressing poorly performing projects proactively so as to improve performance); and adequate staff deployment at country level for implementation of UN-Women's mandate.

### Relationship management

- Surveyed stakeholders rated most aspects of UN-Women's relationship management adequate overall. The alignment of UN-Women's country programme documents with national development strategies was rated strong, as were the promotion of strengthened UN Country Team performance on gender equality and women empowerment, and its partnership development with civil society actors. UN-Women's added-value to policy dialogue, harmonisation and co-ordination were all rated adequate overall by respondents in Ecuador.

### Knowledge management

- UN-Women's involvement of key beneficiaries and partners in evaluation processes was rated adequate by survey respondents in Ecuador. (These questions were part of the only micro-indicator on knowledge management that was assessed at country level.)

## UN-Women's relevance and development results – some highlights from the assessment

### Relevance

- Evaluations commented positively on the relevance of UN-Women contributions to development priorities in Ecuador, although the programmes evaluated were mostly implemented by UNIFEM and its partners before UN-Women was established.
- Survey respondents rated UN-Women adequate in (a) pursuing results in areas within its mandate; (b) aligning its results with global trends and priorities; (c) responding to beneficiary needs; (d) adapting its programmes and operations to the changing needs and priorities of the country.

### Progress towards UN-Women's stated country-level results

- In their written comments, many survey respondents from Ecuador commented that UN-Women's major weakness is its limited financial and human resources at country level, making it difficult for the country office to provide adequate support to its partners.
- Survey respondents rated UN-Women adequate for all areas of results, including strengthening advocacy groups' capacity to incorporate and oversee the implementation of their priorities in national, local and sectoral plans and budgets, and to demand accountability in Ecuador.
- UN-Women's gender-responsive budgeting in Ecuador is considered a model for other countries.
- UN-Women reported that:
  - the Ministry of Finance with support from UN-Women and in collaboration with the National Women's Machinery (CONAMU) reported increases in budget allocations for gender equality programmes
  - UN-Women and other UN agencies contributed to the Atlas of Inequalities, a technical tool revealing inequalities in the country and at local level. The National Plan for Good Living used data from the atlas to describe the situation of gender-based violence in the country and to set targets for 2017.

### Contributions to national priorities and MDGs

- Survey respondents in Ecuador rated UN-Women adequate in (a) contributing to development results that support the achievement of national priorities; (b) making effective contributions to MDGs; and (c) implementing programmes that have positive benefits in the country.
-

## 5.6 KENYA

### COUNTRY CONTEXT

- Kenya has a population of more than 43 million. It is a low income country.
- Certain customs and practices perpetuate discrimination against women and contribute to the persistence of violence against women and harmful practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), polygamy, bride price, and wife inheritance.
- There is persistent discrimination against women in the labour market, including a low rate of female engagement in paid work, a wide wage gap, and occupational segregation.
- The new Kenyan Constitution enhances women's protection and repeals previous discriminatory provisions.
- The 2007 elections had been characterised by high levels of gender-based violence.

### UN-WOMEN'S STRATEGY AND RESULTS AREAS

- In the period 2011-2013, UN-Women's work in Kenya focused on four of the six impact areas, i.e. women's political participation, women's economic empowerment, violence against women, and peace and humanitarian action.
- The UNIFEM Kenya office was established in 2008 and became a UN-Women country office in 2012. The portfolio for 2012-2013 was USD 8.8 million.
- UN-Women participates in the UN's transition to the Delivering as One approach in Kenya.

### UN-Women's organisational effectiveness – some highlights from the MOPAN survey

The majority of survey respondents in Kenya considered UN-Women Kenya country office's practices and systems strong.

#### Strategic management

- UN-Women was rated strong by Kenyan respondents in the following areas: applying results-based management in its work; an organisation-wide strategic plan that is clearly focused on its mandate; mainstreaming and promoting gender equality, good governance and human rights-based approaches in its work; and country strategies developed in consultation with partners and UN Country Teams.

#### Operational management

- Overall, surveyed stakeholders in Kenya rated UN-Women adequate or above in all areas of operational management. They rated it strong for: allocation of resources according to the criteria established; effective procurement procedures; use of performance information for decision making; and ability to approve funding for new areas of co-operation locally.



**Relationship management**

- Most areas of relationship management were rated strong by respondents in Kenya, including the following: UN-Women directs its development co-operation at the country level in support of agreed national plans or partner plans; takes into account local conditions and capacities; uses country systems for operations and disbursements; adds value to policy dialogue; and fulfils a harmonisation and co-ordination role.

**Knowledge management**

- UN-Women was rated strong for involving key partners and beneficiaries in evaluation processes. (These questions were part of the only micro-indicator on knowledge management that was assessed at country level.)

**UN-Women's relevance and development results – some highlights from the assessment****Relevance**

- Survey respondents rated UN-Women strong in (a) pursuing results in areas within its mandate; (b) aligning its results with global trends and priorities; (c) responding to beneficiary needs; (d) adapting its programmes and operations to the changing needs and priorities of the country.

**Progress towards UN-Women's stated country-level results**

- Survey respondents generally found UN-Women to be strong in progress made in its target areas of women's political participation, ending violence against women, and women's leadership in peace building processes and humanitarian emergencies.
- UN-Women contributed to reducing the number of cases of gender-based violence during the election period, in increasing the number of women running for election (from 120 to 156), and in increasing the retention rate of women members of the Parliament by 50%. UN-Women supported capacity development processes among women candidates to run for election (including women with disabilities and youth), and facilitated the creation of a safe space for women and men (called the Women's Situation Room) to discuss and take action on electoral gender-based violence. UN-Women also contributed to increasing the number of Kenyan legal frameworks, laws and policies at national level that protect women's rights.
- There is little documented evidence of UN-Women's contributions to women's economic empowerment, and women's leadership on peace and security outcomes in Kenya. UN-Women country office's annual inputs to the global report include information on activities (e.g. support provided by UN-Women Country Office to Government of Kenya on development of its National Action Plan for UN Security Council Resolution 1325) but there is little evidence of progress toward outcomes.

**Contributions to national priorities and MDGs**

- Survey respondents in Kenya rated UN-Women strong in (a) contributing to development results that support the achievement of national priorities; (b) making effective contributions to relevant MDGs; and (c) implementing programmes that have positive benefits in the country.
-

## 5.7 TANZANIA

### COUNTRY CONTEXT

- Tanzania has a population of more than 45 million. It is a low income country and is one of the first eight countries to pilot the United Nations Delivering as One approach.
- Tanzania ratified the CEDAW Convention in 1985, but did not integrate it in its legal framework.
- Widespread sexual violence is committed against women and girls in exchange for access to essential services ('sextortion'). Women's economic development is undermined by deep-rooted stereotypes and adverse cultural norms as well as by discrimination in financial practices such as high interest rates in loans given to women.
- Women's participation in Parliament has improved significantly since the last election with women holding 36% of seats in 2013.<sup>17</sup>
- Tanzania has seen mixed results with regards to the MDGs.<sup>18</sup> It is expected to reach all MDG results except 1 and 5 where an MDG acceleration framework is now in place.<sup>19</sup>

### UN-WOMEN'S STRATEGY AND RESULTS AREAS

- The UNIFEM office in Tanzania was established in 2006 and upgraded to a UN-Women country office in 2010. The current Country Representative has been in place since 2010 and manages a programme portfolio of USD 5.4 million.
- UN-Women participates in the UN's Delivering as One approach in Tanzania, and under the UNDAF has forged partnerships with other UN agencies to ensure that gender considerations are adequately integrated and resourced in all the UNDAF programmatic areas. UN-Women also implements programmes in UNDAF Programme Working Groups on Governance, Economic Growth, Environment, and in HIV&AIDS. It also leads the Interagency Gender Group.
- UN-Women works on four of its six impact areas in Tanzania: women's leadership and participation, economic empowerment of women, ending violence against women, and promoting national planning and budgeting processes that take into account gender equality commitments.

### UN-Women's organisational effectiveness – some highlights from the MOPAN survey

A clear majority of survey respondents consider UN-Women (Tanzania) to be strong in most aspects of organisational effectiveness.

#### Strategic management

- Respondents considered UN-Women to be strong in all aspects of strategic management, including in giving direction for the achievement of development results, developing country strategies in collaboration with national partners, and providing a clear vision of its normative, operational and co-

17. Tanzania HDI values and rank changes in the 2013 Human Development Report

18. <http://www.tz.undp.org/content/tanzania/en/home/countryinfo/>

19. <http://www.cworldbank.org/en/country/tanzania/overview#1>

ordination mandates. A significant number (37%) of respondents say they don't know whether UN-Women sufficiently promotes environmental sustainability in its work.

#### **Operational management**

- Most areas of operational management were rated strong, except for the delegation of decision-making authority and staff, which was rated adequate (although there was a high “don't know” response rate for two of the questions).

#### **Relationship management**

- All aspects of relationship management were rated strong, apart from the length of time for completing procedures which was rated adequate (although 38% of respondents answered “don't know”).

#### **Knowledge management**

- UN-Women was rated strong for involving key beneficiaries and partners in programme evaluations. (These questions were part of the only micro-indicator on knowledge management that was assessed at country level.)

### **UN-Women's relevance and development results – some highlights from the assessment**

#### **Relevance**

- Survey respondents rated UN-Women strong in (a) pursuing results in areas within its mandate; (b) aligning its results with global trends and priorities; (c) responding to beneficiary needs; and (d) adapting its programmes and operations to the changing needs and priorities of the country.
- UN-Women has shifted its programming towards gender and the extractive sector, which is a good example of how the Entity has adapted its work to the changing needs and national priorities.
- UN-Women's leadership on gender equality considerations in the UNDAF (and joint programming with other UN agencies) indicates co-ordination with UN country team priorities – and therefore seems to be a good indication of relevance.

#### **Progress towards UN-Women's stated country-level results**

- Reporting on progress achieved for the UNDAF is done jointly, thus making it difficult to identify UN-Women's specific contribution to the outcomes.
- Yet survey respondents in Tanzania rated UN-Women strong for its progress on most strategic objectives laid out in the Tanzania Strategic Note.
- The availability of evaluations or reports of progress achieved is limited.

#### **Contributions to national priorities and MDGs**

- Survey respondents in Tanzania rated UN-Women strong in (a) contributing to development results that support the achievement of national priorities; (b) making effective contributions to relevant MDGs; and (c) implementing programmes that have positive benefits in the country.
-

## 6. Conclusions

**These conclusions step away from the specific ratings of the MOPAN assessment and look at the major messages that can contribute to dialogue between individual MOPAN members and UN-Women and its partners.**

**UN-Women's clear mandate to promote gender equality and women's empowerment is a key strength of the organisation. The mandate is clearly reflected in its planning and programming and the overall mandate is understood by most surveyed donors, direct partners and peer organisations.**

UN-Women has developed global, regional and country strategic plans and programming that reflect its mandate. Despite the complexity of its mandate, most surveyed stakeholders recognise that UN-Women's strategic plan provides the necessary clarity and guidance to fully operationalise its mandate. UN-Women's mandate and activities to date have resulted in an increased profile for gender equality and UN-Women is seen as a leader on gender equality.

UN-Women's normative and co-ordination roles are considered clear by surveyed stakeholders, although they are less clear on or have differing expectations of UN-Women's operational role. This lack of clarity may be due to confusion over how UN Women's operational role differs from the project-based work of its predecessor, UNIFEM. Respondents may have differing expectations because they are unfamiliar with UN-Women's additional functions compared to those of its predecessor entities and, as a result, may have particularly high expectations of UN-Women for its operational role, especially at the country level. According to recent evaluations, UN-Women's enhanced visibility has also played a role in increasing expectations of its work.

**UN-Women's mandate and key functions are relevant. They are linked to the rationale for the creation of UN-Women and continue to be pertinent at the global and national levels.**

UN-Women was created by Member States and through the mobilisation of various actors in the international community, including members of the UN system and civil society organisations, who saw the continuing gaps in efforts to reduce gender inequality and lack of focus and coherence in efforts to address those gaps. They advocated for more leadership to address gender equality in the UN reform process and this resulted in the creation of UN-Women.

UN-Women's country plans are strongly aligned with national priorities and the activities of partner organisations at the country level. Survey respondents noted that its programming is sufficiently flexible and responsive to changing circumstances and to meet local needs.

**UN-Women has had considerable success in setting up its operational infrastructure since its creation in 2010, but more remains to be done to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of its operations across the organisation. Funding challenges may limit UN-Women's ability to implement planned activities.**

Despite resource mobilisation challenges – i.e. gaps between donor commitments and resource mobilisation targets – the organisation is on track to fully operationalise its mandate. Achievements include: developing strategic plans (at global, regional and country levels) that meet global and national needs and priorities; putting in place the necessary policies, systems and procedures for a decentralised organisation; expanding its presence at country level and delegating authority to improve the

effectiveness of country programming; setting up a performance management system; and establishing knowledge management practices.

UN-Women's decentralisation process was largely achieved by the end of 2013. However, insufficient resources and vacancies in key positions in some country offices may have a significant impact on the organisation's ability to deliver its mandate at the country level. The effectiveness of the decentralised organisation may be limited by staff shortages at the country level and the lack of adequate oversight and monitoring mechanisms at country and project levels.

While UN-Women has developed operational policies, systems and procedures, there are gaps remaining in their consistent implementation. UN-Women has strong financial accountability mechanisms and other systems to support its work, but some systems still need to be fine-tuned. Notably there are concerns about the transparency and predictability of resource allocation at the country level. Other areas for improvement include an up-to-date resource allocation policy, stronger procurement oversight processes, and systematic risk management strategies. However, the most significant concern about UN-Women's operational infrastructure is a lack of consistency in the implementation of policies, systems and practices across the organisation as a result of resource issues, lack of staff capacity, and different organisational cultures across the country offices. Issues with lack of consistency were identified with respect to results-based management and joint planning/programming.

**UN-Women has an adequate focus on results and has set up relevant performance management systems for the organisation. However, problems with the results chain prevent UN-Women from identifying and assessing the contributions of its own activities. In addition, there are challenges with ensuring that a results-oriented culture and systems permeate the entire organisation.**

UN-Women has made efforts to develop, both internally and externally, a culture of results-based management (RBM). This focus on results is led by senior management and is reflected in both corporate and country level strategic planning documents. Global, regional and country programmes are required to provide detailed annual work plans that identify results and targets. UN-Women reports annually on global results achieved at the outcome level for its six impact areas.

However, challenges with the definition of results within UN-Women's development results framework limit the usefulness of results information and the organisation's ability to measure the direct results of its own activities. Two recent corporate thematic evaluations echoed the concern that the assessment of UN-Women's contributions to results was hindered by weaknesses in programme results frameworks and outcome-level reporting, and by the lack of explicit programme-level theories of change. In addition, some outputs, particularly those related to capacity development, do not have appropriate indicators.

UN-Women has set up a strong structure, planning systems, operational framework and evaluation function to promote accountability and learning at both corporate and decentralised levels. Monitoring, reporting, evaluation, and auditing processes are taking place, to different degrees, at both global and country levels and there is reportedly quite systematic follow-up to recommendations from evaluations and audits. UN-Women has developed systems such as the Global Accountability and Tracking of Evaluation (GATE) and the Global Evaluation Report Analysis and Assessment System (GERAAS) to enhance the systematic use of evaluation findings and lessons learned for decision making, but still needs to improve the external and internal dissemination of lessons learned. The effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation varies across country offices depending on the availability of resources and the organisational culture in each office.

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**UN Women has made progress in fulfilling its function of leading and co-ordinating United Nations system strategies, policies and actions to promote effective system-wide gender mainstreaming, yet its capacity to play this role is uneven at the country level due to funding and staffing constraints.**

UN-Women's co-ordination role is reflected in the development (and implementation by most UN entities) of the UN System-wide Action Plan (SWAP) on gender equality, in its co-ordination of gender theme groups and other initiatives (gender markers, co-ordination of UN country team initiatives on gender mainstreaming, etc). UN-Women is also seen as a strong partner on the ground: it has participated in more than 100 joint programmes with other UN agencies and has developed other joint initiatives with private sector and civil society organisations. It engages with its partners in annual reviews of its programming.

UN-Women's co-ordination capacity has been uneven across country offices due to their different stages of readiness (some are not yet adequately resourced and some have just been established). The challenge of UN-Women's capacity for its co-ordination role was reflected in two recent corporate evaluations.

UN-Women has played an important role in the UN reform process. Many elements of its 2014-2017 strategic plan reflect directives of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR). UN-Women has worked in partnership with other UN agencies to implement QCPR directives to: harmonise joint programming and results-based management; encourage South-South co-operation; increase investments in and track the allocation of resources for gender equality; and enhance gender mainstreaming in programme planning and implementation.

**UN-Women has adopted good practices that are likely to enhance its contributions to development results.**

UN-Women's country strategic plans are based on extensive consultation with national governments and UN and other local partners. UN-Women has a network of civil society advocacy groups that allows it to be in touch systemically with these stakeholders.

It has a reputation for providing high quality, valued policy dialogue inputs; working well with government and other UN partners to build national capacity; providing useful technical assistance for intergovernmental normative processes on gender equality and women's empowerment; and leading and co-ordinating United Nations system strategies, policies and actions to promote effective system-wide gender mainstreaming. It has undertaken harmonisation initiatives, although promoting initiatives to harmonise gender mainstreaming efforts at country level remains a work in progress.

**It is too early to assess in any comprehensive way UN-Women's development results. However, there is evidence that UN-Women has made progress in three of its six impact areas.**

The assessment identified specific achievements with respect to three of UN-Women's impact areas: women and girls live a life free from violence; peace and security and humanitarian action are shaped by women leadership and participation; and 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.

Two recent thematic corporate evaluations and the 2013 meta-analysis of UN-Women's evaluations noted the contributions of UN-Women and its predecessor entities<sup>20</sup> in shaping global policy and norms and supporting the adoption of new or revised national legal frameworks, policies and action plans in the impact areas of ending violence against women and in advancing women's leadership and participation in peace and security. The evaluations also noted that further efforts are needed to support the implementation of these frameworks, policies and action plans.

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) formulates policies and sets global standards to promote gender equality globally. UN-Women has played a key role in supporting the achievement of agreed conclusions at the two recent CSW sessions. After Member States failed to achieve any outcomes at CSW 56, UN-Women increased its advocacy and leveraging of all parts of the organisation to build global consensus on issues prior to CSW 57 and CSW 58.

The Executive Director's annual reports indicate that UN-Women also made progress towards results at the outcome level in other impact areas. However, there is still a limited body of evaluations available to validate results in these impact areas. As a result, overall achievements with respect to development results and the sustainability of results remain to be assessed.

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20. Most evaluations reviewed for this assessment covered both UN-Women's work and the work carried out by predecessor entities, particularly UNIFEM which was the only predecessor entity to have a presence at the country level.

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