



EVALUATION OF THE STRATEGIC NOTE:
**UN WOMEN REGIONAL OFFICE
FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**



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UN WOMEN INDEPENDENT EVALUATION, AUDIT AND INVESTIGATION SERVICES (IEAIS)

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AI	Artificial Intelligence
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BARM	Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
COVID	Coronavirus Disease
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
EU	European Union
IEAIS	Independent Evaluation Audit and Investigation Services
IEAS	Independent Evaluation and Audit Services
IES	Independent Evaluation Service
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SOGIESC	Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EVALUATION OF THE STRATEGIC NOTE: UN WOMEN REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

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This report presents the main findings, conclusions and recommendations arising from the evaluation of the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific's Strategic Note. A Strategic Note evaluation systematically assesses the normative, coordination and operational aspects of UN Women's contribution to development results relating to gender equality and the empowerment of women. The evaluation was conducted between September 2024 and April 2025.

Background

This Strategic Note evaluation is primarily intended to be a formative (forward-looking) evaluation to support the Regional Office and stakeholders' strategic learning and decision-making when developing a new Strategic Note. The evaluation is expected to have a secondary summative (backward-looking) perspective, to support enhanced accountability for development effectiveness and learning from experience. The evaluation provides an independent and systematic assessment of UN Women's contribution to fulfilling its role at the regional level and in support of UN Women presences in the region. The evaluation will feed into learning on what strategies work well and what needs strengthening. The evaluation focused on the current Strategic Note cycle (2023–2025) and will be used to design the new Strategic Note (2026–2030). The evaluation is being conducted in coordination with the Regional Office's functional review.

Evaluation approach and methodology

The evaluation employed a non-experimental, theory-based and gender-responsive approach, emphasizing transparency and participation by involving relevant UN Women stakeholders and partners. It adhered to internal and external guidelines, integrating gender equality and human rights principles throughout the process. Data collection methods included 156 interviews, 5 focus group discussions, surveys, observations, case studies and the review of over 100 documents. Secondary data analyses encompassed a meta-synthesis of 23 evaluations, Global Service Tracker analyses, mission reports and social media web analytics. Contribution analysis was supported by an evidence map and NVIVO software for qualitative data analysis, ensuring robust findings through triangulation. The evaluation applied UN Women's principles for gender-responsive evaluation and the United Nations Evaluation Group's guidance, focusing on the principle of "leave no one behind" to address multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. Participatory methods engaged key stakeholders and rights holders from marginalized groups through civil society organization representatives. The evaluation followed UN Women's procedures to ensure high-quality evaluation processes and products and ethical conduct, as outlined in the UN Women Evaluation Policy and Evaluation Handbook. All evaluation products were subject to quality review by IES management, a peer reviewer, the Evaluation Reference Group and Evaluation Management Group.

Context

The UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific oversees and supports 22 countries within a region hosting 42 UN Member States. The Strategic Note serves as the main planning tool for UN Women’s normative, coordination and operational work, aiming to ensure that women and girls in all their diversity engage with and leverage normative frameworks, gender-responsive policies, laws and institutions securing better access to opportunities, resources and services, in full enjoyment of their fundamental human rights and freedoms.

Within the diverse region of Asia and the Pacific, the Regional Office serves as a knowledge hub and provides oversight, quality assurance, technical assistance, policy services and

support for communications, results-based management, capacity development, resource mobilization and advocacy. It also manages regional and multi-country programming to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment. The Regional Office Strategic Note (2023–2025) focuses on six UN Women Strategic Plan systemic outcomes to drive results across the office’s thematic areas: Inclusive Governance; Ending Violence Against Women and Girls; Women’s Economic Empowerment; Women, Peace and Security; Climate Change; and Humanitarian Action and Disaster Risk Reduction.

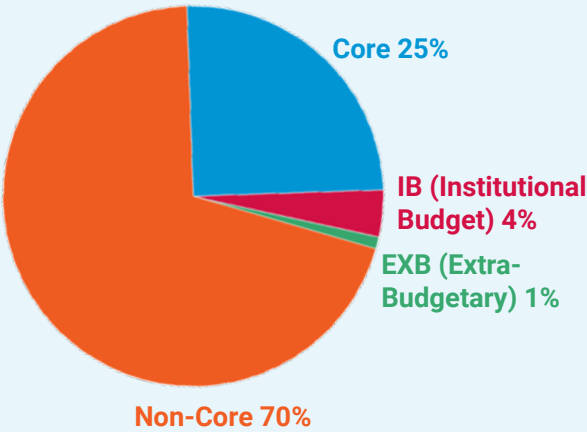
Total Budget in US\$ (2022-2025)

66.5 M

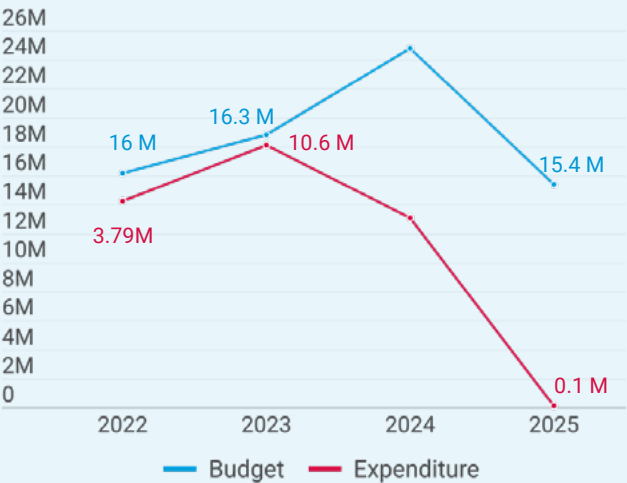
Total Regional Office Workforce

100

Funding sources (2022-2025)



Budget vs Financial Implementation US\$ (2022-2025*)



*Data extracted from Quantum Database, extracted in April 2025

Top 5 Projects (in US\$ millions)

Empower (Resilience) Phase 1: 2018-2022 , Phase 2: 2023-2027	29 M
Safe and Fair (EVAW) 2018-2022	13 M
Enhancing Access to Justice (GPS) 2018-2023	9.8 M
We EmPower Asia (WEE) 2019-2022	8.4 M
Empowering Women for Sustainable Peace (ASEAN) 2021-2025	8.4 M

Source: IES evaluation team, based on UN Women Quantum data

Conclusions

CONCLUSION 1



The Regional Office's Strategic Note is relevant to the region and its work adds value across UN Women's triple mandate. There is a need to strengthen prioritization and focus based on regional priorities. The Regional Office has contributed to advancing normative frameworks across several impact areas but would benefit from strengthened leadership and a clearer vision. Clear prioritization and focus will become particularly critical in an increasingly resource constrained environment.

CONCLUSION 2



The Regional Office has played a key role in advancing gender equality in the region through regional programmes, whose direction has largely followed donor interest and available funding, with intensive engagement in particular with ASEAN. While regional programming has been catalytic in some areas, it has also resulted in skewing resources and engagement towards specific countries and subregions. Opportunities remain to (a) rebalance the Regional Office's core functions with regional programming to ensure it is oriented towards its key client, UN Women presences across the region; (b) focus on other subregions to strengthen both internal coherence and potential impact in the region; and (c) aligned with and guided by corporate guidance, develop a common vision.

CONCLUSION 3



Coordination work is fundamental to UN Women's mandate and will be increasingly important as the organization responds to the the Secretary-General's Gender Equality Action Plan and UN 80 reform initiative. The Regional Office leverages partnerships to enhance coherence in gender equality efforts, engaging diverse actors and amplifying women's voices. A clear theory of change and strategic approach is needed to maximize the impact of coordination work, leverage the Gender Equality Action Plan and deepen key partnerships, especially given potential reductions in funding.

CONCLUSION 4



Stakeholders look to UN Women and the Regional Office to provide critical knowledge, gender data and trends on the progress and challenges faced by women and girls from a regional lens. The Regional Office could better leverage its role as a knowledge hub by prioritizing and systematizing processes related to planning, quality assurance and in monitoring the use of its knowledge products and the knowledge gained. The Regional Office should also invest in forward-looking knowledge practices, including piloting new approaches; integrating emerging tools such as Artificial Intelligence; and facilitating cross-learning across the region. This should include its capacity-building efforts, including through the UN Women Knowledge and Partnerships Centre in the Republic of Korea.

CONCLUSION 5



In the face of intensifying resource constraints, the Regional Office must deepen and strengthen its core functional roles to support UN Women presences across the region. Overall, establishing clearer expectations for functional and thematic units; reinforcing senior management's role in fostering collaboration; and embedding a structured system for tracking and aligning regional engagement would create a more unified operational model.

CONCLUSION 6



As an organization with the protection and promotion of human rights and sustainable development as its core mandate, strengthening the systematic application of non-discrimination, embedding sustainability and environmental safeguards are an imperative. UN Women must hold itself to high standards and practice what it advocates.

RECOMMENDATIONS



The Regional Office should leverage the development of the next Strategic Note as a timely opportunity to sharpen UN Women's strategic focus in the region by clearly defining priorities, deepening coherence and leadership in normative work, and institutionalizing adaptive, forward-looking planning that responds to emerging trends and subregional dynamics.



The Regional Office should prioritize its core functions supporting UN Women presence in the region as the basis for regional engagement, use clear criteria to guide regional programming, rebalance subregional focus, and clarify direction and expectations of non-physical presences ensuring alignment with regional support capacities.



The Regional Office should develop a theory of change and strategy for its regional coordination work, focusing on working collaboratively – both internally and externally – to advance shared goals and leverage investments for gender equality and women's empowerment, including for women's civil society.



The Regional Office should strengthen its leadership in knowledge generation, innovation and capacity strengthening by clarifying the structures to support it, establishing clear processes and internal guidance for the planning, dissemination and measurement of the use of knowledge products and capacity-building efforts, while finalizing its strategy for integrating AI responsibly into its work.



The Regional Office should clarify roles and expectations of both thematic and functional units with the aim of enhancing cross-unit collaboration; coordinated support to UN Women presences; fostering innovation and results-based learning across teams; and strengthening approaches for coordinated and sustainable resource mobilization.



The Regional Office should systematically apply intersectionality and environmental standards across all its programming and coordination efforts to ensure meaningful inclusion of marginalized groups and strengthen environmental safeguards in line with UN Women's global commitments.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Purpose, objectives and scope

Purpose

The primary purpose of this evaluation was to assess UN Women's contributions to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in the Asia and the Pacific region. The aim of the evaluation was to support enhanced accountability for development effectiveness; learning from experience; and to support informed decision-making, namely development of the Regional Office's new Strategic Note 2026–2030.

The primary intended users of the evaluation are the UN Women Regional Office, the programme offices that it oversees, Country Office personnel, UN Women senior management and other relevant personnel at headquarters, regional and country levels. The evaluation may also be useful for other actors.

The primary intended uses of this evaluation are to:

- Support decision-making regarding development of the next Strategic Note.
- Accountability for the development effectiveness of the existing Strategic Note in terms of UN Women's contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as organizational effectiveness, learning and knowledge management.
- Learning on effective, promising and innovative strategies and practices.
- Capacity development and mobilization of regional stakeholders to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Evaluation scope

The Regional Office's entire programme of work and UN Women's integrated mandate was assessed, including contributions in the operational, coordination and normative spheres. However, the evaluation focused on the Regional Office's normative and coordination mandates because several evaluations covering the operational mandate had been completed during the time period. The evaluation focused on the current Strategic Note (2023–2025), but also included efforts from the former Strategic Note cycle (2019–2022) given that this covers the UN Women Strategic Plan period. With the understanding that the current Strategic Note is not complete, the evaluation analysed work completed through 2024 and ensured a formative analysis of the Regional Office's strategy. The timing of the evaluation aimed to feed into the planning process for the next Strategic Note and the planned functional review.

UN Women's "pivot to the regions and countries" initiative was being rolled out in 2025 and the Regional Office undertook a functional review starting in Q1 2025. Therefore, the evaluation attempted to ensure complementarity in scope by excluding a review of operational structures and financing that support Strategic Note implementation.

The geographic scope included areas in the region where UN Women is operating. However, regional programmes were not assessed in terms of their development results, as most areas have been evaluated. A meta-synthesis of evaluations including evaluations undertaken between 2019 and 2023 informed insights on regional programmatic results.

1.2 Evaluation approach and methodology

Methodology

The overall approach of the evaluation was non-experimental, theory-based and gender-responsive. This included disaggregating data by sex and applying feminist analytical frameworks that supported an intersectional analysis. The evaluation was carried out in accordance with internal and external guidelines,¹ and explicit emphasis was placed on integrating gender equality and human rights principles into the evaluation process. UN Women evaluations are inclusive, participatory and transparent; ensure fair power relations; and analyse the underlying structural barriers and sociocultural norms that impede the realization of women's rights.

In consultation with the Regional Office, a reconstructed theory of change was developed and used as the basis for contribution analysis. Evaluation questions were developed using the theory of change and assessed against the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD/ DAC) criteria comprising relevance, coherence, effectiveness, sustainability, gender equality and human rights and organizational efficiency. All evaluation products were subject to quality review by IES management, a peer reviewer, the Evaluation Reference Group and the Evaluation Management Group.

Data collection

The evaluation employed qualitative and quantitative data collection from multiple data sources (see Figure 1), including 156 interviews (78 per cent female and 22 per cent male); five focus group discussions; a UN Women personnel survey and stakeholder survey; observation of meetings; three case studies to provide insight into issues of coherence between the Regional Office and Country Offices; and more than 100 documents were reviewed including ProDocs, annual reports, donor reports, publications, training modules, reviews and audits. Several targeted analyses of secondary data were undertaken including a meta-synthesis of 23 evaluations from the region, analyses of the Global Service Tracker, mission reports and travel, and an analysis of publications and social media web analytics to feed into efficiency questions.

Overall analysis

Multiple lines of evidence fed into the contribution analysis.² An evidence map was developed to map information obtained from different sources on the same results area, including UN Women reports and information collected through interviews, surveys and case studies. NVIVO software was used for qualitative data analysis. Triangulation of sources and methods of information was conducted to ensure robust findings that can be used with confidence. A sample of 10 projects was assessed against a rating scale to support analysis of the extent to which they were aware of marginalized groups in their design and implementation. The same sample was used to analyse the extent to which Social and Environmental Standards were integrated into ProDocs.

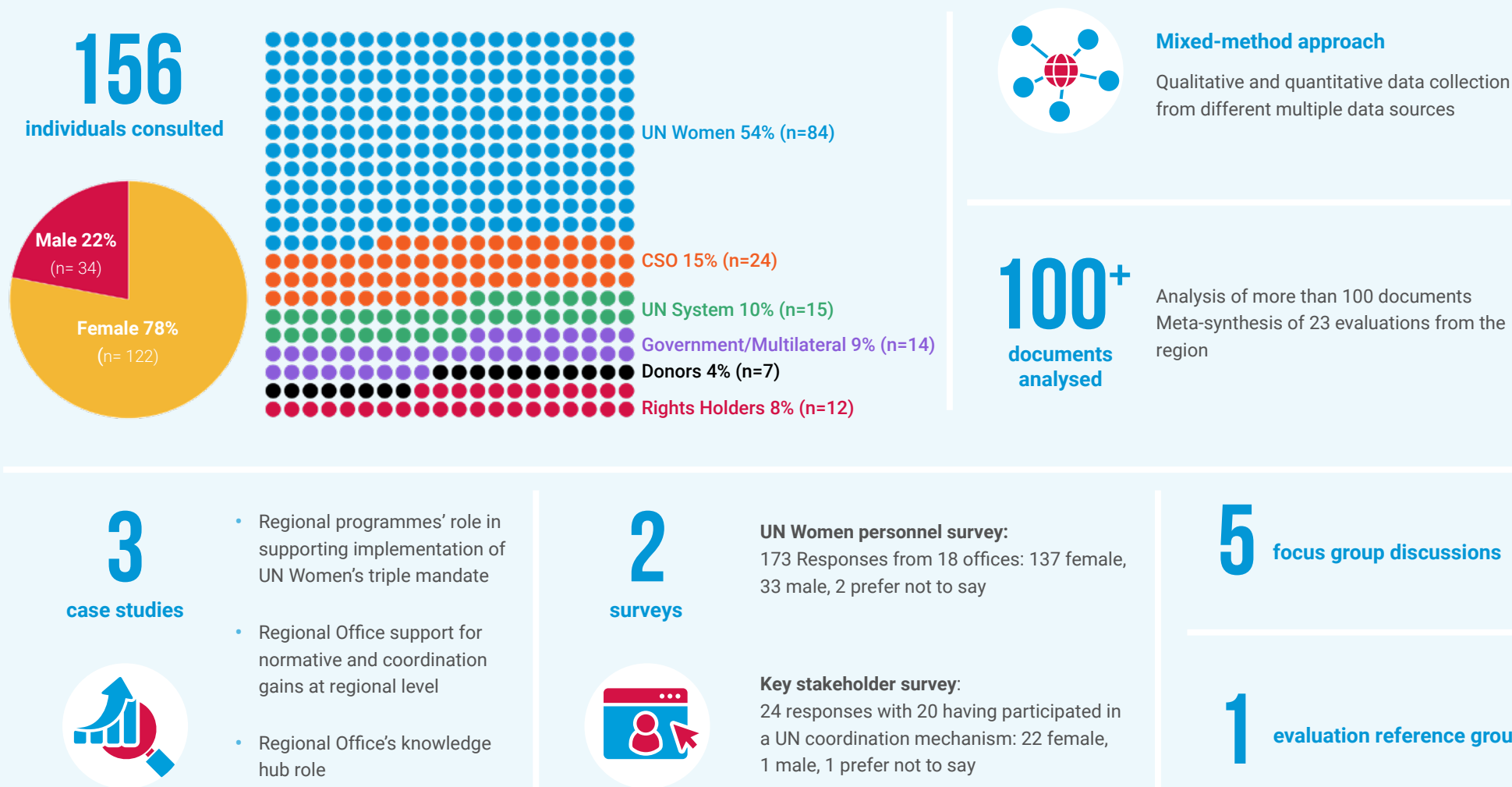


Photo: ©UN Women/Fahad Kaizer

¹ UN Women, *UN Women Country Portfolio Evaluations: Revised Guidelines* (2022). Available at [UN Women country portfolio evaluations: Revised guidelines | Publications | UN Women – Headquarters](https://www.unwomen.org/en/publications/2022/01/un-women-country-portfolio-evaluations-revised-guidelines); UN Women, *Guidance on Integrating Disability Inclusion in Evaluations and Reporting on the UNDIS Entity Accountability Framework Evaluation Indicator* (March 2022). Available at <https://www.unevaluation.org/unevaluation/publications/guidance-integrating-disability-inclusion-evaluations-and-reporting-undis-entity>; United Nations Evaluation Group, *Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations* (August 2014). Available at <https://www.unevaluation.org/unevaluation/publications/integrating-human-rights-and-gender-equality-evaluations>

² Better Evaluation, "Contribution Analysis" (2024). Available from <https://www.betterevaluation.org/methods-approaches/approaches/contribution-analysis>

FIGURE 1: Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific Strategic Note Evaluation overview of data collected



Source: developed by the evaluation team

A map of Asia and Oceania showing the locations of 15 UN member states. The states are marked with the UN flag icon. The map includes labels for countries like China, India, Japan, and various islands in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. The states marked are: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea (DPR), Korea (ROK), Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam.

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Evaluation of the Strategic Note: UN Women
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

1.3 Ethics, gender equality and no one left behind

The evaluation adhered to [UNEG Norms and Standards](#) and [UN Women's Evaluation Policy](#) by embedding gender-responsive and ethical principles throughout its design and implementation. Informed consent was systematically obtained from all participants, with evaluators clearly introducing themselves; explaining the purpose of the evaluation; and securing consent in the participant's preferred language. No audio recordings of individual interviews were made. Where discussions involved rights holders or potentially sensitive topics, interviews were conducted in private, safe settings. Respondents' comfort and safety were prioritized, in line with World Health Organization and UN Women guidance. In all cases, participants' anonymity was preserved, and no personal identifiers were included in the final report. All team members were trained on ethical protocols in advance of fieldwork.

Mechanisms were also implemented to avoid harm and ensure inclusive, respectful engagement with all consulted populations. Interview timings and locations were chosen in collaboration with local staff to ensure accessibility and safety, especially for marginalized groups. Evaluation tools were culturally sensitive and designed to avoid distress, with protocols in place to suspend or discontinue interviews if participants showed signs of discomfort. Data was stored securely on UN Women SharePoint, with access limited to the evaluation team. A dedicated Gender-Responsive and Ethical Procedures Data Management Plan can be found in Annex 6.5.

1.4 Evaluation constraints and limitations

In the external partner survey, responses were more numerous from the Sub-Group on Gender Statistics Training, potentially skewing findings towards statistics priorities. The evaluation team updated the UN Women personnel survey after 21 responses, affecting three questions, which were analysed separately.

Case study 1 included the Pakistan Country Office and Fiji Multi-Country Office to assess the opportunity costs of not participating in a regional programme. However, stakeholders mainly provided insights on their offices' work and desired support from the Regional Office. Moreover, the Pakistan Country Office had received minimal regional funds,³ which somewhat limited it as a counterfactual example.

The evaluation team asked the Regional Office leadership team for copies of its mission reports, as part of the mission analysis; however, due to the absence of a centralized repository for storing mission reports, the analysis did not capture all missions undertaken during the evaluation period.

Significant shifts in donor funding during the evaluation analysis phase affected UN Women and its partners, potentially rendering some findings outdated. Effective partnerships and processes may now be undermined by funding cuts.

³ Pakistan Country Office received US\$ 50,000 under the Governance, Peace and Security project "A Regional Framework Towards Peaceful, Inclusive Societies: Advancing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and Inclusive Governance in the Asia Pacific Region".

2.EVALUATION CONTEXT

2.1. Asia and the Pacific context

The Asia and the Pacific region is significantly off track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the 2030 target,⁴ with the region set to achieve only a third of the necessary progress by 2030. Growing patterns of backlash against gender equality both globally and within the region may also threaten future support and funding for work to advance gender equality goals, including for UN Women and its partners. In this context, women's mobilization, participation and leadership will be critical for driving progress towards achievement of the SDGs within the region.

Women and girls in Asia and the Pacific face considerable challenges in accessing education and employment opportunities, making it harder for them to enter the labour market. While there are some positive trends, such as increased access to finance among women in South Asia, recent data reveals concerning disparities. Across Asia and the Pacific, gender gaps in labour force participation remain substantial, with only 58.1 per cent of women in East Asia and the Pacific and 39.9 per cent in South Asia participating in the labour market, compared to 73 per cent and 78.9 per cent

of men respectively.^{5,6} Demographic shifts in the region and the disproportionate amount of unpaid care work shouldered by women and girls are hindering progress towards gender equality and pose different challenges for the economy. Women are disproportionately more likely than men to leave paid jobs to undertake unpaid family responsibilities, including caring for the sick and homeschooling children.⁷

Recent reports also highlight persistent challenges related to violence against women and girls with alarming rates of gender-based violence, including domestic violence, sexual assault and harmful practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation prevalent across the region. In many countries across Asia and the Pacific, the proportion of women who report experiencing physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime significantly exceeds the global average of 27 per cent. Prevalence rates reach 35 per cent in India, 38 per cent in Timor-Leste and 50 per cent or higher in countries such as Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Bangladesh.⁸ In 2021, Asia recorded the highest number of female intimate partner or family-related killings globally, with an estimated 17,800 women killed.⁹

⁴ 2024 Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in UN News, "Asia-Pacific off track on path to Sustainable Development Goals, UN data shows", 15 February 2024.

⁵ World Bank, Gender Data Portal: East Asia and Pacific, accessed May 14, 2025, <https://genderdata.worldbank.org/en/regions/east-asia-pacific>.

⁶ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), Female Labour Force Participation and the Care Economy in Asia and the Pacific: Policy Brief (Bangkok: UNESCAP, 2022), 2, <https://repository.unescap.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12870/5164/ESCAP-2022-PB-Female-labour-force-participation-care-economy-Asia-Pacific.pdf>.

⁷ UN Women, "Two years on: The lingering gendered effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in Asia and the Pacific" (2022). Available at <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/06/two-years-on>

⁸ World Health Organization, *Violence Against Women Prevalence Estimates, 2018: Global, Regional and National Prevalence Estimates for Intimate Partner Violence Against Women and Global and Regional Prevalence Estimates for Non-Partner Sexual Violence Against Women* (Geneva: WHO, 2021), <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240022256>.

⁹ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and UN Women, Gender-Related Killings of Women and Girls (Femicide/Feminicide): Global Estimates of Gender-Related Killings of Women and Girls in the Private Sphere in 2021 – Improving Data to Improve Responses (Vienna: UNODC and UN Women, 2022), https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-11/ap-Femicide_brief_22Nov2022_final2.pdf.

Climate change-related disasters and hazards pose significant risks in Asia and the Pacific, disproportionately affecting women and girls. Asia and the Pacific is the most disaster-prone region in the world, with 6 of the 10 countries most affected by climate change from 2000 to 2019 located in the region.¹⁰ While women's role in early warning systems, disaster preparedness, adaptation and post-disaster recovery is essential for building inclusive risk governance systems, women are also more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change due to socioeconomic factors and cultural roles, which often limit their mobility, inclusion in decision-making and access to resources.¹¹ Women in Asia and the Pacific face disproportionate impacts of climate-induced displacement, with the region accounting for nearly 80 per cent of global disaster-related displacements,¹² and global estimates suggesting women constitute 80 per cent of those displaced.¹³ The Asia and the Pacific region has experienced regression in relation to SDG 13 (climate action) targets.¹⁴

The Global Peace Index highlights that many countries in the Asia-Pacific region have unresolved, ongoing conflicts or are in post-conflict situations, with key areas of concern including Afghanistan, Myanmar and parts of the Philippines. South Asia recorded a deterioration in peacefulness over the past year and remains the second least peaceful subregion overall.¹⁵ Multiple and overlapping crises, including political instability, the effects of climate change, violent extremism and conflict have significantly impacted the region. Investing in advancing women's leadership and effective participation across all sectors is key to gender-responsive political and governance systems and processes – and in efforts to strengthen legal frameworks that promote, enforce and monitor gender equality (SDG Target 5.1). While more women are increasingly becoming political representatives, progress

remains uneven: South and South-West Asia reported the lowest rates of political representation for women at 17.3 per cent, followed by the Pacific at 18 per cent, North and Central Asia at 21 per cent, South-East Asia at 21.4 per cent, and East and North-East Asia at 21.7 per cent.¹⁶ New technologies such as generative artificial intelligence present unparalleled opportunities to transform lives and livelihoods, while at the same time posing risks to societies and individuals.

The Asia and Pacific region faces significant challenges in upholding the rights of both persons with disabilities and diverse SOGIESC (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics), highlighting deep disparities in social and legal protections. 350 million women and girls with disabilities live in Asia and the Pacific – more than half of the region's total population with disabilities.¹⁷ Women with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities are among the most marginalized of the estimated 690 million persons with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific. In several countries, they are unable to own property, open a bank account, or participate in elections as voters or candidates.¹⁸ Adult women with disabilities are at least 1.5 times more likely to be physically and sexually abused than women without disabilities.¹⁹ Persons with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, particularly women with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities, often face systemic and institutional barriers that deny them full economic, political, and social participation.

Rights pertaining to LGBTIQ+ and social acceptance vary widely in the region, with Thailand having recently approved a comprehensive same-sex marriage law, while countries such as Malaysia and Brunei criminalize same-sex relations. A 2019 global study found that conversion therapy was prevalent, with 26 per cent in the region terming it “very common.”²⁰

¹⁰ Germanwatch. “Global Climate Risk Index” (2025). Available at <https://www.germanwatch.org/en/cr/>

¹¹ Tanaka, S., & Bhandari, P. (2016). *Building gender into climate finance: ADB experience with the Climate Investment Funds*. Asian Development Bank. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/186020/gender-climate-finance.pdf>

¹² Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. (2022). *Disaster displacement in Asia and the Pacific: A business case for investment in prevention and solutions*. <https://www.internal-displacement.org/publications/disaster-displacement-in-asia-and-the-pacific/>

¹³ UN Environment Programme. (2022). *Climate change exacerbates violence against women and girls*. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/stories/2022/07/climate-change-exacerbates-violence-against-women-and-girls>

¹⁴ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, “SDG13 Climate Action”, (n.d) Asia-Pacific Knowledge Management Hub. Available at: <https://knowledge.unasiapacific.org/sdgs/sdg13-climate-action>

¹⁵ Institute for Economics & Peace, Global Peace Index 2023: Measuring peace in a complex world. Available at <https://www.economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/GPI-2023-Web.pdf>

¹⁶ UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, UN Women, *SDG 5 Profile, Progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals – Report of the Secretary – General*. Available at: <https://repository.unescap.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12870/4318/ESCAP-2022-PB-SDG-5.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

¹⁷ UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, *Disability in Asia and the Pacific: The facts* (n.d). Available at <https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/Disability%20The%20Facts.pdf>

¹⁸ UN Women. (2022). *Access to justice for women with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities in Asia and the Pacific*. UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/11/access-to-justice-for-women-with-intellectual-and-psychosocial-disabilities>

¹⁹ UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, *Disability in Asia and the Pacific: The facts* (n.d). Available [here](#).

²⁰ Outright Action International, *Harmful Treatment: The Global Reach of so-called conversion therapy* (2019). Available at <https://outrightinternational.org/our-work/human-rights-research/global-reach-so-called-conversion-therapy>

2.2. UN Women in Asia and the Pacific

The UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific is in a region that is host to 42 UN Member States where it oversees and supports 22 countries across the region.

The Regional Office provides oversight (programmatic and operational), quality assurance, technical assistance and policy services (normative and thematic) on UN coordination, strategic planning, programme development, management and operational issues, as well as representational and advocacy support to UN Women presences in the region. The Regional Office serves as a knowledge hub²¹ and provides support on results-based management, capacity development, resource mobilization, partnership development and management, as well as advocacy and communications. The Regional Office also leads on and manages regional and/or multi-country programming to advance gender equality and women's empowerment. Where UN Women is non-resident, the Regional Office focuses on normative support and UN coordination to advance gender equality and women's empowerment by leveraging regional UN coordination mechanisms and processes, and based on requests from UN Resident Coordinators.

The Regional Office's Strategic Note (2023–2025) focuses on the following five UN Women Strategic Plan systemic outcomes to drive results across the office's thematic areas:

Inclusive Governance, Ending Violence Against Women and Girls, Women's Economic Empowerment, Women Peace and Security, Climate Change, and Humanitarian Action and Disaster Risk Reduction. The Strategic Plan outcomes include: i) SP Outcome 1: Normative frameworks and gender-responsive laws, policies and institutions; ii) SP Outcome 3: Positive social norms (including by engaging men and boys); iii) SP Outcome 4: Women's equitable access to services, goods and resources; iv) SP Outcome 5: Women's voice, leadership and agency; and v) SP Outcome 6: Production, analysis and use of gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data and knowledge.

The Regional Office's Strategic Note (2023–2025) is underpinned by a comprehensive theory of change that describes how Regional Office efforts will contribute to desired outcomes and impact. However, as this evaluation is focused specifically on the Regional Office's contribution to normative and coordination results, the evaluation team developed a reconstructed theory of change (see Figure 3) to identify how the Regional Office adds value and contributes to change in these areas. This theory of change was used to inform evaluation questions and to assess evidence regarding whether and how the Regional Office has contributed to normative and coordination results.



Photo: ©UN Women/Fahad Kaizer

²¹ The evaluation applies the following definition, based on how the Regional Office positions itself as a knowledge hub: A knowledge hub is a strategic platform for generating, sharing and applying knowledge, tools and innovations to strengthen gender equality efforts in the Asia and Pacific region. It supports capacity-building, promotes collaboration and aligns regional and country-level action through evidence and joint analysis.

FIGURE 3: Reconstructed theory of change – focused on the normative and coordination work of the UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

KEY CONTEXTUAL FACTORS & CHALLENGES

Variety of political systems in the region

Shrinking civic space

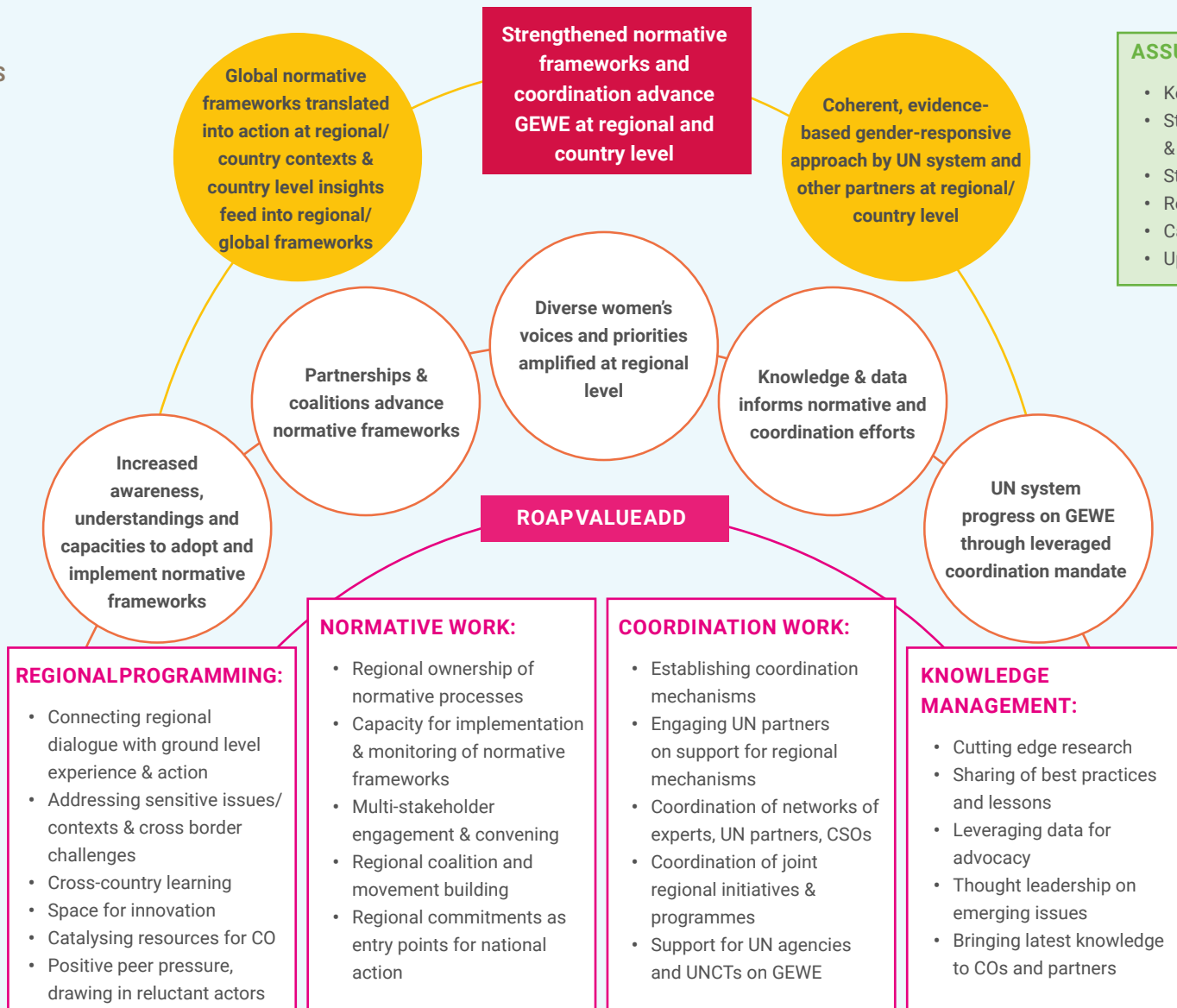
Vulnerability to climate induced disasters

Political instability & conflict in region

Limited civil society & youth engagement

Limited political will and capacity on some normative commitments

Resistance & backlash on GEWE



ASSUMPTIONS

- Key partnerships in place
- Strong connections to civil society & women's movements
- Stakeholder coordination
- Resource mobilization
- Capacity of UN Women staff
- Uptake of knowledge

KEY BARRIERS:

- Siloed approach between thematic areas, esp. at CO/NRA level.
- Insufficient linkages between programme interventions and advocacy
- One size fits all & top-down approaches
- Gap between UN Women RO priorities and national govt priorities
- Varied capabilities in COs/NRAs
- Lack of sustained funding
- Slow operational processes
- Weak interagency collaboration, esp. at country level
- Competition among UN agencies around RM

Source: developed by the evaluation team

3. PORTFOLIO ANALYSIS

3.1 Financial analysis

Between 2022 and 2024, as per the UN Women Executive Dashboard, the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific managed a total budget of US\$ 66.5 million. The implementation is supported by a team of 100 personnel, including 77 staff (FTA/TA/SC), 4 UN Volunteers (UNVs), 16 consultants, and 6 interns.²² The largest share of funding (70 per cent) came from non-core resources, with the top donors being the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia), the Government of the Republic of Korea and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). The top projects were the EmPower programme (US\$ 28.9 million) and Safe and Fair (US\$ 13 million). For 2022, the most spending was concentrated in SP1 (Women's Political Environment), SP4 (Peace, Security and Humanitarian Action) and SP3 (Elimination of Violence Against Women). Refer to Figure 4 for further details.

3.2 Key partners

The portfolio review included a human rights-based approach to the analysis of stakeholders from across programme interventions and activities to identify key duty bearers²³ and rights holders. The analysis of approximately 148 stakeholder groups reflects diverse sectors (for further details see Annex 5.1). Of these, 53 stakeholders were engaged with the Regional Office in cross-cutting thematic areas: 51 were primarily engaged with UN Women in Women's Economic Empowerment and migration, including private-sector involvement; 17 in Ending Violence Against Women and HIV; 17 in Women's Participation in Peace and Security; and 11 in resilience (climate change, humanitarian action and disaster risk reduction). The most marginalized rights holders include women with diverse sexual orientations, women with disabilities, migrant women and survivors of violence. Organizations led by or focused specifically on marginalized groups, such as LGBTIQ+ individuals and persons with disabilities were also identified.

²² The personnel count was conducted in October, 2024 with the Regional Office. This count does not include personnel based in NPPs or the UN Women Knowledge and Partnerships Centre in the Republic of Korea.

²³ In accordance with the UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation, the CPE recognizes "duty bearers" as both state and non-state actors with either duties or responsibilities for a development intervention.

FIGURE 4: Regional Office Asia and the Pacific overview

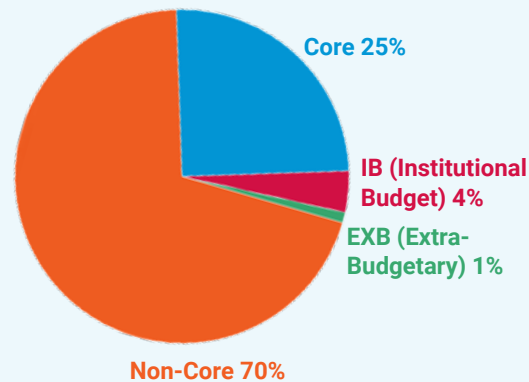
Total Budget in US\$ (2022-2025)

66.5 M

Total Regional Office Workforce

100

Funding sources* (2022-2025)



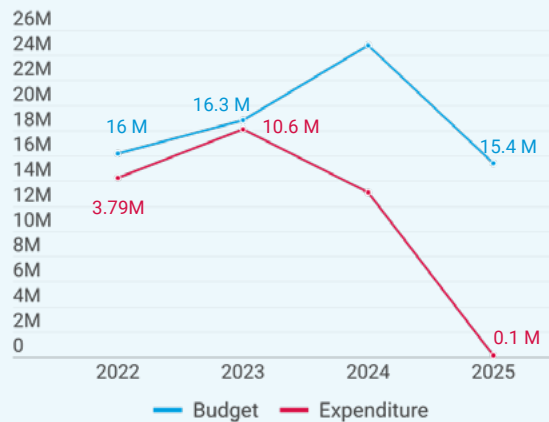
Top 6 donors (2022-2025)



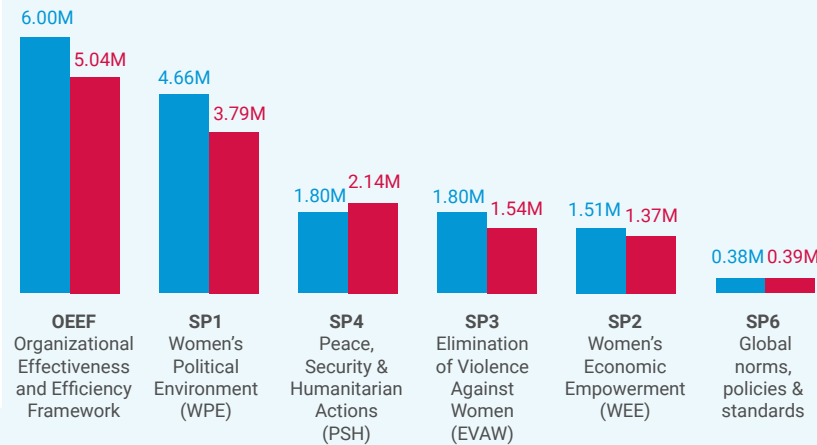
Top 5 Projects (in US\$ millions***)



Budget vs Financial Implementation US\$ (2022-2025*)



Budget & delivery by SP framework US\$ (2022**)



*Data extracted from Quantum Database, extracted in April 2025

**For Budget and Delivery by SP framework, the data is only available for 2022. The 2022 budget-delivery gap reflects the transition from ATLAS to Quantum. Remaining balances were not rephased in ATLAS but directly added in Quantum, resulting in a discrepancy between budget and expenditure figures

***Based on agreement value and exchange rates as of October, 2024.

****EmPower Phase I was funded by SIDA

Source: IES evaluation team, based on UN Women Quantum data

4.FINDINGS

4.1 RELEVANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS

To what extent is UN Women's regional thematic focus and strategies for influencing normative-level efforts relevant and effective for advancing regional/subregional policy frameworks and agreements on gender equality and women's empowerment?

FINDING 1

The Strategic Note's impact areas were found to be broadly relevant for the region, with room for fine-tuning based on country priorities. Partners value UN Women's technical expertise and its reach to women's rights organizations. However, there is an opportunity to better articulate and communicate the Regional Office's strategic priorities internally and with partners.

Stakeholders reported that the Strategic Note provides a strong framework for UN Women to lead in established areas, and to respond to emerging regional priorities. For example, the Regional Office's work on the care economy was identified as a relevant response to growing interest among governments in the region and to the demographic challenge of ageing populations. Several cross-cutting areas of the Regional Office's work emerged as particular strategic priorities, including social norms, gender data, issues around digitalization and technology, and gender and climate change.

While the Strategic Note broadly reflects regional priorities, stakeholders consulted suggested that growing resource pressures mean that further prioritization may be required. The stakeholders suggested that the next Strategic Note should be based on a strategic foresight assessment of

how shifting regional dynamics and evolving global megatrends are likely to shape opportunities for advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women in the region, and how UN Women's investments can best add value within this context, including by supporting UN priorities such as the Secretary-General's six key transitions.²⁴ Stakeholders stressed that, given the regional and global context for advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women is changing fast, the Regional Office will need to become nimbler to remain relevant and the next Strategic Note should be designed to enable flexibility.

The evaluation found there was no clearly articulated approach or shared understanding among UN Women personnel regarding how the different areas of the Regional Office's work under the Strategic Note should be taken forward, or how these different areas fit together.

²⁴ Secretary-General Report: Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: The effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions.

Some internal stakeholders suggested that this was due to high turnover among Regional Office leadership, which undermined the development of a coherent vision for implementation of the Strategic Note. For example, while the Regional EmPower project helped lay the groundwork and bring visibility to the gender and climate agenda during the current Strategic Note period, a clearer vision is required on how to mainstream this agenda across the Regional Office's work, which is particularly urgent given that climate change will increasingly shape the regional context. This finding aligns with an IES corporate evaluation on UN Women's approach to climate change.²⁵

UN Women personnel suggested that the Strategic Note has not provided sufficiently clear framing for work on Women's Economic Empowerment or facilitated a strong narrative regarding impact in this area (although during the implementation period the Women's Economic Empowerment team has produced a regional strategy that seeks to address this). Similarly, UN Women personnel reported that the Strategic Note did not provide a framework to develop a strong narrative on the Regional Office's humanitarian work. There is also appetite among personnel for the next Strategic Note to provide a more comprehensive and coherent approach to work on social norms.

Some areas of the Regional Office's work are not sufficiently relevant to different subregional and country contexts and may need to be further fine-tuned to ensure relevance. For example, multiple stakeholders noted that differing country contexts demand more targeted and context-specific implementation, including a greater focus on policy and the public sector in those countries which lack a proper regulatory environment or have weak public sectors. The Regional Office initially focused on care entrepreneurship but now plans a strategic approach through the TransformCare initiative. This aims to promote a whole-of-government and whole-of-society model by investing in creating an enabling environment for care, emphasizing policy-level engagement. UN Women personnel in the Pacific highlighted that gender and migration dynamics in the subregion differ significantly from those in ASEAN countries. They emphasized the importance of tailoring the Regional Office's migration-related approaches to the Pacific context and noted the need to support efforts that retain skilled labour within the subregion.

In relation to Governance, Peace and Security, while the Regional Office team noted that the Regional Office plays an essential added-value role by facilitating regional dialogues and activities that are deemed too sensitive to have in-country, some personnel reflected that the strong emphasis on working with women's human rights defenders and CSOs does not fit all types of political contexts and needs to be more nuanced.

In addition, interviews revealed that Country Offices and partners would like greater support and leadership from the Regional Office in several areas, e.g. gender statistics and data, but the Regional Office has limited capacity to provide such support given its small team and project focus. This was confirmed by the surveys in which both UN Women personnel and partners identified gender statistics and data as the area that most requires more attention from the Regional Office.²⁶ Other areas that emerged as having widespread interest and required further support among Country Offices but where the Regional Office has limited expertise include gender-responsive budgeting, social protection and the opportunities and challenges emerging in the tech space. In addition, some Country Offices are working on rule of law and access to justice issues, but due to the closure of the regional justice programme there is no expertise within the Regional Office. While the Regional Office cannot offer expertise in all areas of Country Office interest, it could be more systematic in connecting Country Offices to opportunities for peer learning and relevant external expertise. One good example of this was a workshop organized by the Governance, Peace and Security team with the Gender-Responsive Budgeting Specialist from the Regional Office in Europe and Central Asia, which aimed to facilitate knowledge-sharing among UN Women Country Offices in the Asia and Pacific region on gender-responsive budgeting.²⁷

The evaluation found that UN Women's technical expertise is highly valued by its partners. Regional-level UN partners noted that UN Women's comparative advantage lies in the depth of its gender technical expertise, and that leveraging this expertise more effectively within the UN system would enhance collaboration and impact. The partners also noted that UN Women's thematic expertise adds significant value to coordination spaces such as the Issue-Based Coalition on Human Rights, Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and the Peer Support Group.

²⁵ UN Women, *Corporate Formative Evaluation of UN Women's Work in the area of Climate Change* (2023). Available from https://www.unevaluation.org/member_publications/corporate-formative-evaluation-un-womens-work-area-climate-change

²⁶ External stakeholders identified gender statistics as the regional thematic area most requiring more attention from the Regional Office, with N=8/17 selections. In the UN Women personnel survey, gender statistics and data also emerged as the most frequently cited area requiring more attention, with 57 per cent (N=81/143) selections.

²⁷ Concept Note and Agenda, UN Women Regional Workshop Gender Responsive Budgeting, 12-13 June 2024, Bangkok, Thailand.

Development partners reported that UN Women brings a unique knowledge and approach, for example through its people-centred and transformative approach to regional climate work. Several ASEAN stakeholders also stressed the value of UN Women's expertise, for example on gender normative frameworks, SDG 5 developments in the region, civil society engagement and issues related to inclusion. Similarly, the evaluation meta-synthesis found that UN Women's technical expertise on ending violence against women has enabled it to make a localized contribution towards promoting favourable social norms (see Annex 18). Technical expertise was also strongly appreciated by partners at the country level, for example by government partners and United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) consulted in the Philippines and Cambodia.

UN Women's relationship with civil society is widely recognized as a unique value add. For example, multiple regional-level stakeholders appreciated UN Women's efforts in ensuring a stronger and more diverse civil society voice

in the Beijing+30 process than in previous Beijing consultations. This was partly thanks to the Beijing+30 Civil Society Steering Committee established jointly with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in June 2024, comprising 13 feminist CSOs representing various constituencies in the region.²⁸

At country level, both UN and government partners reported that UN Women plays a valuable role in convening civil society and supporting civil society engagement in processes, such as development of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security in the Philippines. Multiple CSO partners reported that they valued the Regional Office's support for their capacity development, network building and access to decision makers. The importance of UN Women's support to civil society is highlighted in the meta-synthesis which identifies "engaging civil society actors, especially women's rights organizations and networks in normative processes... as a key strategy for advancing gender responsive policies." (see Annex 18)

FINDING 2

The Regional Office has significantly contributed to normative results across all Strategic Note impact areas and levels (regional, subregional and national), aligning with regional priorities and emerging opportunities. However, some efforts have been project-driven, ad hoc and lacked coherence. The Regional Office would benefit from stronger leadership and coordination on normative efforts and a common vision to better leverage synergies between thematic areas.

The Regional Office played a central role in driving forward gender equality and the empowerment of women normative processes at regional level, including through its active engagement in the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and Beijing+30 regional consultations. For example, at the CSW66 Regional Consultation, UN Women's normative engagement contributed to stakeholders discussing ways to advance the Beijing Platform for Action, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the SDGs, and helped inform stakeholder perspectives at COP 27.²⁹ However, it should be noted

that respondents to the UN Women personnel survey rated the monitoring of CEDAW implementation as the least effective area of work relative to other areas.³⁰

Stakeholders reported that the Beijing+30 consultations were enriched by the Regional Office's support for the participation of key officials and civil society representatives, and for national-level preparations. The personnel survey identified, "Technical support for discussions in international processes" as the second most effective type of support within normative work.³¹

²⁸ UN Women, *Beijing+30 Civil Society Steering Committee* (2024). Available at <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/stories/in-focus/2024/03/in-focus-beijing30-in-asia-pacific/beijing30-civil-society-steering-committee>

²⁹ UN Women, *Annual Report for Asian and the Pacific 2020 -2021* (2022). Available at <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/asia-pacific-annual-report>

³⁰ The lowest effectiveness ("somewhat effective" or "very effective") ratings were observed for monitoring implementation of CEDAW recommendations (65 per cent (N=113/173)).

³¹ In the UN Women personnel survey, awareness-raising on international and national normative commitments received the highest number of "somewhat effective" or "very effective" votes at 84 per cent (N=145/173), followed by technical support for discussions in international processes (CSW, Beijing +30, SCR 1325) with 82 per cent (N=142/173).

The Regional Office also contributed to bringing gender issues to a wider range of regional normative processes, beyond those focused primarily on gender equality. For example, the Regional Office influenced regional climate-related normative processes, drawing on the relationships, expertise and operational experience that it has developed through the EmPower programme.³² Similarly, the Regional Office influenced migration-related normative mechanisms, as identified by an evaluation on the topic, particularly the Colombo Process and integrating gender mainstreaming in its Thematic Area Working Groups and Colombo Process meetings, and by generating knowledge and useful data sources.³³

At subregional level, the Regional Office has made a strong contribution to normative results through its work with ASEAN, notably on the Women, Peace and Security agenda, through supporting development of the 2022 ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security and its subsequent localization, and on disaster risk management, through support for development of the ASEAN Regional Framework on Protection, Gender and Inclusion in Disaster Risk Management 2021–2025. This was validated by the Country Portfolio Evaluation of the UN Women Indonesia Country Office.³⁴

The Regional Office supported Country Offices' normative work through support to localization processes, which some stakeholders reported as being very valuable in bringing normative agendas to local and grassroots levels that they would not otherwise reach. One example is UN Women's work on Women, Peace and Security in the Philippines (see Box 1). The Regional Office also supported development of the National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women in several countries and has provided capacity-building support for monitoring, implementation and evaluation of the plan.

The Regional Office has responded well to emerging priorities and opportunities within its normative work. For example, it built on growing interest in the care economy following the COVID-19 pandemic to drive forward the normative agenda in this area. Partners reflected that the Regional Office defined and "packaged" the issue of the care economy in a

way that generated significant momentum. The Asia Pacific Care Forum events were highlighted as particularly valuable in generating knowledge, commitment and action,³⁵ while dialogue and technical support to the ASEAN Committee on Women and ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children has advanced ASEAN's work on care.³⁶

Various stakeholders mentioned that the Regional Office's normative work often lacked a clearly defined and shared vision and could be excessively process oriented; and while suggesting that this may be due to turnover in Regional Office leadership, it could result in other actors with a clearer vision shaping the agenda. Some stakeholders believed that the Regional Office lacked a strategic vision and shared understanding among personnel regarding the opportunities and constraints for UN Women's influence at the Beijing+30 consultations, limiting the office's ability to maximize its potential to influence despite significant resource investment.

BOX 1: Support to localization of Women, Peace and Security normative framework in Philippines

Nationally, UN Women collaborated with the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity to develop successive National Action Plans, aligning them with the ASEAN Women, Peace and Security Regional Action Plan. At the subnational level in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), UN Women aided development of the third Women, Peace and Security Regional Action Plan and supported its localization through joint programming with UNDP. This support improved the plan's quality, focusing on women's involvement in peace mechanisms such as early warning. Additionally, the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund facilitated civil society consultations for both the Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan and the subnational BARMM Regional Action Plan processes. UN Women also helped organize an international Women, Peace and Security conference in 2024, fostering solidarity and exchange.

³² This included influencing the Review of Climate Ambition in Asia and the Pacific report, integrating gender into the SDG 13 Brief, contributing to gender being highlighted at the Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, supporting a qualitative shift in language, approach and actions of the Asia-Pacific Regional Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction (2021–2024), and inputting into the action plan on Sendai.

³³ IOM, ILO, and UN Women, *Final evaluation of the "Governance of Labour Migration South and South-East Asia" (GOALS) Programme (Aug 2020 – Jan 2024)* (2024). Available at <https://gate.unwomen.org/Evaluation/Details?EvaluationId=11744>

³⁴ UN Women, "Country Portfolio Evaluation of UN Women Indonesia Country Office" (2023). Available at <https://gate.unwomen.org/Evaluation/Details?evaluationId=11644>

³⁵ For example, following participation in Asia Pacific Care Forums the Fiji government signalled its intention to include care within its existing National Action Plan on Women's Economic Empowerment; the Ministry of Women in India made UN Women the focal point for multiple workstreams on care; and Timor Leste signed up to the global alliance for care.

³⁶ E.g. ASEAN women leaders network statement and progress towards ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening the Care Economy and Resilience Towards ASEAN Community Post-2025.

The evaluation highlighted concerns about the prioritization and coherence of the Regional Office’s engagement with regional normative processes. Between 2022 and 2024, the office reported contributing to at least 37 normative events or dialogues and supported or influenced 24 normative frameworks or their implementation. The wide range of its engagements can overstretch personnel, leading stakeholders to view some efforts as superficial and unsustainable. There is a desire for the Regional Office to focus on fewer processes with greater potential for impact.

Weaknesses were identified in the organization of regional-level normative work, where planning often excluded some thematic personnel, leading to reactive and ad hoc involvement. The personnel consulted noted that this resulted in a lack of coherent, shared agendas and disjointed, project-focused engagement. Personnel also noted that consultation between the Regional Office and Country Offices is often limited, resulting in an inadequate reflection of country priorities. Stronger and earlier planning, timely outreach to Country Offices and clear input requirements from thematic staff would have supported more coherent normative engagement.

TABLE 1: Good practice – effective strategies used by the Regional Office to advance normative gains

STRATEGY	
	Led targeted research or knowledge products to inform normative agendas.
	Expanded the range of actors engaged in regional normative processes and convened cross-sections of stakeholders, bringing new perspectives.
	Established key partnerships and built on existing relationships and emerging opportunities to enter new normative spaces.
	Drew on regional programmes to generate the knowledge and credibility to engage effectively in normative spaces.
	Supported localization of normative frameworks in a sustained way.

Source: developed by the evaluation team based on evaluation evidence



Photo: UN Women/Joyantee Reza

FINDING 3

The Regional Office's work with ASEAN has built strong relationships, mobilized resources and achieved significant normative results. However, this has focused attention away from other subregions and has contributed to an over emphasis on issues and approaches of relevance to the ASEAN subregion in coordination, programming and normative work.

The Regional Office's Strategic Note emphasizes coordination with ASEAN, focusing on gender equality across all ASEAN Community Pillars. In 2019, UN Women formed a team to liaise with the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta. During the Strategic Note period, the Regional Office expanded its work with ASEAN, mobilizing resources, fostering partnerships and enhancing cross-sectoral collaboration (e.g. between the ASEAN Committee on Women and the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children).

The [Country Portfolio Evaluation of the UN Women Indonesia Country Office](#) highlights the significant growth of the ASEAN Liaison function since 2019 –expanding in both financial and human resources (including some positions within the Regional Office) –and draws lessons from the collaboration between the Regional Office and the Indonesia Country Office, including how UN Women's triple mandate has been leveraged for ASEAN Women, Peace and Security work across normative, coordination and operational areas. Factors enabling or constraining the effectiveness of this engagement are summarized in Annex 9.

Stakeholders consulted as part of this evaluation and the aforementioned Country Portfolio Evaluation identified UN Women's engagement with ASEAN as a strong partnership where it has advanced normative and policy frameworks, developed action plans and generated evidence

and data across a range of gender equality and women's empowerment areas.³⁷ For example, UN Women supported the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children³⁸ to produce the ASEAN Guidelines for Developing National Coordinated Response to Violence against Women and Girls,³⁹ which are designed to be an essential resource for policymakers, practitioners and frontline service providers.⁴⁰ UN Women also contributed to enhancing the overall gender responsiveness of the ASEAN–UN Second Action Plan (2021–25)⁴¹ and was credited with advancing the agenda on norms relating to violence against women and the care economy at the forty-fourth ASEAN summit. Meanwhile, the Regional Office's work on Women, Peace and Security with ASEAN contributed to both regional-level frameworks and catalysing commitment, resources and action for the development of National Action Plans in several Member States.⁴² The 2024 ASEAN Gender Outlook,⁴³ produced jointly by the Regional Office Women Count programme with the ASEAN Secretariat, was reported to be highly useful in raising the visibility of ASEAN data and influencing sectoral bodies. The ASEAN stakeholders consulted also stated that collaboration with UN Women had increased their knowledge on gender issues, understanding of the UN system and commitment to work with a wider range of stakeholders.

³⁷ The Regional Office's partnership with ASEAN has been documented as having "...effectively leveraged the Entity's triple mandate through h its normative, coordination and operational work and demonstrated how a small investment in dedicated capacity can be catalytic."

UN Women, "Country Portfolio Evaluation of UN Women Indonesia Country Office" (2023). Available at <https://gate.unwomen.org/Evaluation/Details?evaluationId=11644>.

³⁸ Safe and Fair project funded by the European Union Spotlight Initiative.

³⁹ ASEAN, "ASEAN Member States issue guidelines for coordinated response against women and girls". *ASEAN Secretariat News*, 22 August 2024. Available at <https://asean.org/asean-member-states-issue-guidelines-for-coordinated-response-to-violence-against-women-and-girls/>

⁴⁰ ASEAN and UN Women, *State of Gender Equality and Climate Change in ASEAN* (2022)

⁴¹ UN Women, "Country Portfolio Evaluation of UN Women Indonesia Country Office" (2023). Available at <https://gate.unwomen.org/Evaluation/Details?evaluationId=11644>

⁴² Including through the Regional Office supporting the 2022 ASEAN chair (Cambodia) in development of the National Action Plan and then cascading this example to other countries.

⁴³ UN Women and ASEAN, "ASEAN Gender Outlook" (2024). Available at <https://data.unwomen.org/publications/asean-gender-outlook-2024>

Based on the evaluation evidence,⁴⁴ there is widespread recognition internally and externally that the Regional Office's strong focus on ASEAN has shifted attention from other subregions and has contributed to the Regional Office's normative and programming work being highly concentrated in the ASEAN subregion and on issues of most relevance to this subregion. Some Regional Office personnel acknowledged that the ASEAN focused programming reflects both donor priorities and the availability of a mature intergovernmental structure, with ASEAN serving as a platform to shape norms that has potential for adaption across the wider Asia and Pacific region. However, Country Offices outside the ASEAN subregion reported that this focus on ASEAN results in them having less engagement with the Regional Office and

fewer opportunities for involvement in subregional processes and knowledge exchange between countries. There is a clear demand from Country Offices in other subregions for a rebalancing of the Regional Office's subregional work, as well as recognition within the Regional Office that such rebalancing is required to achieve meaningful results across the region.

There is potential for the Regional Office to draw on its experience with ASEAN to inform its engagement with other subregions. However, there is widespread agreement that the Regional Office's ASEAN engagement cannot be a blueprint, and that any lessons would need to be adapted to accommodate the very different challenges and opportunities posed by the other subregions.



Photo: ©UN Women/Pathumporn Thongking

⁴⁴ Evaluation evidence includes surveys, interviews and mission report analysis. For example, the personnel survey found that the majority of respondents that had been involved in subregional normative initiatives reported that these were related to ASEAN. Similarly, an analysis of travel missions undertaken by Regional Office personnel showed that 16 per cent of missions (N=44) had ASEAN as their purpose.

4.2 COHERENCE

How effectively is UN Women leveraging its coordination mandate to strategically position itself and contribute to a more coherent and gender-responsive approach by UN partners and other development actors with respect to gender equality and women's empowerment in the region?

FINDING 4

The Regional Office's contribution to coherence within the UN system with respect to gender equality and women's empowerment is uneven. While a corporate strategy is in development, the Regional Office would benefit from a regional-level theory of change and strategy to guide coordination and enhance internal synergies, especially as the Secretary-General's Gender Equality Action Plan is rolled out.

The Regional Office is beginning to strengthen its role in fostering regional coordination and collaboration, leveraging joint programming and coordination platforms to improve synergies and collective action. While only 6 of the 34 projects initiated between 2022 and 2025 were joint programmes, they accounted for 53 per cent of total funding.⁴⁵ At least 20 coordination groups were identified by personnel, with the Regional Office chairing or co-chairing five (see Annex 10). The evaluation identified some strong examples of regional-level coordination work, including the regional Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group, which the Regional Office co-chairs and members consulted perceived as providing leadership and expertise, a sharing space and good collaboration. Regional Gender in Humanitarian Action work has reportedly strengthened networks of related working groups; increased the visibility and capacity of women's organizations in humanitarian response;⁴⁶ facilitated dialogue between Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Groups and Gender Theme Groups; supported gender mainstreaming in other UN regional working groups;⁴⁷ and provided tools for coordination, needs identification and promoting women's participation in disaster processes.⁴⁸ The Regional Office has leveraged these relationships to enhance inter-agency

collaboration in country-level humanitarian responses and to advocate for gender and humanitarian issues within the UN system.

However, the effectiveness of other regional-level coordination work was mixed. UN Women personnel raised concerns about the Regional Office's influence being undermined by a lack of strategic vision and competition between agencies, allowing those with a clearer vision to set the agenda. They suggested the Regional Office might be overstretched due to involvement in too many regional processes and recommended focusing on fewer processes with a clearer strategy. Several personnel reported that regional coordination is often burdensome and has limited impact, suggesting the Regional Office should concentrate more on direct support to country-level coordination for greater impact.

Multiple stakeholders, including UN Women personnel, noted a lack of clarity regarding coordination platforms and their added value; how these different processes relate to each other; and the Regional Office's role within them. There is a need for stronger communication regarding regional coordination work, which reflects findings from previous evaluations.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ US\$ 56,229,694.37 of US\$ 105,677,917 of total project funding was through joint programmes. These six projects are Enhancing Access to Justice for Women in Asia and the Pacific (Women, Peace and Security), GOALS (Migration), Safe and Fair and PROTECT (Ending Violence Against Women) and EmPower Phase I and Empower Phase 2 (Resilience).

⁴⁶ Asia Pacific Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group 2023 Summary. Available at: <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/afghanistan/asia-pacific-gender-humanitarian-action-working-group-2023-summary#:~:text=2023%20HIGHLIGHTS%3A&text=Focus%20on%20strengthening%20Women%20Led,Webinar%20report%20in%20the%20region>.

⁴⁷ UN Women, Regional Office Asia Pacific Strategic Note Annual Report 2023 (internal document).

⁴⁸ UN Women, WE Respond: Gender Organizations Dashboard. Available at: [WE RESPOND: Gender Organizations Dashboard - Database of women and girl-focused organizations working on humanitarian response in the Asia Pacific region \(October 2024\) | OCHA](#)

⁴⁹ For example, the 2021 Corporate Evaluation of UN Women's UN System Coordination and Broader Convening Role in Ending Violence Against Women recommended that "UN-Women should systematically document and compellingly communicate the impact of coordination to the UN system, donors and national stakeholders through high-level messaging of the value proposition of its coordination work using metrics and case studies suitable for external audience." Available at <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2021/06/evaluation-un-women-un-system-coordination-and-broader-convening-role-in-evaw>

For example, the Issue-Based Coalition on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, while recognized as offering strong expertise to UNCTs, was described by UN partners as insufficiently active, lacking leadership and not delivering on its potential. This was perceived partly because of the turnover of senior leadership within the Regional Office and the coordination specialist being on detailed assignment, which affected its ability to drive the work. The evaluation identified that coordination was most effective where UN Women is perceived to have a clear mandate and strong capacity, and to be advancing goals that are a priority for both itself and UN partners, rather than being overly focused on its own organizational interests.⁵⁰

The Regional Office's contributions in support of UNCTs is highly valued and there is appetite within the UNCTs consulted for the Regional Office to further expand this support, for example by providing more tools, sharing best practices and supporting gender mainstreaming within joint work planning.⁵¹ Regional and Country Office personnel consulted reported that the Regional Office's support to UNCTs is often

reactive and would benefit from stronger planning and prioritization, including mapping the needs of UNCTs and clarifying what UN Women can offer. Data could also be put to better use to identify trends and inform inputs. Improved systems are needed to capture the results of coordination support at the country level, such as better application of the gender equality marker by UNCTs.

A particular challenge was noted in contexts without a UN Women Country Office, as UNCTs expect non-physical presences to provide the same level of support as a Country Office or for the Regional Office to fill any gaps, sometimes resulting in unmet expectations within the UNCT and overstretched capacities. For example, in Cambodia, despite not being a full Country Office, UN Women advanced the gender scorecard; supported the Gender Theme Group's engagement with the government; undertook joint advocacy with UN partners; coordinated CEDAW initiatives; and provided strategic advice, capacity development and technical expertise to the UNCT.

FINDING 5

The Regional Office's engagement with diverse strategic partners is highly valued. It has expanded stakeholder involvement in regional coordination, bringing in diverse civil society voices and non-traditional partners and introducing new perspectives to policymakers and normative agendas. However, the Regional Office's engagement with strategic partners has been project/event-driven without a clear vision.

The Regional Office engages with a wide range of strategic partners, working in close collaboration with traditional partners such as ministries of women, women's machineries and civil society. It has also involved deepening partnerships with less traditional interlocutors, for example working with the private sector on the Women's Empowerment Principles and the care economy or engaging with climate bodies such as the Green Climate Fund, Global Climate Facility and Adaptation Fund on gender and climate issues. The Regional Office effectively uses its convening role to bring traditional and non-traditional partners together, for example by organizing dialogues such as the Women's Empowerment Principles and Care Economy Forums, the Regional Office

engaged diverse stakeholders to create spaces for awareness-raising and commitment to gender-responsive policies.⁵² Stakeholders suggested the Regional Office could strengthen engagement with some actors, such as unions in relation to the care economy, or international financial institutions and academic institutions, which were rated by UN Women personnel as the least effective partnerships.⁵³

Multiple stakeholders reported that the Regional Office has contributed to expanding the diversity of actors convened through regional processes, which is an important value add for the Entity. A clear example of this was the efforts to broaden civil society engagement in the Beijing+30 process, both by expanding the CSO Steering Committee to include

⁵⁰ See annex 18 for evidence from the meta-synthesis of evaluations. Further, corporate evaluations also highlight this issue. For example, a 2021 corporate evaluation of UN Women's UN system coordination and broader convening role in ending violence against women recommended that "UN-Women should strengthen in-house mechanisms for coordination, to better represent thematic area highlights and coordination challenges in inter-agency mechanisms and reporting".

⁵¹ The Regional Office's support to UNCTs has taken a variety of forms, providing training on UNCT Scorecards and gender equality markers, and supporting United Nations Development Assistance Framework planning and development processes through the Peer Support Group.

⁵² UN Women, *Annual Report for Asia and the Pacific* (2023). Accessed from UN Women SharePoint.

⁵³ On a scale of 1-5, please assess the effectiveness of the Regional Office's management of partnerships with the following actors in order to effectively fulfil its mandate. Management of partnerships with academic institutions was rated ineffective by 8 per cent (N=14/170) of respondents, with 53 per cent (N=90/170) rating them as effective. Similarly, partnerships with international financial institutions were rated ineffective by 8 per cent (N=14/170), with 51 per cent (N=87/170) finding the partnerships effective.

a younger and more diverse set of civil society actors and by supporting the participation of many civil society representatives at the Beijing+30 regional consultations.⁵⁴ The Beijing+30 Asia Pacific CSO Forum, organized by the CSO Steering Committee ahead of the regional Ministerial Conference on Beijing+30, united diverse stakeholders to strategize on gender equality, amplify feminist voices and draft a joint CSO statement for advocacy. However, there were also some challenges, with reports that more established civil society actors were reluctant to collaborate with the newer civil society actors that were brought into the CSO Steering Group.

The Regional Office supported the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly to develop plans to engage with a wider set of actors, including marginalized groups, and organizations representing persons with disabilities to participate in consultations and training for UN agency focal points on the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy. The Regional Office's joint advocacy and facilitation of CSO and trade union participation in Thematic Area Working Group meetings, together with ILO and IOM, contributed to Colombo Process Member States becoming open to the engagement of such organizations in these processes.⁵⁵

Although the Regional Office already has substantial engagement with women's organizations in the region, there would be value in co-creating a stronger vision for regional-level partnerships with women's civil society. Most critically,

several stakeholders pointed out that women's civil society is facing pushback from a growing anti-rights movement and stakeholders requested clarity on the Regional Office's strategy for how it can collaborate with civil society and take visible action to counter this movement.

More broadly, a stronger vision for UN Women's partnership with civil society would also help to address other concerns stakeholders raised in this area, including that UN Women still engages primarily with well-established women's organizations and should do more to expand its engagement with a wider range of organizations, e.g. those representing grassroots women and marginalized groups. Some stakeholders suggested that the Regional Office's efforts to develop networks, for example through Gen-Forum, should involve a stronger focus on supporting these networks to engage in sustained collaboration and joint action. It was also suggested that the Regional Office could better navigate the internal politics of women's movements.

Stakeholders suggested the Regional Office should engage more strategically with development partners. Although relations were positive and seen as effective by UN Women personnel, they were mostly project-based. Broader partnerships with a shared vision and priorities could enhance the Regional Office's influence on donors regarding gender equality and women's empowerment. Some stakeholders recommended reinstating the Gender Equality Partners platform for sustained and strategic engagement.



Photo: ©UN Women Fiji MCO/Maryann

⁵⁴ 596 CSOs across the region registered to participate: the application was among the top 10 downloaded products on the website

⁵⁵ UN Women, Regional Office Asia Pacific Strategic Note Annual Report 2023 (internal document).

How are Regional Office efforts supporting internal coherence, catalysing efforts at country level and bridging corporate and country-level efforts across UN Women offices in the region to ensure a coherent approach to achieving the Entity's integrated mandate to advance gender equality and women's empowerment?

FINDING 6

The Regional Office's Strategic Note aligns with UN Women's Strategic Plan 2022–2025 (with a few discrepancies); however, while the systemic outcomes aimed to bridge silos and facilitate cross-thematic work, challenges with internal coherence persist as silos still remain and hinder cross-thematic/outcome work from taking place.

The UN Women Strategic Plan (2022–2025) provides a broad framework for the Entity's work which can be adapted as appropriate at regional and country levels. With respect to overall alignment, the Regional Office's work is structured differently from the Strategic Plan. For example, the Strategic Plan places climate change under the Women's Economic Empowerment thematic area and unit, while the Regional Office has placed it under a Resilience Unit that combines HIV/AIDS, Humanitarian Action, Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change. Similarly, under the Strategic Plan, the Women, Peace and Security thematic area includes Humanitarian Action, but the Regional Office placed Humanitarian Action under the Resilience Unit and placed Women, Peace and Security work under the Governance, Peace and Security Unit.

This difference in structural arrangements may affect coherence in approaches; for example, the Women's Economic Empowerment Strategy,⁵⁶ launched in 2024, links climate change efforts with supporting women in green/blue economies. The draft Strategic Plan (2026–2029) further reinforces these linkages by proposing an impact area on "women's economic empowerment in resilient economies". In contrast, the Regional Office currently only has one key programme financing work on climate change, which was initiated prior to the strategy and is focused on achieving equal access to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and reducing vulnerability to the impacts of climate change.⁵⁷ Challenges may arise when headquarters compiles reports from across regions as the misalignment may result in the breadth and depth of climate change work in the Asia and Pacific region

not being fully captured, including across UN Women's triple mandate, for example. Regional Office personnel indicated they had plans for a more cross-cutting approach to climate change across all thematic areas.

The Strategic Plan 2022–2025 aimed to bridge thematic silos with seven systemic outcomes. The Regional Office Strategic Note committed to linking key thematic areas to achieve results aligned with the global Strategic Plan. However, personnel and documents indicated that headquarters did not provide adequate guidance or mechanisms to support offices in integrating new ways of working.

The Regional Office did take some steps to facilitate cross-outcome work. For example, each Regional Office unit assigned its outputs under the relevant systemic outcomes that aligned with its efforts, and convened outcome groups to support linkages between teams (see Figure 5). However, personnel reported that some outcomes only had one unit assigning outputs (e.g. while social norms and gender statistics were meant to be cross-cutting systemic outcomes of relevance to all thematic areas, the Regional Office assigned only the ending violence against women unit to the social norms systemic outcome and the Statistics unit to the statistics systemic outcome); and annual reports became a compilation of individual unit's efforts rather than a holistic view of how the Regional Office was progressing towards the systemic outcomes¹ at regional level. Given the lack of broader corporate guidance and support, the Regional Office was not able to leverage the systemic outcomes as an organizing principle for synergizing its efforts.

⁵⁶ UN Women, *Women's Economic Empowerment Strategy* (2024). Available at [un-women-womens-economic-empowerment-strategy-en.pdf](https://unwomen.org/publications/un-women-womens-economic-empowerment-strategy-en.pdf)

⁵⁷ UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, *EmPower Women for Climate Resilient Societies* (2024). Available at [empower-overview-may-2024.pdf](https://unwomen.org/publications/em-power-overview-may-2024.pdf)

FIGURE 5: Snapshot of the Regional Office's Strategic Note Theory of Change by unit



Source: developed by the evaluation team

Several IES-led evaluations⁵⁸ and the Mid-Term Review of the Strategic Plan 2022–2025 identified similar challenges with respect to the systemic outcomes. The Mid-Term Review appreciated the systemic outcome areas but highlighted the need for more institutional support for new ways of working and comprehensive structures at all levels to break thematic silos and enhance synergistic results.^{59, 60} These plans have not yet been communicated to the Regional Office.

Regional Office units have developed some examples of cross-thematic work. However, these efforts were not always planned systematically and were generally ad hoc and driven by individual motivation.

Evaluation evidence points to several key underlying issues driving the current situation. UN Women's funding structures contribute to siloed work, as most resources are mobilized through bilateral donor agreements for specific projects which limits flexibility and does not incentivize cross-thematic collaboration. Additionally, due to the reliance on non-core project funds, there is perceived competition between units, further discouraging collaborative efforts (see Finding 9). Finally, unit structures (both at corporate and Regional Office level) are based on thematic areas, which may have contributed to a culture of working in thematic silos in the absence of tools or incentives to work across areas/units. UN Women is aware of these challenges and has committed to taking steps to better support integration across areas, such as the Planning, Monitoring and Reporting Policy issued in 2023.

FINDING 7

Regional projects have fostered cross-regional learning opportunities, knowledge exchange, new partnerships and allowed UN Women to enter new spaces. The Regional Office has focused its efforts on countries that are part of regional projects, primarily in South-East Asia, which has caused an imbalance of support throughout the region and weakened internal coherence. Although efforts have been made to support offices beyond regional projects, further work is needed to systematize approaches and balance Regional Office core functions with regional programming.

During the evaluation inception phase theory of change workshop and consultations, Regional Office personnel posited that regional programming was catalytic to country-level work both through financial resources and by opening doors to partnerships and emerging areas of work, which enables country-level work to inform regional-level work.

The evaluation found that regional programmes primarily allowed for “cross-regional learning opportunities/knowledge exchange,” with 73 per cent (N=127/173) of personnel survey respondents selecting this option: interviews with both internal and external stakeholders also confirmed this. Respondents to the personnel survey noted that regional programmes had led to new partnerships and networking opportunities (45 per cent, N=79/173), with stakeholders consulted confirming that regional programmes opened

doors to new partnerships and helped UN Women build credibility in emerging areas, such as climate and gender through the EmPower project for example. Most personnel survey respondents (60 per cent, N=33/55) noted that technical support needs to be better aligned with country priorities to enhance the balance between regional programmatic engagement and functional/oversight support for Country Offices/non-physical presences; followed by increased functional oversight and support (22 per cent, N = 12/55); and more regional programme engagement (11 per cent, N= 6/55).

Maintaining an adequate balance between Regional Office programme implementation and country-level support for those offices not part of regional programmes has been a consistent challenge identified by both the lessons learned

⁵⁸ The UN Women Independent Evaluation Service-led evaluations which touch upon the systemic outcomes include: [Corporate Formative Evaluation of UN Women's Work in the area of Climate Change](#) (2022 – 2023); [Feminist Collaborative Evaluation of UN Women's approach to social norms change](#) (2024 -2025)

⁵⁹ UN Women, *Report of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women on the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2022–2025, including the midterm review of the Strategic Plan*, UNW/2024/2 (2024). Available at [n2410337.pdf](#)

⁶⁰ UN Women, “Lessons Learned and Ways Forward: Mid-Term Review Strategic Plan 2022-2025” (n.d.). Accessed on UN Women SharePoint.

in the Regional Office Strategic Note⁶¹ and the IAS audit⁶² of the Regional Office completed in 2019. The Regional Office has taken steps to address these concerns, enhancing linkages and support to Country Offices. For example, in line with audit recommendations, the Regional Office allocated core resources to fund 50 per cent of the thematic unit leads' salaries. However, challenges persist. The evaluation team mapped regional projects across Asia and the Pacific to identify countries receiving the most funding from the Regional Office (see Figure 6). The map showed that the highest investments were in non-physical presences and Country Offices in South-East Asia. The travel and mission analysis (see Annex 16) revealed that these offices, in addition to those countries part of ASEAN efforts, also received more Regional Office visitors. The top six countries⁶³ visited were all based in South-East Asia, except for the Republic of Korea, and accounted for 54 per cent (N=148/272) of mission reports.

There was mixed evaluation evidence that regional programmes catalysed additional financial resources for countries engaged in those projects. There are many factors that influence the ability of a programme to catalyse funding (and it is highly dependent on external factors). Yet, importantly, there is a need for countries to avoid dependency on regional projects, as this is a key risk to sustainability. While 39 per cent (N=67/173) of respondents to the evaluation personnel survey selected "resulted in additional funding,"⁶⁴ it is unclear from where this additional funding was mobilized. The evaluation case studies identified that, except for the Joint Programme with UNDP funded by Canada on Women, Peace and Security in the Philippines, offices were not able to

mobilize additional country-based programme funds. Some personnel consulted identified opportunities for better donor engagement much more in advance of the end of projects to ensure sustainability of efforts, while others pointed to external factors driving decision-making.

The evaluation team sought evidence of how Regional Office thematic units support UN Women's presence beyond regional programmes and the responses varied, with most thematic units not tracking requests or support systematically.⁶⁵ The evaluation's mission report and travel analysis is one data point that provides insight into in-person support; however, the personnel consulted noted that most technical support was provided virtually or via email. One good practice identified was the Ending Violence Against Women team spreadsheet established to track technical assistance to UN Women presences between 2022 and 2024. The evaluation team analysed this information and found that the number of times the team provided support ranged from a high of Viet Nam (N=39) to a low of Sri Lanka (N=2).

Some thematic teams systematically engaged with UN Women presences through regular community of practice meetings, annual retreats with country focal points, surveys and co-creating emerging areas of work. Key gaps identified included weak guidance on prioritizing and coordinating country support, leading to varied approaches by each team, and the lack of a central tracking system, limiting understanding of Regional Office support to countries. Enhanced understanding of who, where and what type of support is being provided would improve prioritization and coordination.

⁶¹ The Regional Office Strategic Note identifies the following lessons learned and committed actions: There is a need to enhance the strategic linkages between regional programmes and country-level efforts and results. The Regional Office's role as an advisory and technical hub on gender equality and women's empowerment shall be emphasized via increased investments in core functions (policy advisory services and technical support), and through a review of the Regional Office's articulation of its menu of services.

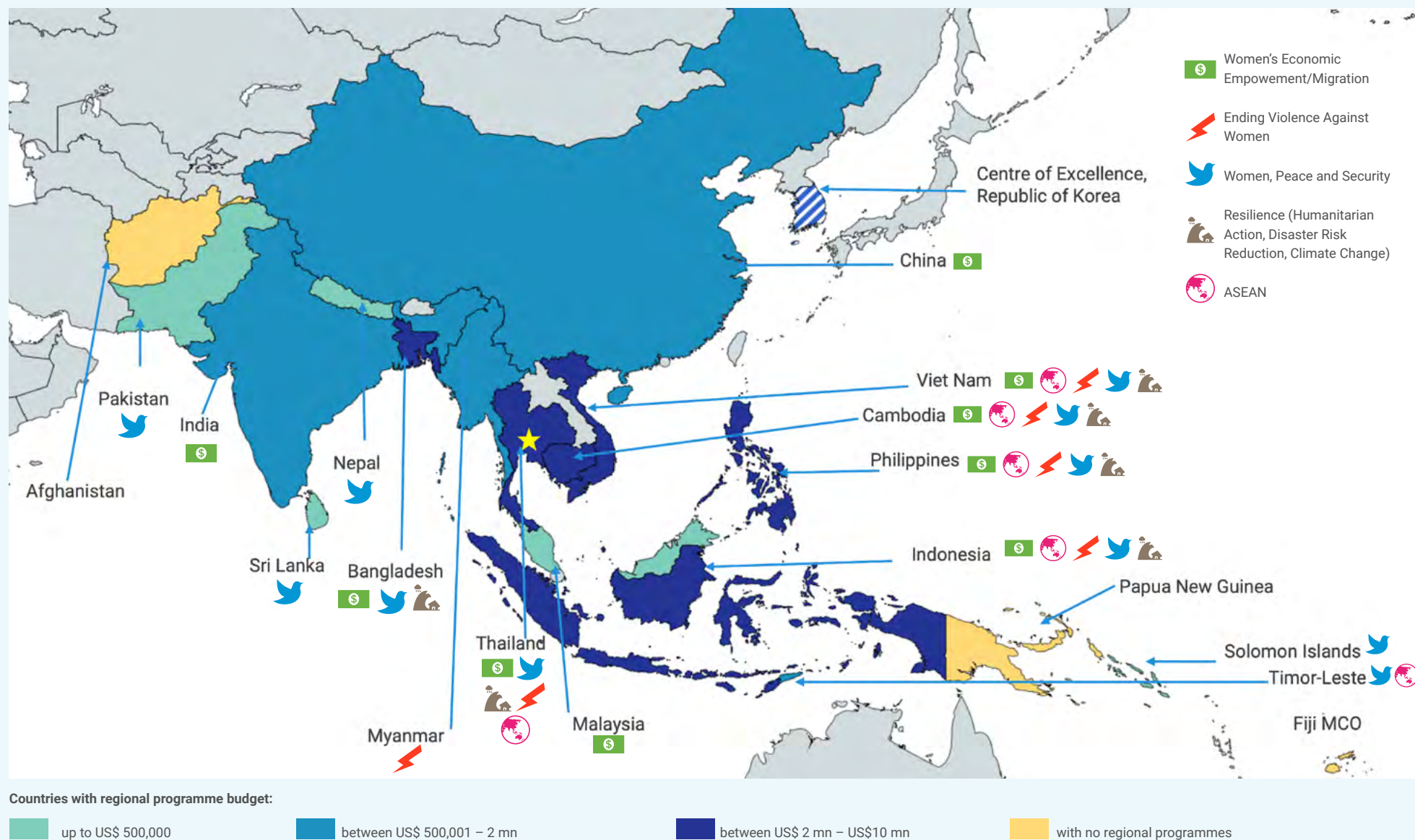
⁶² UN Women Independent Evaluation and Audit Services (IEAS), *Internal Audit Report UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific*, IEAS/IAS/2019/010 (New York – UN Women 2019)

⁶³ Philippines (36 mission reports), Republic of Korea (36 mission reports), Lao PDR (28 mission reports), Cambodia (18 mission reports), Thailand (17 mission reports) and Malaysia (18 mission reports) (non-programme presence, non-resident agency, Centre of Excellence).

⁶⁴ A total of 280 responses were received for this question, as respondents could select multiple options. In terms of the total number of responses - the highest selection was "created cross-regional learning opportunities/knowledge exchange," accounting for 45 per cent (N=127/280) of the total responses. The lowest response was for "resulted in additional funding," selected in 24 per cent (N=67/280) of responses.

⁶⁵ Only the Ending Violence Against Women unit submitted an excel spreadsheet tracking form that logs all requests and responses by the unit.

FIGURE 6: Distribution of regional programme funds across different UN Women presences in Asia and the Pacific



The map was downloaded from: <https://www.mapchart.net> and is for illustrative purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Source: developed by the evaluation team, based on regional projects initiated or active between 2022 and 2025

FINDING 8

UN Women’s presences without a full Country Office (non-physical presences), have successfully forged key partnerships and advanced gender equality and women’s empowerment in line with national priorities, primarily through regional programmes. Their sustainability is challenged by dependence on Regional Office programme finances and operational support. Covering UN Women’s full triple mandate may sometimes have stretched these offices too thinly, affecting their credibility.

UN Women’s Presence Governance Policy outlines the different types of UN Women presence,⁶⁶ which includes non-physical presences where UN Women has limited (through programmes) or no physical presence in the location. The Regional Office has oversight over three non-physical presences with projects implemented in Cambodia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka; and, although Thailand is officially a Country Office, its programming is limited and is treated as an non-physical presence. The Regional Office’s Strategic Note commits to providing a range of support to these non-physical presences across both programmatic, functional and operational areas.

The evaluation’s visits to two non-physical presences identified overall positive feedback on their contributions to normative progress. The Philippines and Cambodia offices were supporting the localization and translation of global normative frameworks; convening of diverse stakeholders and reach to women’s rights organizations; knowledge-sharing; and technical support. Based on stakeholder feedback, the evaluation team identified the following key intervention areas in the Philippines and Cambodia as shown in Table 2.

The Regional Office has complemented the contributions of non-physical presences by investing substantial resources to support delivery. Among the 14 offices receiving regional programme funds, the Philippines and Cambodia non-physical presences held the third and fourth highest budgets, respectively. In terms of support through missions, the evaluation team’s analysis of the mission reports submitted shows that the Philippines (ranked first) and Cambodia (ranked fourth) were among the top destinations for Regional Office missions conducted between 2023 and 2024. Both non-physical presences and non-resident agencies (e.g. Malaysia) were visited 180 per cent more frequently than the region’s Country Offices. Notably, the Philippines was visited 260 per cent more often than the Country Office with the highest number of visits.⁶⁷ Visits to Country Offices accounted for only 25 per cent of all mission reports. As shown in Figure 7, most of these missions related to programme and technical support.

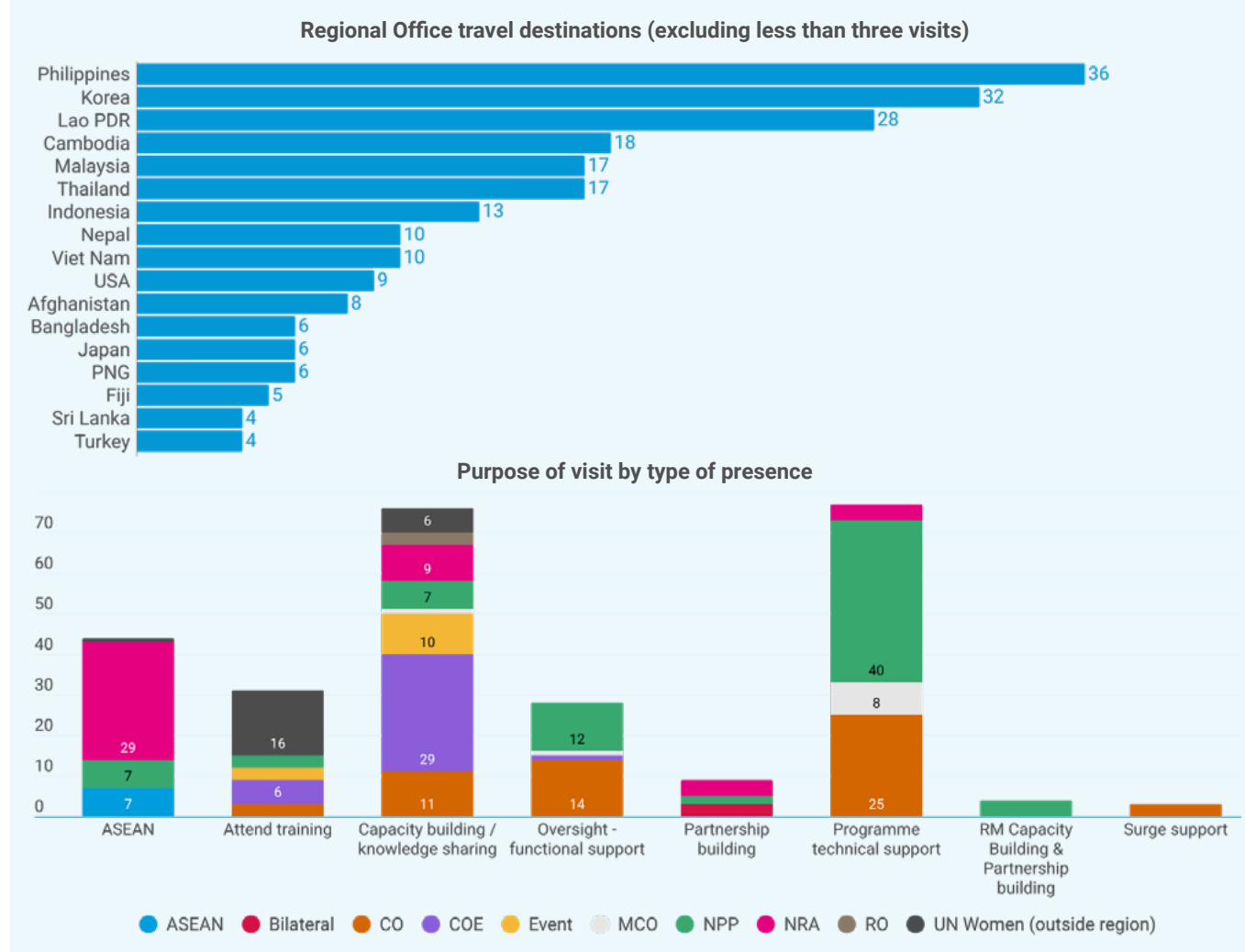
TABLE 2: Key intervention areas in the Philippines and Cambodia

COORDINATION	Supported UNCT participation and leadership on gender equality and the empowerment of women (e.g. Result Group 4 in Cambodia, Operations Management Team and Gender Theme Group in the Philippines). Enabled joint advocacy with UN agencies and governments (e.g. Domestic Violence law in Cambodia, Women, Peace and Security in BARMM). Positioned gender equality and women’s empowerment as a cross-cutting priority in UN system planning and retreats.
NORMATIVE	Provided technical guidance on the National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women (in Cambodia) and localized Women, Peace and Security implementation. Built capacity of feminist leaders, women peacebuilders and LGBTQI+ advocates to engage in policy spaces.
OPERATIONAL	Delivered large-scale regional programming on Women, Peace and Security; Climate/Disaster Risk Reduction; and Women’s Economic Empowerment. Invested in CSO capacity development, networking and platforms for knowledge exchange.

⁶⁶ UN Women, *Presence Governance Policy* (August 2020). Accessed on UN Women SharePoint.

⁶⁷ Of the total 36 missions to the Philippines recorded across all teams, 4 missions were related to the organization of the WEPs Forum and 3 to the APMCDRR. As multiple colleagues attended the same two events, this also drove up the total mission count for the missions to the Philippines.

FIGURE 7: Regional Office mission report analysis of travel destinations and purpose of missions



Source: developed by the evaluation team based on analysis of the mission reports submitted by the Regional Office

In terms of operational support, data from the Global Service Tracker analysis conducted by the evaluation team shows that, of the 14,838 total requests assigned and fulfilled by the Regional Office, 7,033 were from offices within the region, and the remaining requests were from within the Regional Office. Of these requests,⁶⁸ 48 per cent came from just four non-physical presences; specifically, the Philippines, Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Thailand (see Figure 8).

The higher number of visits and Global Service Tracker requests from non-physical presences illustrates the higher demand for Regional Office support and reflects that Regional Office focus follows where regional programmes are being implemented and may also be reflective of the lower operational capacities in these offices given that they do not have the full suite of operational positions or Delegation of Authority.

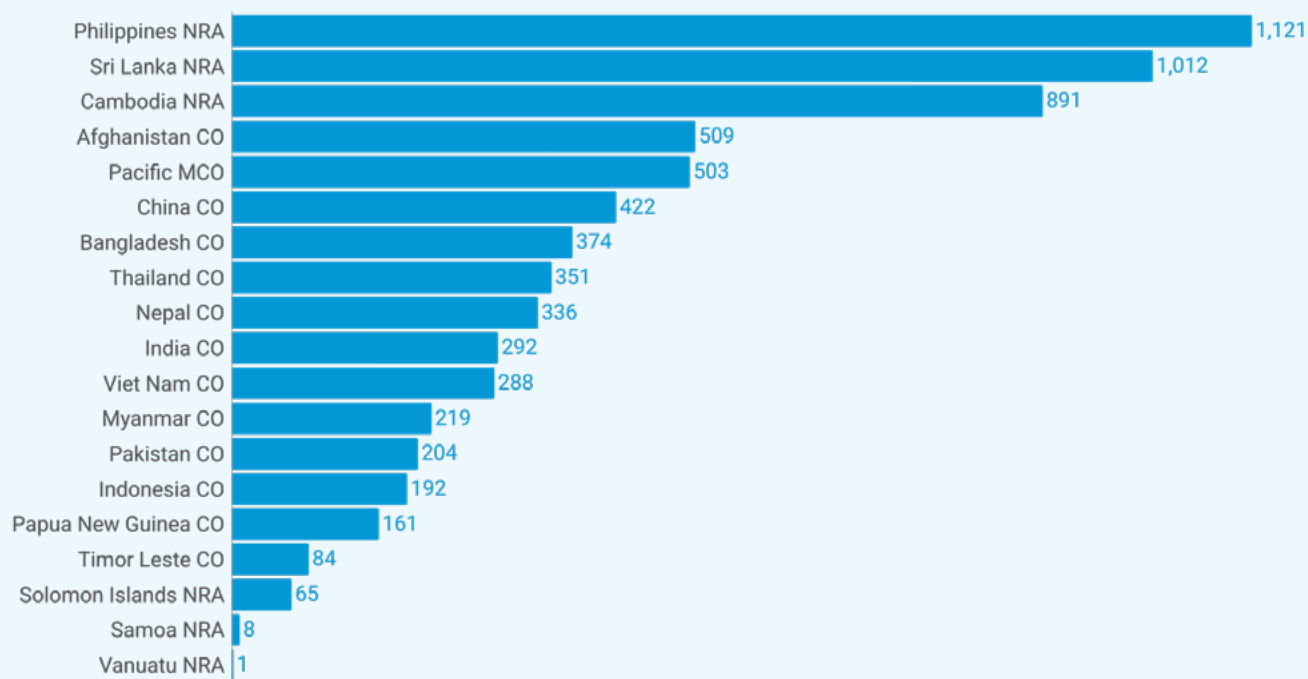
Since 2019, IEAIS evaluations and audits have highlighted challenges in operating non-physical presences,⁶⁹ particularly the expectation that they deliver across the Entity's triple mandate as fully-staffed Country Offices. Evaluation evidence found that in some cases this has led to unmet expectations and overstretched capacities. The UNCT members consulted often expect non-physical presences to provide the same level of support as Country Offices, or for the Regional Office to fill the gap. This is compounded by the lack of criteria for determining where Regional Office team efforts should focus and clear corporate guidance on UN Women's presence. The ongoing functional review and IAS meta-synthesis of Regional Office audits⁷⁰ recommended strengthening oversight by clearly defining technical and programmatic support, ensuring a balanced approach between regional and country oversight.

⁶⁸ Requests relate to payment processing, directorate/ RO approval, vendor approval, and contract amendment, among others.

⁶⁹ UN Women Independent Evaluation and Audit Services (IEAS), *Internal Audit Report UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific*, IEAS/IAS/2019/010 (New York – UN Women 2019)

⁷⁰ UN Women, Internal Audit Service, "Meta-synthesis of Regional Audits" (2025)

FIGURE 8: Global Service Tracker request analysis (January 2023 – 5 January 2025)



Source: developed by the evaluation team based on the Global Service Tracker data



Photo: ©UN Women/Satu Bumi Jaya

4.3 ORGANIZATIONAL EFFICIENCY

To what extent is RO Resource Mobilization, Knowledge Management (KM), Results-Based Management (RBM), capacity development as well as advocacy and communications effectively catalyzing and supporting the delivery of UN Women results in the region?

FINDING 9

The Regional Office provides support on resource mobilization to UN Women presences through various teams and approaches, including technical guidance, partnerships and peer learning. Weak corporate systems and incentives for individually driven resource mobilization and perceived internal competition challenge the ability of the Regional Office to coordinate support, driving a more reactive approach.

The Regional Office successfully mobilized resources during the current Strategic Note period, with non-core funding increasing by 23% in 2024 compared to 2022; although, given the recent cuts by large donors, it is expected to decline.

The Regional Office External Relations Unit, through its Resource Mobilization and Partnerships pillar,⁷¹ coordinates donor intelligence, high-level engagement and due diligence processes for funding proposals. The unit also supports the analysis and visualization of resource mobilization and partnerships data to inform decision-making and capacity-building support through peer learning, knowledge-sharing and collaboration via the community of practice. Regional Office thematic units also support Country Offices in resource mobilization tailored to thematic priorities, although there is no central tracking mechanism or reporting space for the support provided.⁷²

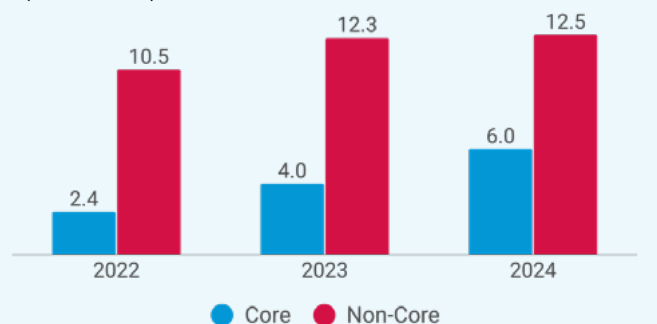
Respondents to the personnel survey emphasized the need for stronger support in securing and managing financial resources at regional, country and cross-thematic levels.⁷³

Between 2022 and 2025, the Regional Office received funding from 23 donors, with the top five contributors accounting for 89 per cent of the total non-core budget.⁷⁴ CSOs and donors consulted noted that political shifts are already impacting funding for feminist agendas, making it essential for UN Women to diversify its donor base and undertake foresight planning to secure funding. Aligned to this, a key theme emerging from the personnel survey is the need for

a diversified funding base and long-term, flexible financing, such as through the Strategic Note, essential for ensuring sustainability.

Some Country Office stakeholders noted delayed access to donor intelligence, affecting their ability to prepare competitive proposals and align with donor interests. Recent improvements include an intranet webpage by the headquarters Strategic Partnerships Division and donor mapping by the Regional Office's External Relations Unit, focusing on country-specific priorities and alignment with UN Women's thematic areas and priority recipient countries.⁷⁵ Projects such as EmPower Phase II have parallel donor intelligence efforts.⁷⁶

FIGURE 9: Regional Office funding breakdown by source* (2022-2024)



*excluding EXB and IB

Source: Quantum data extracted in May, 2025

⁷¹ An resource mobilization coordinator, a UN volunteer and an international consultant, as of November 2024.

⁷² The evaluation team compiled assistance provided as follows: technical guidance on proposal and concept note development, facilitating peer learning and results-sharing through events and missions, and generating knowledge products.

⁷³ This was explicitly brought up in 15 responses, but was a recurring theme across open ended answers in the survey.

⁷⁴ Extracted from UN Women Results Management System on 7 April 2025.

⁷⁵ At the time of drafting this report, the mapping had been completed for the public sector, with plans to extend it to the private sector, international financial institutions and mapping of promising foundations.

⁷⁶ The EmPower donor mapping identifies resource mobilization opportunities in gender and climate action, outlining donor priorities across governments, international non-governmental organizations, regional bodies, UN agencies, financial institutions, climate funds, businesses and corporate foundations.

UN Women personnel identified fragmented donor engagement and information management as key challenges, leading to a lack of strategic prioritization and an ad hoc approach. Apart from the decommissioned and inconsistently used corporate LEADS tool, tracking is managed individually, resulting in the absence of a comprehensive view of the donor landscape. Coordination tends to be individual-driven due to the lack of institutional incentives for collaboration and due to the lack of formal coordination mechanisms. Regional Office thematic units are perceived to be driven by self-interest to maintain funding for their specific area of work, including their own salaries, leading to competition between teams and sometimes between the Regional Office and Country Offices. This is an issue which has persisted since the IAS Regional Office audit in 2019.⁷⁷ In February 2025, the Resource Mobilization team introduced an internal donor engagement email system to document donor-related communications

and materials as part of an internal repository. Personnel consulted noted that the lack of a corporate Client Relationship Management tool (e.g. Salesforce) complicates donor engagement, while time zone differences make participation in corporate webinars on donor deep dives challenging.

Country Office stakeholders noted that the Regional Office's role in translating global agreements and serving as a bridge between headquarters and Country Offices remains underutilized, which could provide an opportunity for Country Offices to leverage global partnerships more effectively.

The Regional Office also works on strategic communication and donor visibility by enhancing the UN Women Asia-Pacific website, creating innovative audiovisual content and showcasing results and contributions to reinforce its authority on gender equality.

FINDING 10

The Regional Office's "functional leads" provide significant support to offices in the region, supporting strengthened capacities for evidence-based decision-making; bridging headquarters and country presences; and ensuring compliance with corporate policies and procedures. While the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific is recognized as a high performing Regional Office, gaps in understanding how such support translates into the performance of offices is difficult to assess in the absence of an accountability framework.

The Regional Office provides strategic, technical and operational support to ensure programme implementation and corporate compliance (see Figure 10). All functional units play a key role, bridging global and country-level efforts by communicating, interpreting and operationalizing policies, procedures and guidance at the country level while simultaneously providing feedback to headquarters on what is working and where adjustments are needed.

The personnel consulted noted that Regional Office support to priority countries had become more structured and coordinated through regular "Cross-Pillar" meetings; needs assessment surveys conducted as part of communities of practice; and requests for support from Country Offices/non-physical presences submitted through annual work planning presentations (Regional Peer Review Group). Personnel noted that the Quarterly Business Review process (instituted by headquarters) on key operational performance indicators for offices across the region has strengthened the Regional Office's oversight role. However, personnel stated that overall support remains primarily ad hoc and demand-driven, and

the Regional Office lacks a comprehensive view of developments across offices. While regular leadership meetings focus on high-priority countries, the personnel consulted noted that this could be more systematic, with clear criteria for prioritizing high-risk or high-priority areas and proactive engagement with offices/teams rather than the prevailing reactive approach.

Outside of General Service Tracker requests for support from Operations, Human Resources and Communications units, there is no clear system for tracking requests from Regional Office functional teams. The evaluation team's analysis of Global Service Tracker requests identified that a total of 24,971 requests⁷⁸ were received between January 2023 and 5 January 2025 (including requests from both Country Office and Regional Office personnel). This equates to roughly 1,040 requests per month over a two-year period. Analysis of Global Service Tracker requests can provide insights into priority topics, countries and time allocation of Regional Office personnel, which could be used to identify how to more systematically support and target capacity-building.

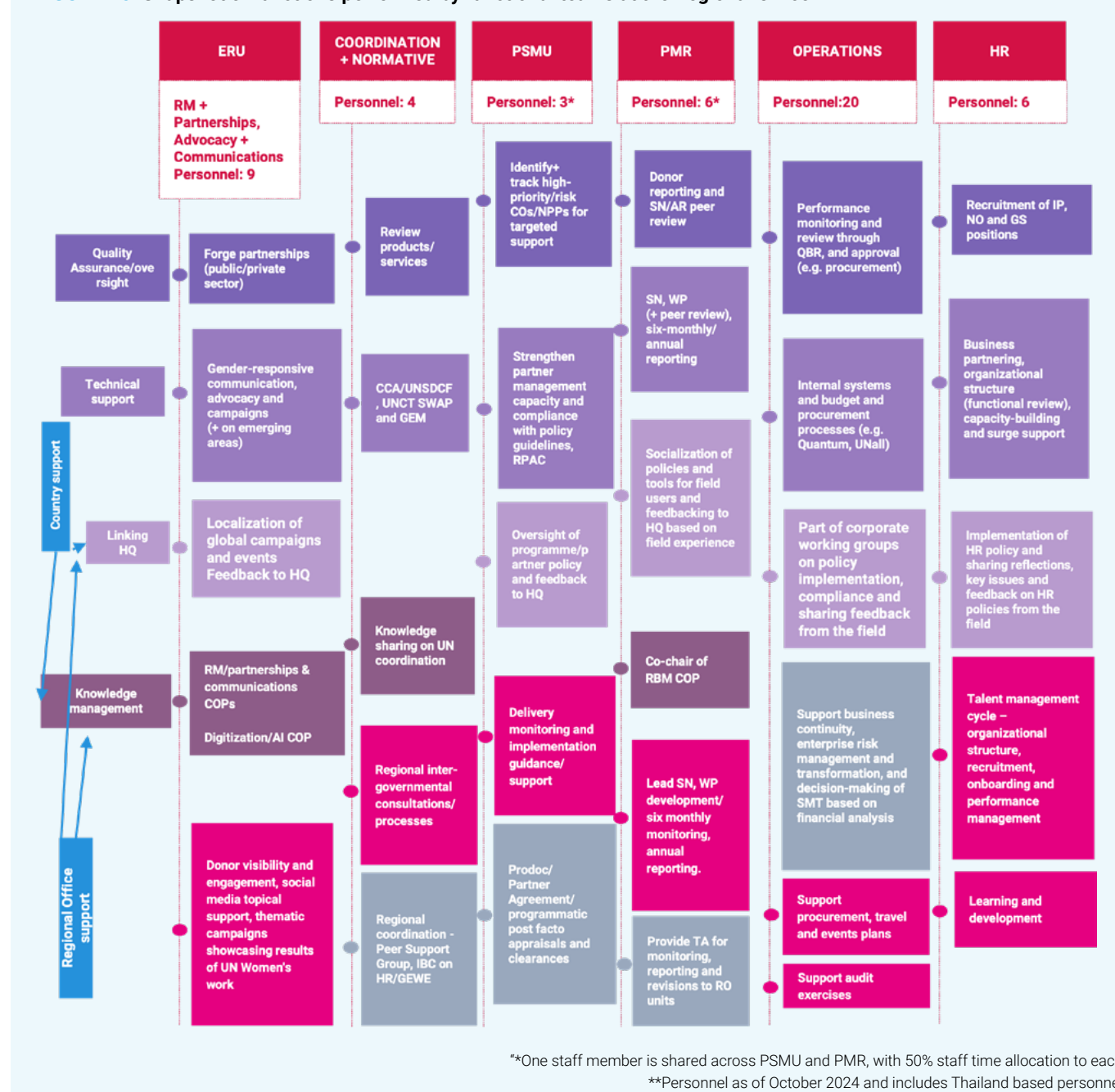
⁷⁷ UN Women Independent Evaluation and Audit Services (IEAS), *Internal Audit Report UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific*, IEAS/IAS/2019/010 (New York – UN Women 2019)

⁷⁸ This included two categories: 10,133 requests created and fulfilled by the Regional Office and 14,838 requests assigned and fulfilled by Regional Office.

One key challenge identified by personnel is in measuring the results of Regional Office feedback and support to Country Office operations and challenges in holding Country Offices accountable for acting in response to feedback from the Regional Office. This issue was also raised in the recent

UN Women IAS meta-synthesis of Regional Office audits, which identified the underlying reason as the lack of an established accountability framework and compact at UN Women, which IAS recommended should be established.⁷⁹

FIGURE 10: Snapshot of functions performed by functional teams at the Regional Office



Source: developed by the evaluation team

⁷⁹ UN Women, *Internal Audit Services Summary Report on Meta-synthesis Analysis of Regional Offices* (February 2025).

The Regional Office has produced a large quantity of knowledge products, with stakeholders pointing to the high quality and relevance of the products they were familiar with. The Regional Office could better leverage its knowledge hub role to advance gender equality and women's empowerment in the Asia–Pacific region. Knowledge production is project-driven, with each thematic team working independently without common approaches or quality assurance.

The Regional Office's Strategic Note set out to strengthen knowledge management as a key enabler of gender equality and women's empowerment. Reflecting on experience, the Strategic Note identified key challenges, including lack of capacity, common guidelines and procedures, and with respect to external knowledge management, the lack of standards or quality assurance processes. The Regional Office set out to enhance knowledge management with "strategic investments", including hiring a knowledge management specialist. However, the evaluation noted that the same challenges persist, and no personnel has been assigned or recruited to take on a knowledge management role. The Regional Office explained this was primarily due to the turnover of leadership, shifting priorities and funding prospects.

In terms of the planning, production and dissemination of knowledge products, each team has its own approach, making it difficult to see the bigger picture and create linkages between areas of work.⁸⁰ This has resulted in limited accountability and quality assurance for knowledge production.

While key channels are tapped into for dissemination, it is unclear whether the products are reaching the right audience and whether or how they are being utilized, as use is not consistently measured. The evaluation analysis revealed that the Regional Office produced approximately 326 products between 2022 and 2024, yet 88 per cent of the products on the Regional Office website had been downloaded less than 100 times.⁸¹ The Regional Office pointed to the fact that teams also disseminate products through other or partner websites; therefore, the number of downloads may not capture the full picture. Based on the google analytics data provided to the evaluation team, the average social media post of the top five most viewed/downloaded knowledge products reached around 4,504 individuals, while the average number of website views was 1,734.

External stakeholders highly valued UN Women's knowledge products, including materials co-developed with organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) and other civil society partners.⁸² However, stakeholders were generally only familiar with the knowledge products that were a direct result of their collaboration or project. Interviews with external stakeholders also found a gap between what stakeholders find useful and the knowledge products produced and disseminated on the Regional Office website. Stakeholders found the Regional Office's research, evidence and guideline documents useful; however, the majority of what was being produced and disseminated on the Regional Office's website was communications products pertinent to project events or visibility. Among the top 10 downloads from 2022 to 2024, three products were linked to Beijing+30, which also featured prominently among the most viewed pages on the website and had a strong presence across social media reach. In 2023, for example, the Regional Office reported it had produced 234 human interest stories. Of the evaluation sample of 67 knowledge products, 43 per cent were a project or event brief, and 25 per cent were self-reported as linked with normative processes. This indicates the need for products that are better tailored to audience demands and a balance between enhancing visibility and influencing normative work.

In terms of monitoring and evaluation of knowledge products, while website and social media analytics provide insights on some of the reach of knowledge products,⁸³ they do not provide insights into the quality of the products, users' satisfaction or how the products are being utilized. Interviews with stakeholders revealed how they have accessed and utilized the knowledge products developed by the Regional Office in their awareness-raising, policy advocacy and capacity-building. The stakeholders interviewed also provided feedback pertinent to the knowledge products developed by the Regional Office, including the need to contextualize

⁸⁰ In addition to interviews, the evaluation team sampled 10 projects to identify whether knowledge management and communication strategies were integrated.

⁸¹ Based on the google website analytics accessed in October, 2024. This does not capture the Gender Statistics team's publications, which has a dedicated website – it was not analysed as it is owned by headquarters.

⁸² For instance, [Closing the Justice Gap for Women with Intellectual and/or Psychosocial Disabilities \(2023\)](#) and [Access to Justice for Women with Intellectual and Psychosocial Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific \(2022\)](#)

⁸³ The Gender Statistics unit noted that it disseminates products primarily through partners and other websites and therefore these statistics do not accurately measure reach for its products.

products to subregions or countries and to translate the products into various languages and formats, e.g. ensuring they are disability inclusive.

UN Women information systems have not been fully leveraged to support internal knowledge-sharing. For example, there was no updated SharePoint page (as of February 2025) where knowledge can be stored and shared internally. Personnel reported limited information-sharing related to normative processes and coordination groups. While six communities of practice have been established, the personnel survey found that 53 per cent (N=92/173) of respondents did not participate in any of the communities. One reason for this could be that all the communities are

housed in different Teams Channels, and there is not one source that lists all the resources available. Respondents to the personnel survey noted community of practice participants had applied the knowledge gained in their work, such as using guidance, tools, knowledge products, peer learning opportunities and headquarters-provided policies to enhance their work and apply shared knowledge effectively. Interviews with key informants mentioned that the Women's Economic Empowerment community of practice had fostered better collaboration and innovation within the region, shifting from just sharing information to co-creating programming, including the Care Forum.

FINDING 12

Capacity-building efforts, including through the UN Women Knowledge and Partnerships Centre in the Republic of Korea, have a large reach, but future efforts should ensure synergies between teams and that links are strengthened with UN Women's normative and programmatic work to enhance sustainability.

The Regional Office's Strategic Note commits to building the capacity of both internal UN Women personnel and external stakeholders as part of its key strategies for operating across different thematic and functional units and for sustaining efforts beyond specific project timelines. The UN Women Knowledge and Partnerships Centre in the Republic of Korea (the Centre)⁸⁴ was launched in 2022 to improve implementation of normative and policy frameworks and to address discriminatory social norms and practices that perpetuate gender inequality in the region. The Centre aims to be a regional platform for in-depth learning and exchange of experiences, gender data and research production.⁸⁵

The Centre leveraged Regional Office expertise to organize training and webinars on UN Women's thematic areas. The evaluation analysis of Regional Office mission reports identified that Regional Office visits to the Republic of Korea in support of the Centre's capacity-building efforts was the second highest of all destinations visited, with at least 32 visits between 2023 and 2024. However, the personnel consulted noted that this engagement is on an ad hoc and project-driven basis.

As noted in the Centre's Mid-Term Review Report,⁸⁶ most survey respondents reported that they had successfully applied and shared the knowledge and skills acquired through the Centre's initiatives in their work and organizations. Some respondents reported that their enhanced understanding of the topic allowed them to better integrate gender perspectives in their areas of expertise, such as climate change, disaster risk reduction and development planning. However, some stakeholders consulted believed that the Centre had spread itself too thinly and linkages between increased capacity and contribution to normative work was unclear. They identified the need for a clearer theory of change, unpacking the linkage between the activities delivered by the Centre and advancement in normative work, and greater investment in monitoring and measuring its long-term results.⁸⁷

As a key strategy for achieving results, the Regional Office delivered other capacity-building activities aimed at strengthening the capacity of its key partners to exercise their leadership role towards the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment. Other than through RMS reporting, which focused primarily on activity-level results,

⁸⁴ Previously called the Centre of Excellence for Gender Equality.

⁸⁵ UN Women, "Project Document: UN Women Knowledge and Partnerships Centre in the Republic of Korea, Republic of Korea" (10 July 2023). The Centre is also mandated to build strategic partnerships with Korean stakeholders and organize high-visibility events, bringing together Korean and international experts, policymakers and private sector entities.

⁸⁶ UN Women Knowledge and Partnerships Centre in the Republic of Korea Mid-Term Review Report (internal document).

⁸⁷ UN Women Knowledge and Partnerships Centre in the Republic of Korea Mid-Term Review Report (internal document).

there was no systematic way to track these efforts or their effectiveness. Findings from the regional meta-synthesis report highlighted how capacity-building had increased the knowledge and skills of participants and resulted in impactful changes for individuals and institutions, despite the lack of a strategic long-term vision, follow-up support and feedback loops. The UN Women Corporate Evaluation⁸⁸ on capacity-building confirmed there was no organization-wide systematic process for planning, delivering and monitoring capacity development initiatives, whether stand-alone activities or within wider programmes.

The Regional Office has started to work on a draft AI Strategy for Gender Equality in Asia-Pacific (2025–2030), in line with the UN 2.0 “Quintet of Change”,⁸⁹ presenting an opportunity

for the Regional Office to advance gender equality in emerging technologies. The draft strategy aims to build stakeholders’ capacities⁹⁰ to leverage AI tools for research. However, AI-generated data often rely on secondary sources, which may not always be accurate or reflect the most up-to-date or robust statistics, and are often gender-biased.⁹¹ It should also be noted that currently there is no standardized process, incentives or risk-taking culture to identify, incubate, test and scale new ideas within UN Women.⁹² Existing Regional Office efforts on innovations such as AI are largely demand-driven rather than systematic, highlighting the need to nurture other innovation capabilities within the Regional Office and provide support to Country Offices on the same.

FINDING 13

While there has been progress in building capacities related to Results-Based Management, overall monitoring and evaluation systems and coordination across units need improvement to ensure more effective implementation and impact measurement.

The Regional Office Strategic Note identifies support to Country Offices and country presences in the region to ensure compliance with corporate requirements as its key aim and is committed to providing quality assurance and building capacities through facilitated webinars, regional in-person training and a community of practice.

At the Strategic Note level, the review of 2022–2024 annual reporting identified several issues with indicator reporting, including target values set equal to or below baseline values, inconsistencies between target types and reported data formats (e.g. numeric targets with yes/no reporting), and inaccuracies in 2024 status classifications, for example, some indicators marked as “target reached or surpassed” despite not meeting the target. One underlying issue is the varying interpretations of the same indicator within and across teams, leading to inconsistent reporting. At the project level, from the sample of 10 projects, all projects had results and resource frameworks and a theory of change. However, their quality varied, indicating there is a need for follow-up and to systematically capture whether suggested changes provided

during the Regional Project Appraisal Committee process are made. The evaluation meta-synthesis report also found issues with poorly selected indicators in projects, such as focusing on activity/output rather than impact (see Annex 18) and highlighted the need for improved outcome-level monitoring through better data collection and analysis, particularly data disaggregated by sex and other demographic factors. All ProDocs sampled explained how monitoring, evaluation and reporting would be conducted. However, monitoring is almost entirely reliant on the partners’ capacity to monitor effectively (see Annex 18). Interviews with stakeholders highlighted that UN Women monitoring and evaluation personnel often wore different hats, which diverted attention away from their core monitoring functions. The Regional Office mission report analysis identified that only 5 per cent of missions (N=14/272) were related to monitoring and reporting, and the majority of these were related to capacity-building, not focused on programme monitoring validation. This indicates the need to strengthen Regional Office monitoring capacity to systematically validate results.

⁸⁸ UN Women, “Corporate Formative Evaluation of UN Women’s Support for Capacity Development of Partners to Respond to the Needs of Women and Girls at National Level” (2023). Available at <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2023-08/evaluation-capacity-development-of-partners-to-respond-to-the-needs-of-women-and-girls-at-national-level-brief-en.pdf>

⁸⁹ The areas include data, digital transformation, strategic foresight, innovation and behavioural science.

⁹⁰ Specifically, UN Women, UNCTs, governments, CSOs, private-sector actors and young leaders to be equipped with the skills to leverage AI for gender equality.

⁹¹ The World Bank, “Fostering AI-Readiness and Responsible Redistribution of Official Statistics” (2025). Available at [Room Document-WorldBank-E.pdf](#)

⁹² UN Women, “Corporate Formative Evaluation of UN Women’s Approach to Innovation” (2021). Available at [Evaluation Details-Global Accountability and Tracking of Evaluation Use - GATE System](#)

Notably, the Regional Office's uptake of recommendations based on regional thematic evaluations has been commendable.⁹³ For example, in [response](#) to a recommendation from the Evaluation of UN Women's Crisis Response in Asia and the Pacific,⁹⁴ the Regional Office developed detailed Crisis Response Standard Operating Procedures in 2023, demonstrating the use of evaluation to strengthen systems. These standard operating procedures contextualized the corporate Crisis Response Policy for the Asia-Pacific region and has reportedly streamlined coordination among functional teams – senior leadership, programmatic, operations, and security – to better support Country Offices during emergency response. The standard operating procedures have since informed practices in other regions and contributed to global mechanisms.

Another example, as noted in Finding 14, is the EmPower Phase II leave no one behind guidance, which was developed in [response](#) to recommendations from the final evaluation of EmPower Phase I⁹⁵ on identifying and engaging the most vulnerable and marginalized groups.

Interviews with personnel emphasized the need for better planning and technical support in monitoring and evaluation. This is a broader challenge for the organization as the Mid-Term Review of the UN Women Strategic Plan 2022–2025⁹⁶ identified the need to improve both the attainment of measurable, context-specific results in countries and communicate consolidated results globally. Building on the 2023 corporate Planning, Monitoring and Reporting Policy, UN Women committed to invest in improving capacities across these cycles, focusing on their interdependencies.



Photo: ©UN Women Sri Lanka/Jeewan Vithanage/Vimukthi Maduwantha/Raveendra Rohana

⁹³ The management response to the recommendations of recent thematic evaluations conducted for the Regional Office can be found here [Evaluation of UN Women's Crisis response in Asia and the Pacific](#) (2022), [Evaluation of UN Women's contributions to women's economic empowerment through private sector engagement](#) (2022), [Evaluation of Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific Contributions to Women, Peace and Security](#) (2021).

⁹⁴ UN Women, *Evaluation of UN Women's Crisis Response in Asia and the Pacific*, 2022, accessed May 23, 2025, <https://gate.unwomen.org/Evaluation/Details?EvaluationId=11538>.

⁹⁵ UN Women, *Final Evaluation: EmPower – Women for Climate-Resilient Societies, Phase II*, 2024, accessed May 23, 2025, <https://gate.unwomen.org/Evaluation/Details?EvaluationId=11599>.

⁹⁶ UN Women, *Lessons Learned and Ways Forward: UN Women Midterm Review of the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan* (2023)

Has the Regional Office's portfolio been designed and implemented according to human rights, leave no one behind principles, including disability perspectives, social and environmental safeguards and development effectiveness principles (ensuring national ownership and sustainability of programming efforts)?

FINDING 14

While overall the Regional Office takes a human rights-focused approach, and has made some progress on integrating an intersectional and leave no one behind lens into its programming, there is potential to adopt a more systematic approach and accountability mechanisms to social inclusion and intersectionality to better reach those most in need and to facilitate sustainability of efforts.

The Regional Office's Strategic Note commits to applying a leave no one behind lens at all stages of the programme cycle; adopting a learning approach to better understand the needs of diverse women and girls (including by investing in sex, age and disability disaggregated data); and in informing the design of programmatic interventions.

The evaluation team analysed the extent to which 10 of the 35 active regional projects (29 per cent)⁹⁷ were aware of different marginalized groups in project design and implementation (see Table 3).⁹⁸ The Governance, Peace and Security Regional Framework "Towards Peaceful, Inclusive Societies: Advancing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and Inclusive Governance in the Asia-Pacific Region," demonstrated a stronger integration of marginalized groups in both design and implementation compared to other thematic areas. The evaluation also identified EmPower-tailored guidance on operationalizing leaving no one behind as a good practice. It offers a structured approach to identify entry points and support the inclusion of marginalized groups across regional and national efforts, with checklists provided for each stage of the project cycle.

Among projects with available implementation data, only three of seven were aware or somewhat aware of more than one marginalized group during project design and only two of these three projects showed awareness during implementation. Across thematic areas, youth engagement emerged as the most consistently addressed sub-group among marginalized groups. In contrast, indigenous/rural women and ethnic minorities were the least included. Some stakeholders

consulted highlighted the need for a clear strategy on Regional Office engagement with indigenous peoples, which could be adapted to the specific contexts of each country.

Regional Office coordination partners rated the office's effectiveness through a stakeholder survey. The highest "Very Effective" rating (9 of 17) was for identifying marginalized and vulnerable populations. However, 7 of 17 respondents found engaging with these groups "very ineffective" or "somewhat ineffective," indicating a gap between identification and engagement. Respondents rated the Regional Office's effectiveness in "integrating approaches that reach marginalized groups" with 8 of 17 respondents choosing "Not Sure" or left it blank, showing a need for better communication and visibility.

While some internal stakeholders emphasized that the Regional Office's work, particularly through normative platforms and partnerships and support to civil society, lays the groundwork for inclusive policy and programmatic engagement, gaps remain in how intersectionality and leave no one behind principles are communicated, operationalized and measured across the regional portfolio. Despite increased efforts from the Regional Office to involve marginalized women, stakeholders observed that high-level discussions often lump these groups together, ignoring their unique challenges and intersectional barriers. For example, while wheelchair accessibility (a more immediately recognizable form of disability) may be addressed in events such as CSO consultations, it does not always meet the needs of deaf persons or those with psychosocial disabilities.

⁹⁷ The sampling ensured thematic diversity by including at least one major project from each thematic area (projects exceeding US\$ 3 million in budget and a three-year implementation period). Additionally, all case study projects were included to provide in-depth insights.

⁹⁸ This analysis is based on mandate proposed by the Strategic Note and reviewing projects documents and donor annual reports.

This oversimplification of marginalized groups in regional programming was also emphasized by stakeholders, who noted that the diverse realities of local populations require more tailored approaches.⁹⁹ The stakeholder consultations and meta-synthesis of evaluations identified good practices and areas for attention across UN Women's triple mandate (see Figure 11). For instance, stakeholders urged UN Women to go further by explicitly naming groups persistently left behind, particularly women with psychosocial disabilities, who often remain unacknowledged even within disability constituencies. Progress in this area is a

corporate challenge as identified by the Mid-Term Review of the UN Women Strategic Plan, which notes that application of the leave no one behind principle remains inconsistent across programmes. Stakeholders noted the absence of a clear strategy for integrating intersectionality and leave no one behind approaches. They stressed the importance of identifying marginalized groups in Asia and the Pacific and providing stronger guidance and technical support. This would enhance inclusion in regional projects through participatory methods and help Country Offices and non-physical presences address women's diverse needs.

TABLE 3: Inclusion and awareness of marginalized groups in sampled projects

PROJECT (THEMATIC AREA)	SOGIESC		WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES		INDIGENOUS/RURAL WOMEN/ETHNIC MINORITIES		YOUTH		WOMEN MIGRANTS	
	Design	Implement	Design	Implement	Design	Implement	Design	Implement	Design	Implement
Regional Framework (GPS)	✓	✗	✓	~	✓	✗	✓	✓	~	✗
Women, Peace Cybersecurity (GPS)	~	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	~	~
Empowering women for sustainable peace (ASEAN/WPS)	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗
PROTECT (EVAW)	✗	—	~	—	✗	—	✗	—	✓	—
Safe and Fair (EVAW)	✗	~	✗	✗	✗	✗	~	~	✓	✓
Empower Phase II (Resilience)	✓	—	✓	—	~	—	✓	—	✗	—
COVID-19 Prevention and Response (Resilience/ EVAW)	~	✗	~	~	✗	✗	✗	~	✓	✓
Gender Action Lab (WEE)	✗	—	~	—	✗	—	✗	—	✗	—
LINK Women (WEE)	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	~	✗	✗
We Rise Together (WEE)	✗	✗	~	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	~



Aware



Somewhat aware



Unaware

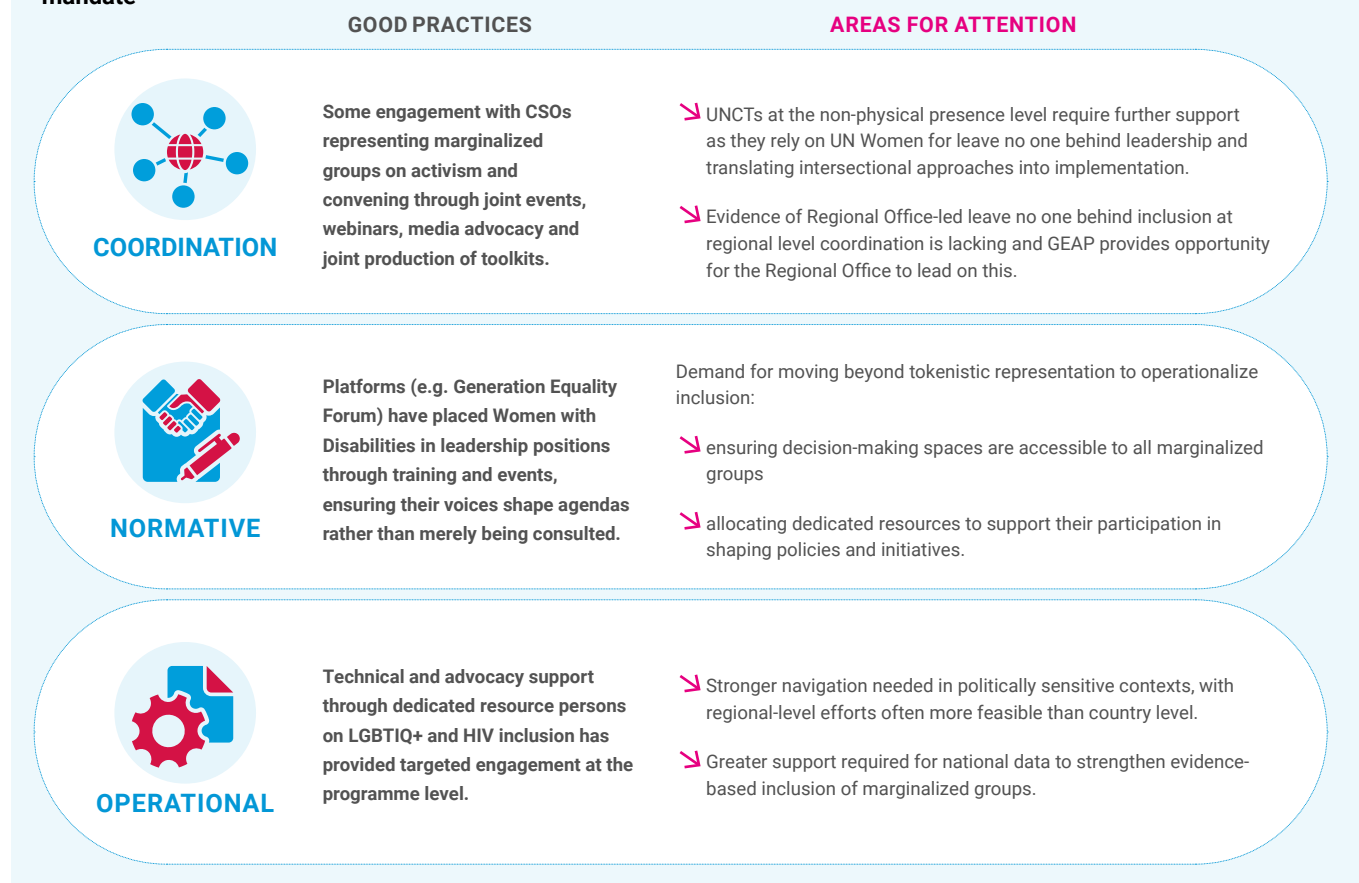


Data not available

Source: developed by the evaluation team

⁹⁹ For instance, a stakeholder noted the lack of engagement of widows in a Women, Peace and Security project in BARMM, a key group that faces unique vulnerabilities in post-conflict recovery and reintegration. Another stakeholder noted that language barriers pose a significant challenge, often limiting participation to elite groups fluent in national or international languages.

FIGURE 11: Good practices and areas of attention to enhance leave no one behind integration across UN Women's triple mandate



Source: developed by the evaluation team

FINDING 15

Environmental sustainability considerations are gradually being integrated into Regional Office programming, with most project risks assessed as low or not applicable, though opportunities remain to strengthen risk mitigation and climate-resilience measures.

UN Women's Social and Environmental Standards Policy and Procedure, introduced in December 2023, aim to enhance programming quality and efficiency by integrating sustainability considerations. The policy mandates sustainability scanning at the Strategic Note level and completion of the Social and Environmental Screening Template¹⁰⁰ during ProDoc development, except for certain project types.¹⁰¹ Given its recent adoption, programmes have not yet incorporated these standards at the design stage. However, the evaluation conducted a retrospective review of the integration

of the Social and Environmental Standards in the Strategic Note and a sample of 10 projects¹⁰² to identify opportunities for strengthening its integration in future programming.

A key observation was that 74 of 80 risk scenarios (8 risk scenarios per 10 projects) were "Not Applicable", as the evaluation team's assessment found that project activities did not pose any significant risk. For the remaining six scenarios spread across the projects, most risk ratings were rated moderate or low, except in one instance. Similarly, at the Strategic Note level, the assessment highlighted a low direct

¹⁰⁰ Screening process is to be conducted across the following eight Social and Environmental Risk Scenarios: biodiversity and conservation, sustainable natural resource management, climate change and disaster risks, community health, safety and security, cultural heritage, displacement and resettlement and indigenous peoples and rural women.

¹⁰¹ Projects focused solely on policy support, knowledge products, capacity-building, coordination, research, monitoring and maintenance are exempt from Social and Environmental Standards screening.

¹⁰² Same projects as the leave no one behind analysis sample (see Figure 11).

environmental impact. However, some gaps emerged in the integration of sustainability and risk mitigation measures across programmatic and operational activities.

No critical impact on natural habitats, biodiversity or cultural heritage was identified through the Regional Office's programmatic or operational activities. Hybrid working has reduced the Regional Office's carbon footprint, yet the evaluation team noted that no explicit pollution prevention measures were outlined.

Major events (e.g. CSW, Beijing Platform for Action+30) could better plan for carbon mitigation regarding travel and environmental impact. The evaluation team conducted an analysis of carbon emissions from travel (excluding the COVID-19 years), and found that between 2019 and 2023, there was a significant reduction in the number of passengers, but the decrease in carbon emissions was not proportional. This suggests that factors such as flight routes¹⁰³ played a role in emission levels.

Further, the number of items printed in the Regional Office has increased consistently year-on-year. In 2023, there was a 50 per cent increase in items printed compared to 2022, followed by a 44 per cent increase in 2024 compared to 2023.

The Strategic Note acknowledges that programmes operate in climate-vulnerable countries such as Bangladesh, Cambodia, Viet Nam and the Pacific countries. However, measures for climate adaptation, greenhouse gas minimization and carbon sink preservation, could be more clearly integrated into programme activities. While climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction programmes promote women's leadership, potential unintended impacts on indigenous rights were identified, with opportunities to ensure consultation mechanisms are in place to provide free, prior and informed consent and meaningful participation of indigenous communities.

Regarding the component on community exposure to health and safety risks, within the ProDoc there is scope to clarify UN Women's approaches to safeguards to protect stakeholders from potential backlash and prevent sexual exploitation and abuse.



Photo: ©UN Environment Programme/Andrew Ball

¹⁰³ For example, the mission analysis showed that travel to the UN Women Knowledge and Partnerships Centre in the Republic of Korea (previously Centre of Excellence), established in 2022 in the Republic of Korea, drove a significant amount, i.e. 12 per cent of all travel in 2022 and 2023.

5. LESSONS LEARNED AND PROMISING PRACTICES

The lessons learned from the evaluation draw on insights from across the region and are intended to inform future efforts in normative and coordination work. They reflect evidence-based lessons that are applicable to other regional or multi-country settings, particularly those with complex political environments, diverse stakeholders and evolving gender equality priorities.

FACTORS OF SUCCESS	LESSONS LEARNED
 Strong leadership and a clearly articulated vision can create alignment across teams and stakeholders.	Strong leadership and a clear vision articulating UN Women's positioning can ensure a common approach and coherent action in advancing gender equality through normative and coordination work.
 Flexibility in regional coordination and normative functions enables responsiveness to shifting needs.	Normative and coordination efforts must be flexible and responsive to the diverse and emerging challenges in the region, adapting to different subregional realities
 Inclusion of diverse perspectives strengthens the legitimacy of regional initiatives.	Bringing diverse perspectives and new knowledge to normative spaces and coordination processes is a critical pathway through which gender equality and women's empowerment can be advanced within the region but must be backed by strong technical expertise, experience and credibility, along with collaborative partnerships.
 Country-led initiatives and demand-driven approaches strengthen regional relevance and ownership	Regional initiatives are most effective when priorities are driven by the countries involved; thematic and functional support is coordinated; coverage is balanced across the region; and sustainability strategies are embedded.
 Alignment and collaboration across internal units enhance implementation and effectiveness.	Internal coherence is reliant on collaboration across levels and functions. Strengthening internal coherence requires establishing shared goals, accountability and collaboration mechanisms that systematize support.
 Knowledge products and learning tools are more effective when directly linked to user demand & embedded in institutional systems.	High-quality knowledge and learning platforms must be linked with demand; delivered through coherent systems that assure quality and coordinated approaches; and supported by dedicated resources.
 Inclusive programme design and early attention to environmental and social safeguards contribute to sustainability.	Meaningful participation of marginalized groups and early integration of environmental safeguards from the conceptualization of programmes and throughout the programme cycle is essential for delivering sustainable results.

6. CONCLUSIONS

UN Women stands at a crossroads, as a fundamental shift in global development priorities is taking shape and backlash against the very principles for which the United Nations was founded is growing in intensity. Despite the challenges, the women, individuals, CSOs and organizations who work tirelessly to defend human rights are continuing to find ways to ensure progress. There is opportunity for women's rights advocates to mobilize and focus on the most pressing gender equality challenges of our time; rising backlash against women's rights; the deepening climate crisis; and the quickly evolving landscape of AI and digitalization.

The Regional Office has contributed to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in Asia and the Pacific, leveraging its technical expertise and normative leadership to engage civil society, convene diverse actors and shape policy frameworks. Within the current context, the Regional Office has an opportunity to leverage its Strategic Note to recalibrate priorities and ways of working. At a time when marginalized groups, particularly those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, are most at risk of being left behind, the Regional Office must ensure that its approach is not only ambitious but also grounded in the realities of those it seeks to serve. It must do so in an increasingly uncertain funding landscape, where shifts in donor priorities and reduced flexibility in resources threaten the sustainability of gender equality efforts. The Regional Office is in the process of building a common vision, which it should endeavour to do by co-creating, clarifying and communicating its key priorities, ensuring they are aligned with the

priorities of the countries it serves and its own functions. By developing more intentional and systematic ways of working and models of engagement, the Regional Office can advance its aims towards gender equality in the Asia and the Pacific region more coherently, effectively and collaboratively with its key partners.

Presentation of the evaluation's preliminary findings and discussion on the way forward took place with members of the Evaluation Reference Group in February 2025 and fed into the final recommendations presented below.

The recommendations were reviewed by the Evaluation Management Group and the Evaluation Reference Group, and subsequent changes were integrated as appropriate. The key actions are presented in a graduated format for consideration by the Regional Office – starting from the initiation phase to scaling phase – based on their feasibility within the office's current programme of work and available resources.

CONCLUSION 1

The Regional Office's Strategic Note is relevant to the region and its work adds value across UN Women's triple mandate. There is a need to strengthen prioritization and focus based on regional priorities within the context of diminishing resources. The Regional Office has contributed to advancing normative frameworks across several impact areas but would benefit from strengthened leadership and a clearer vision.

Based on Findings 1 and 2

The Regional Office's current work is broadly relevant to the region. Its mandate and contribution are widely recognized by stakeholders across a range of areas, while its technical expertise and reach to women's civil society voices and convening power are seen as providing unique added value.

The Regional Office has contributed to advancing gender equality in normative frameworks and bringing gender equality and women's empowerment agendas into normative processes across a variety of impact areas including Ending Violence Against Women; Women, Peace and Security; climate and resilience; gender statistics; Women's Economic Empowerment; and migration. This has been achieved at multiple levels (regional, subregion, national and subnational) and by employing a range of successful strategies. The Regional Office's evolving role in humanitarian action, disaster risk reduction and climate change represents a growing area of importance that warrants clarity in its approach. There is opportunity for stronger leadership and a clearer vision for the Regional Office's normative work to ensure it is more coherent, better prioritized and more effective.

Development of the next Strategic Note provides an opportunity to articulate a stronger vision across UN Women's triple mandate and core impact areas, and to rebalance efforts towards areas that will have the largest impact. Given the rapidly changing dynamics and intensifying challenges in the region, developing and implementing such a vision requires ongoing assessment of how shifting dynamics shape opportunities for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment and the resulting implications for UN Women's priorities, investments, engagement and partnerships. Clear prioritization and focus will become particularly critical in an increasingly resource constrained environment.

CONCLUSION 2

The Regional Office has played a key role in advancing gender equality in the region through regional programmes, whose direction has largely followed donor interest and available funding, with intensive engagement in particular with ASEAN. While regional programming has been catalytic in some areas, it has also resulted in skewing resources and engagement towards specific countries and subregions. Opportunities remain to (a) rebalance the Regional Office's core functions with regional programming to ensure it is oriented towards its key client, UN Women presences across the region; (b) focus on other subregions to strengthen both internal coherence and potential impact in the region; and (c) aligned with and guided by corporate guidance, develop a common vision on non-physical presences, given their reliance on regional programme funding and intense operational support.

Based on Finding 3, 7 and 8

Regional programmes have resulted in significant commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment, advancing normative frameworks and supporting their localization. Regional programming has created cross-country learning platforms; facilitated engagement with global and regional mechanisms; and strengthened UN Women's credibility in strategic policy spaces across all thematic areas. In some areas, such as the climate change space, regional programmes have facilitated access to partners and platforms that would not otherwise have been possible. The Regional Office's consistent work with ASEAN has built relationships of trust and allowed UN Women to influence a range of ASEAN processes and bodies. This has worked in conjunction with support to localize and implement normative commitments and frameworks within ASEAN member states and through subregional-level programming.

While there is much to be learned from the Regional Office's strong programming focus on ASEAN, there are opportunities to replicate and adapt successful elements of this approach in other subregions, supporting a more balanced and inclusive regional normative and programming footprint. The current emphasis on regional programming has resulted in a concentration of efforts in areas such as ASEAN, where much of the regional programming is anchored. At the same time, the Regional Office has significantly complemented the contributions of teams based in non-physical presences by

investing substantial resources to support these offices in delivering on UN Women's triple mandate, including support for delivering regional programmes and meeting broader expectations for them to operate as full offices, including fulfilling coordination functions.

Difficult decisions about how to rebalance support will entail looking at what types of regional programme modalities will support UN Women presences equitably in the region. This will require advocacy with donors and the willingness of the Regional Office to say "no" to certain types of projects that do not support this vision. This will also entail establishing clarity on the vision for non-physical presences, given their reliance on regional programme funding and operational support, which creates uncertainty about their long-term viability.

CONCLUSION 3

Coordination work¹⁰⁴ is fundamental to UN Women's mandate and will be increasingly important as the organization responds to the Secretary-General's Gender Equality Action Plan and UN 80 reform initiative. The Regional Office has built key partnerships to advance coherence in gender equality efforts by using its convening power to expand the diversity of actors involved in regional spaces and processes and by creating opportunities for women's perspectives to be heard by a wide range of decision makers. There is a need for a clearly articulated theory of change on how the Regional Office's coordination work seeks to contribute to change; a strategy on how it will leverage the Gender Equality Action Plan in UN coordination spaces; and how it will deepen key partnerships with other actors in support of the women's movement, recognizing the possibility of reduced funding for gender equality and women's empowerment.

Based on Findings 4 and 5

The Regional Office's coordination work has contributed to strong results in some areas, particularly where it has been able to provide consistent leadership, high-quality technical expertise and build collaborative partnerships based on shared goals. The Regional Office has strong relationships with a range of strategic partners and is particularly valued for its convening role and ability to bring diverse voices to normative and policy spaces.

The Regional Office's UN system coordination work has been able to add value in key areas such as Gender in Humanitarian Action and Gender Statistics, while its support to UNCTs is noted to be of value. Rolling out the Gender Equality Acceleration Plan in the region will be a major focus of the Regional Office's coordination work going forward and will require a significant investment in terms of personnel time.

The Regional Office engages with a wide range of partners at regional, subregional and national levels and has made good progress in strengthening partnerships with non-traditional interlocutors such as the private sector and climate-related bodies. The Regional Office has a strong relationship with women's civil society in the region, which is seen by partners as a clear added value.

There is room for a more proactive approach from Regional Office leadership, building a vision and prioritizing spaces for coordination work. Developing a theory of change would clarify how Regional Office coordination achieves results, and a regional strategy would ensure consistent approaches across the team. This would enhance cross-team collaboration and improve communication about coordination of gender equality and women's empowerment. Importantly, it would help prioritize Regional Office activities, focusing on key issues and balancing regional coordination efforts with UNCT-level support.

Such a strategy would then guide the Regional Office's interactions with women's organizations by involving a broader spectrum of organizations, especially those representing marginalized groups of women. This would promote a sustained, strategic and shared vision of how UN Women can support women's movements in addressing anti-rights actors.

¹⁰⁴ This conclusion is based on an assessment of coordination with UN partners and other development actors, aligned with the coherence criterion and the evaluation question: "How effectively is UN Women leveraging its coordination mandate to strategically position itself and contribute to a more coherent and gender-responsive approach by UN partners and other development actors with respect to gender?"

CONCLUSION 4

Stakeholders look to UN Women and the Regional Office to provide critical knowledge, gender data and trends on the progress and challenges faced by women and girls from a regional lens. This knowledge supports stakeholders in their own advocacy and work to advance the rights of women within their own context. The Regional Office could better leverage its key role as a knowledge hub by prioritizing and systematizing processes related to planning, quality assurance and in monitoring the use of its knowledge products and the knowledge gained. The Regional Office should also invest in forward-looking knowledge practices, including piloting new approaches; integrating emerging tools such as AI; and facilitating learning across the region. This should include its capacity-building efforts, including through the UN Women Knowledge and Partnerships Centre in the Republic of Korea.

Based on Findings 10,11 and 12

The Regional Office's knowledge production is highly valued by stakeholders, yet with ever-increasing information overload, there is a need to think critically about what information is produced and disseminated, for what purpose, format, audience and use. Ways of communicating have transformed in recent years with social media and the mass-market introduction of AI. This calls for internal reflection and strategizing on how UN Women can best leverage the available tools to advance gender equality and women's empowerment through every facet of its operation.

First, it is important to determine which team should oversee the planning and implementation of knowledge management at the Regional Office to ensure the systematic application of key knowledge management concepts. Improved knowledge management would facilitate better cross-team collaboration and planning. Mapping out each team's plans

would help to identify potential synergies and efficiencies, allowing for the development of joint products. Stakeholder demands for information should be analysed and responded to through knowledge products. As the most popular Regional Office products are those that address cross-cutting topics, a common flagship product could be developed, highlighting the Regional Office's work, communicating progress on gender equality and women's empowerment, and identifying key trends and gaps. Stakeholders require more gender data, trends analysis and insights into what works for gender equality and women's empowerment within complex contexts.

The evaluation analysis demonstrated that the time and effort invested in knowledge production by the Regional Office may not be resulting in the visibility expected. Social media outreach has supported products to gain reach, yet production and dissemination plans should be based on analysis of demand and what works for which audience. While reach is not the only indicator of success, for an organization such as UN Women, scale is important and ensuring products are accessed and used can validate their continued production.

A systematic quality assurance system could enhance the overall quality and usefulness of knowledge production, ensuring credibility. There is also a need to ensure consistent monitoring of the knowledge and skills gained from knowledge products and capacity-building activities, and how products have been utilized. This could feed into an understanding of how the Regional Office is contributing to normative change.

As the organization embraces the UN 2.0 agenda and looks to integrate emerging tools such as AI into its work, the Regional Office has an opportunity to lead, but must do so responsibly. This will require ethical safeguards, clear value articulation and investment in internal capacities to ensure technology enhances rather than undermines the pursuit of gender equality and the credibility of the organization.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ The [UN General Assembly's resolution on AI](#) underscores the need for safe, secure and inclusive AI systems which close the gender digital divide.

CONCLUSION 5

In the face of intensifying resource constraints, the Regional Office must ensure it is agile, anticipatory and systems oriented. This will require intentionally aligning its core functional roles across units to better support UN Women presences in the region. Overall, establishing clearer expectations for functional and thematic units; reinforcing senior management's role in fostering collaboration; and embedding a structured system for tracking and aligning regional engagement would create a more unified operational model.

Based on Finding 6,9 and 13

In support of rebalancing the Regional Office's focus (see Conclusion 2), there is an opportunity to strengthen cross-unit collaboration and ensure a more integrated approach to the Regional Office's core functions in support of UN Women presences in the region. While steps have been taken to improve internal coordination, embedding cross-unit collaboration into the Regional Office's ways of working (rather than relying on ad hoc or individual-led efforts) is critical.

Clarity from senior management is needed on criteria for prioritizing support, common understanding of roles and how to leverage team synergies. Strengthening coordinated support (across both thematic and functional units) to presences in the region through the establishment of systematic

tracking would also enhance the Regional Office's ability to understand where and what type of support is being provided and to support informed decision-making.

As a core function of the Regional Office, strengthening approaches for coordinated, sustainable resource mobilization is essential. The Regional Office has successfully mobilized resources during this Strategic Note period, but efforts have been project-based, reliant on a limited donor pool and driven by individual teams working in silos. Transitioning to Strategic Note-based funding offers greater flexibility and responsiveness to regional priorities but requires a shift in internal resource mobilization management. Stronger collaboration between thematic units, functional leads and the External Relations Unit must be institutionalized, moving to shared planning cycles, aligned messaging and collective ownership of donor relationships. The Regional Office must also improve communication of opportunities, trends and strategic direction to Country Offices to ensure better local donor engagement.

As the region grows more complex and expectations on Country Offices increase, the Regional Office must foster innovation and results-based learning across teams. This includes strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems and coordination across units to ensure improved indicator quality, strengthened data systems that support outcome-level analysis, effective oversight and impact measurement.



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CONCLUSION 6

As an organization with the protection and promotion of human rights and sustainable development as its core mandate, strengthening the systematic application of non-discrimination, embedding sustainability and environmental safeguards are an imperative. UN Women must hold itself to high standards and practice what it advocates by modelling these values internally. The Regional Office has begun to make progress in integrating the perspectives of marginalized groups and identifying environmental considerations into its programming but will need to deepen these efforts and integrate accountability for action in the next Strategic Note.

Based on Findings 14 and 15

The Regional Office has taken important steps towards embedding the perspectives of diverse marginalized groups and environmental concerns into its programming. The Regional Office has increased the visibility of marginalized groups in regional normative platforms and initiatives, signalling its growing awareness of intersectionality. However, in the absence of a clear, unified strategy and clear lines of accountability related to this principle, the application of leave no one behind remains uneven.

In the current environment – where the rights of women, girls and people with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics are under intensified threat – the Regional Office must act with urgency.

The Regional Office must move beyond ad hoc efforts and systematically apply the leave no one behind principle and operationalize environmental safeguards as non-negotiable components of its work. Partnership with organizations of persons with psychosocial disabilities (OPDs) as co-leads in setting agendas and designing inclusive strategies should be a clear commitment.

A structured, context-specific approach is essential to facilitate meaningful participation of the most excluded and discriminated against groups. Country Offices require enhanced technical guidance and tools to address exclusionary systems and achieve genuinely inclusive outcomes. Personnel need access to a centralized resource for identifying data on marginalized populations and conducting analyses that inform programming strategies. This includes implementing participatory methods for engaging with marginalized communities and their representatives, ensuring that programmes are driven by the needs and insights of the populations UN Women aims to serve.

Similarly, while environmental considerations are being integrated, risk mitigation, climate resilience and indigenous safeguards require further strengthening. This will entail reflecting across the programme cycle on where the environment may be impacted, including through UN Women's own practices (e.g. travel, conference venue selection, giveaways, etc.). Reinforcing these principles will not only enhance compliance with UN Women's Social and Environmental Standards but will also solidify the Regional Office's position as a leader in gender-responsive climate action.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

RELEVANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Leverage the development of the next Strategic Note as a timely opportunity to sharpen UN Women's strategic focus in the region by clearly defining priorities, deepening coherence and leadership in normative work, and institutionalizing adaptive, forward-looking planning that responds to emerging trends and subregional dynamics.

BASED ON	Conclusion 1
PRIORITY	High
TIME FRAME	Immediate steps Q3/Q4 2025, longer-term steps during the period of the next Strategic Note.
TO BE LED BY	Regional Office senior management with support from thematic units and the Planning, Monitoring and Reporting unit.
IMPACT	Normative frameworks in priority areas are strengthened across the region and contribute to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in ways that are relevant to emerging priorities and to different subregional contexts.
DIFFICULTY	Medium. While prioritization and strengthening leadership and vision for normative work are within the hands of the Regional Office, mapping trends and responding to context, as well as developing entry points for engagement in subregions beyond ASEAN, will require strong political skills and significant personnel time.
IF NOT IMPLEMENTED	Failure to develop such a prioritized, forward-thinking, strategic approach could result in the Regional Office's normative work being dispersed, less relevant to context, unable to gain traction in other subregions and having limited results in terms of advancing normative frameworks.

KEY ACTIONS

RESULTS

INITIATE

- Use the opportunity of developing the new Strategic Note to further clarify and articulate strategic priorities for UN Women in the region.
- Collect and analyse data regarding possible future scenarios in the region; and identify emerging trends and potential disruptions and their implications for UN Women's regional work.
- Within the next Strategic Note, ensure greater emphasis is given to potential and emerging trends in the region, building in the flexibility to respond.

- **The next Strategic Note provides a framework to address clearly defined strategic priorities in ways that are relevant to the changing dynamics of the region.**

DEEPEN

- Build a common understanding of the Regional Office's approach to different strategic priorities and areas of work, identifying how these can be nuanced based on subregional or country contexts and how resources can be aligned to support them. For example, integration of technology, social norms and climate change as cross-cutting concerns.
- Enhance the articulation, communication and visibility of the Regional Office's strategic priorities internally and with partners.
- Develop stronger leadership and a more coherent and targeted vision for the Regional Office's normative work, focusing efforts on those normative areas that have the greatest potential to deliver results.
- Develop systems to strengthen the planning of normative work. These should include the consistent involvement of Regional Office thematic colleagues and relevant UN Women presences to ensure that normative work leverages synergies between thematic areas, is informed by programmatic work and is connected to Country Office priorities.

- **UN Women personnel and partners have clarity on the Regional Office's strategic priorities and its approach to how it will advance them, including within different subregions/countries.**
- **The Regional Office's normative engagements are more coherent and focused, and based on forward planning involving all relevant colleagues, making engagement more effective.**
- **The Regional Office has clear, realistic and well informed plans to expand its work in South Asia/the Pacific.**

SCALE

- Undertake regular mapping of emerging trends in the region to inform ongoing reflection on how the Regional Office should adapt its work to respond to these trends.
- Build on and scale up the following strategies to advance gender equality and women's empowerment within the normative space by using research to inform normative agendas; expanding the range of actors in normative processes; building on existing relationships and emerging opportunities to enter new normative spaces; drawing on regional programmes for normative engagement; and supporting sustained localization of normative frameworks.

- **The Regional Office's work becomes more adaptive, responsive and better able to address shifting priorities and threats in the region.**
- **The Regional Office's normative work employs the most effective strategies for impact.**
- **The Regional Office is increasingly engaged in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment across the region in ways that are relevant to all subregions.**

RELEVANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS

RECOMMENDATION 2:

The Regional Office should prioritize its core functions as the basis for regional engagement, use clear criteria to guide regional programming, rebalance subregional focus, and clarify direction and expectations of non-physical presences ensuring alignment with regional support capacities.

BASED ON

Conclusion 2

PRIORITY

High

TIME FRAME

Immediate steps Q3/Q4 2025, longer-term steps during the period of the next Strategic Note.

TO BE LED BY

Regional Office senior management in consultation with UN Women presences leadership and the Regional Office leadership team.

IMPACT

More equitable support across the regions, enhanced strategic clarity for non-physical presences and a stronger focus on the Regional Office's core functions, contributing to more balanced delivery of UN Women's triple mandate in Asia and the Pacific.

DIFFICULTY

High. Requires strategic trade-offs, internal realignment of roles and resources, and navigating complex sustainability and partnership dynamics for non-physical presences and subregional engagement.

IF NOT IMPLEMENTED

Subregional imbalances will persist, with limited impact in underrepresented areas; non-physical presences will remain over-reliant on regional programme funding without clear strategic direction or sustainability; and the imbalance in focus of the Regional Office on regional programming may dilute its ability to perform its core functions effectively.

KEY ACTIONS

RESULTS

INITIATE

- Initiate internal process to clarify the Regional Office's core functions and define the criteria for regional programming based on a "regionality" principle (e.g. cross-country relevance, catalytic potential, complementarity with the Regional Office's mandate).
- In line with Recommendation 2 of the [Country Portfolio Evaluation of Indonesia](#), clearly articulate in the next Strategic Note how the Regional Office will sustain its focus on ASEAN while identifying opportunities to replicate successful elements of this approach in other subregions to ensure a more balanced regional engagement.
- Facilitate internal reflection and alignment within the Regional Office on the future role, expectations and support required for non-physical presences.

- **A clearly articulated subregional focus within the Strategic Note will enable the more transparent prioritization of resources, improved internal coherence and a more balanced regional presence.**
- **Shared understanding across the Regional Office and non-physical presences of current support gaps and expectations.**
- **A shared understanding within the Regional Office of its core functions and clearer criteria to guide decisions on which regional programmes to pursue.**

DEEPEN

- Strategize with Country Offices and partners from the Pacific/South Asia to identify priorities, opportunities and entry points for work in these subregions, including drawing on lessons from work with ASEAN where relevant.
- Formulate a regional vision for non-physical presences, including differentiated pathways based on size, capacity and national context.
- Assess and align the Regional Office's functional and technical support capacities with the rebalanced subregional focus and differentiated non-physical presence models, ensuring support is aligned with needs and priorities.
- Develop and test internal guidance to prioritize regional programmes that align with the Regional Office's core functions and regionality criteria

- **Agreed subregional priorities and entry points for engagement in the Pacific and South Asia, informed by contextual needs and relevant lessons from ASEAN, laying the foundation for more balanced regional programming.**
- **Improved coherence, sustainability planning and strategic direction for non-physical presences.**
- **Improved alignment of regional programming with the Regional Office's strategic role, and greater coherence between programme and core function delivery.**

SCALE

- Incrementally increase the Regional Office's dedication of focus, resources and engagement across the region in line with the priorities and opportunities identified with Country Offices and partners in these regions.
- Embed differentiated models for non-physical presence support and engagement into regional planning and resource allocation, with clear pathways for strengthening, sustaining or transitioning non-physical presences based on strategic relevance and national context.
- Integrate a planning and decision-making process into existing mechanisms (i.e. Regional Project Appraisal Committee) that regularly reviews regional programme proposals against Regional Office core functional alignment and regionality criteria.

- **Expanded and more equitable Regional Office engagement across the region, resulting in stronger partnerships, increased visibility and enhanced support for country-level impact aligned with regional priorities.**
- **A regionally led, context-responsive approach to non-physical presences that clarifies expectations and ensures alignment with UN Women's regional priorities and support capacities.**
- **A consistent decision-making process is established to ensure regional programmes reinforce, rather than detract from the Regional Office's core functions in its normative work, coordination and technical support.**

EXTERNAL COHERENCE

RECOMMENDATION 3:

The Regional Office should develop a theory of change and strategy for its regional coordination work, focusing on working collaboratively – both internally and externally – to advance shared goals and leverage investments for gender equality and women’s empowerment, including for women’s civil society.

BASED ON Conclusion 3

PRIORITY High

TIME FRAME Immediate steps Q3/Q4 2025, longer-terms steps during the next Strategic Note period.

TO BE LED BY Coordination and Normative units in consultation with the Regional Office leadership team.

IMPACT The Regional Office’s more strategic approach to coordination and its broader and deeper partnerships with key stakeholders contribute to stronger and more effective collaboration to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment in the region based on shared goals.

DIFFICULTY **Medium.** There is strong appetite for UN Women to strengthen its leadership on coordination and widespread recognition of its mandate to do so, which the Regional Office can build on. However, this will require overcoming challenges related to internal resource constraints and competition among agencies.

IF NOT IMPLEMENTED Without a clear strategy to drive regional coordination work, collaboration with partners risks being ad hoc and project based, and UN coordination on gender equality and women’s empowerment and support to UNCTs may not be sufficiently robust to successfully roll out the Gender Equality Acceleration Plan.

KEY ACTIONS

RESULTS

INITIATE

- As part of development of a theory of change and strategy to guide coordination work, the Regional Office should:
- Develop stronger leadership and vision in relation to regional-level coordination processes.
 - A theory of change should be developed which defines how internal and external coordination efforts interrelate and identifies priority areas for synergy across UN Women regional and country structures and external actors.
 - Ensure better branding and communication of different gender equality and women's empowerment coordination processes and the development of stronger connections between them.
 - Develop a framework for stronger planning, prioritizing and monitoring of results from Regional Office coordination support to UNCTs.

- **A theory of change and strategy that provide a clear vision and framework to guide the Regional Office's internal and external coordination and partnership work at different levels.**

DEEPEN

- The Regional Office should proactively mobilize the UN system by engaging key allies to collectively roll-out the Gender Equality Action Plan.
- Leverage the Gender Equality Action Plan as a framework for engagement, while also identifying and utilizing other regional coordination platforms and opportunities to strengthen cross-UN and intergovernmental collaboration.
- The Regional Office should develop a stronger and more structured approach to regional coordination mechanisms and to UNCT support, including better planning and prioritization and the integration of trend analysis.
- The Regional Office should articulate a clear vision for how it can deepen and broaden its partnerships with women's civil society, including how it can collaborate with women's rights movements to counter anti-rights movements in the region. This vision should be developed together with civil society partners.
- The Regional Office should identify how it can more consistently and meaningfully engage with CSOs beyond its traditional partners, including organizations that represent grassroots women or marginalized persons.
- The Regional Office should foster more systematic and long-term engagement with development partners based on shared interests and goals rather than allowing partnerships to be driven by events and projects.

- **Enhanced UN coordination on gender equality and women's empowerment in the region supports the effective roll-out of the Gender Equality Acceleration Plan.**
- **Regional Office coordination efforts, both at regional level and in support of UNCTs, focus on priority areas and provide well planned and well-informed inputs.**
- **The Regional Office partners with a wider range of women's organizations, working in collaboration to advance gender equality and women's empowerment priorities and to address anti-rights threats within the region.**
- **The Regional Office is better able to engage and influence development.**

SCALE

- The Regional Office should integrate a more strategic and systematic approach to engagement with all its partners, ensuring that key partnerships are fostered and maintained over the long term, and that collaboration is based on a shared vision and priorities.

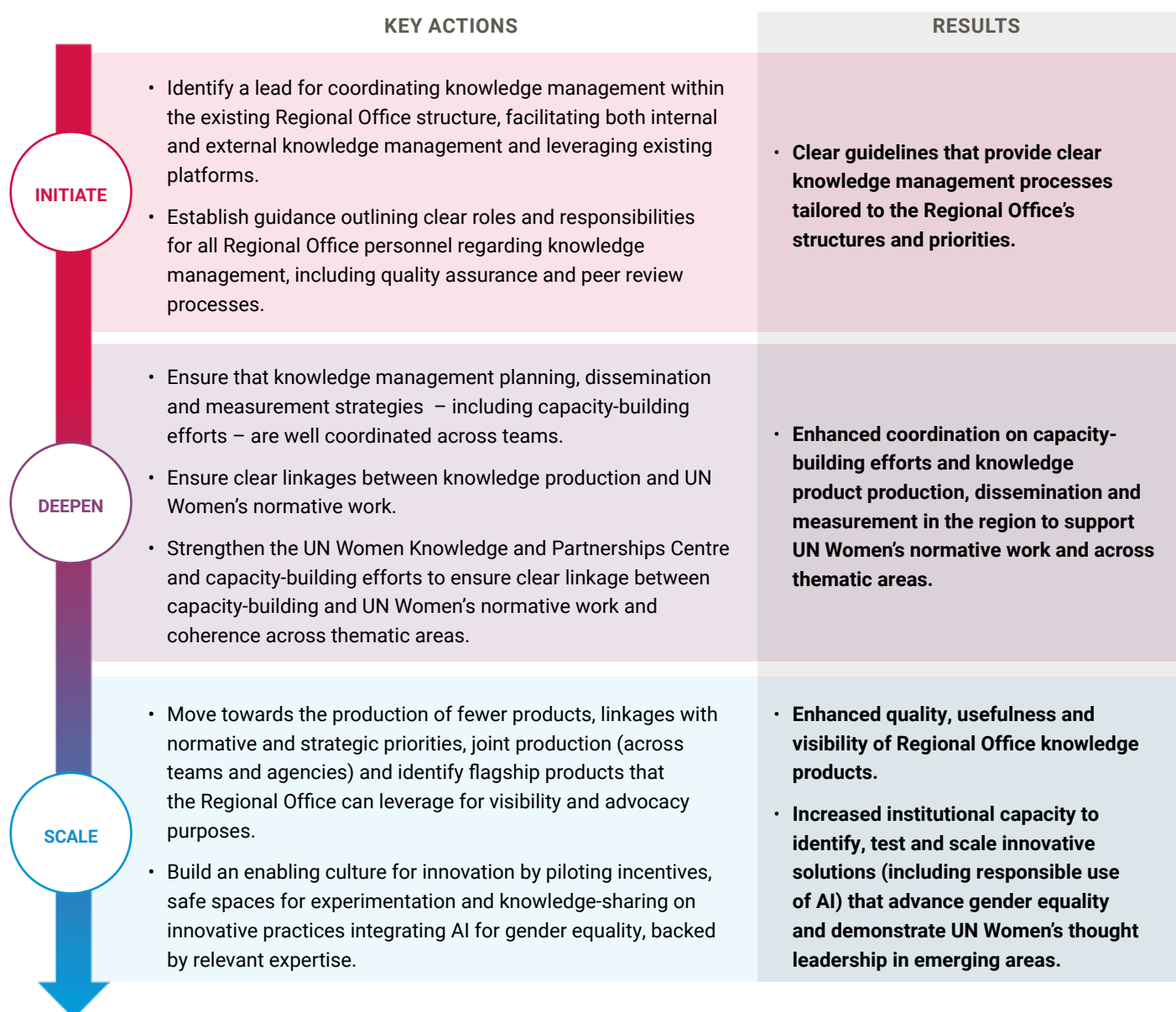
- **The Regional Office has stronger and more sustained partnerships with key actors that result in deeper and more effective collaboration.**

EFFICIENCY

RECOMMENDATION 4:

The Regional Office should strengthen its leadership in knowledge generation, innovation and capacity strengthening by clarifying the structures to support it, establishing clear processes and internal guidance for the planning, dissemination and measurement of the use of knowledge products and capacity-building efforts, while finalizing its strategy for integrating AI responsibly into its work.

BASED ON	Conclusion 4
PRIORITY	Medium
TIME FRAME	Q4 2025
TO BE LED BY	Regional Office senior management and External Relations Unit.
IMPACT	Strengthened thought leadership and influence of the Regional Office, with increased uptake and use of knowledge products to inform regional and global normative processes.
DIFFICULTY	Medium. This requires dedicated coordination capacity, buy-in across teams and alignment with corporate systems.
IF NOT IMPLEMENTED	Fragmented knowledge management efforts will persist, reducing the strategic impact and utility of knowledge products, and missing opportunities to position the Regional Office as a knowledge leader..



EFFICIENCY

RECOMMENDATION 5:

The Regional Office should clarify roles and expectations of both thematic and functional units with the aim of enhancing cross-unit collaboration; coordinated support to UN Women presences; fostering innovation and results-based learning across teams; and strengthening approaches for coordinated and sustainable resource mobilization.

BASED ON Conclusion 5

PRIORITY High

TIME FRAME Immediate steps Q2/Q3 2025, longer-terms steps during the next Strategic Note period.

TO BE LED BY Regional Office leadership team

IMPACT More coherent, coordinated and efficient delivery of the Regional Office's integrated mandate, strengthening its ability to support Country Offices and respond to regional priorities.

DIFFICULTY **High.** Undertaking this recommendation requires culture change, new systems and sustained leadership to shift from siloed approaches to integrated ways of working.

IF NOT IMPLEMENTED Silos will persist, limiting the Regional Office's ability to deliver on systemic outcomes, mobilize flexible resources and demonstrate impact across thematic priorities.

	KEY ACTIONS	RESULTS
INITIATE	- Establish guidelines with clear criteria for prioritizing support, informed by systematic tracking of technical and functional assistance (beyond Operations), to identify and respond to the needs of country presences. - Considering the funding prospects, the next Strategic Note to integrate strategic foresight concepts into resource mobilization approaches.	More effective and coordinated support to country presences. Enhanced Strategic Note and resource mobilization approaches.
DEEPEN	- Institutionalize cross-unit planning and review mechanisms as platforms that go beyond corporate reporting requirements, fostering genuine collaboration, alignment and visibility into each team's work through joint planning, reporting and periodic stocktaking. - Strengthen Results-Based Management systems to improve data quality, outcome-level monitoring, oversight and learning. - Enhance visibility to donors by using results data that showcase cross-thematic results and impact that demonstrate the collective value of UN Women's regional and country-level work. - Integrate key performance indicators to incentivize new ways of working.	Enhanced internal coherence and synergies across units contributing to Strategic Note outcomes. Increased ability to course-correct and demonstrate results and impact.
SCALE	- Strengthen collective resource mobilization by embedding joint donor engagement and planning across units, aligned with the Strategic Note. - Continue to actively diversify funding sources, including through flexible financing and non-traditional donors.	More coordinated and strategic donor engagement that reduces internal competition, enhances resource alignment with regional priorities and increases access to flexible, multi-thematic funding. Stronger donor recognition of UN Women's integrated impact, fostering deeper partnerships. Securing multi-year, flexible funding and support for cross-thematic initiatives.

HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER EQUALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

RECOMMENDATION 6:

The Regional Office should clarify roles and expectations of both thematic and functional units with the aim of enhancing cross-unit collaboration; coordinated support to UN Women presences; fostering innovation and results-based learning across teams; and strengthening approaches for coordinated and sustainable resource mobilization.

BASED ON Conclusion 6

PRIORITY High

TIME FRAME Immediate steps in Q3/Q4 2025; full implementation aligned with the next Strategic Note cycle.

TO BE LED BY Regional Office leadership team in consultation with Human Rights and Climate Change focal points

IMPACT Inclusive and environmentally conscious programming becomes a defining feature of the Regional Office's contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment in Asia and the Pacific.

DIFFICULTY **Medium.** Implementation requires coordination across teams, dedicated capacity and stronger alignment with corporate systems and standards. Resource constraints and capacity gaps at the grassroots level could pose a challenge.

IF NOT IMPLEMENTED Efforts to advance gender equality and women's empowerment may remain fragmented, risk missing those most left behind and undermine UN Women's credibility in promoting environmental responsibility.

	KEY ACTIONS	RESULTS
INITIATE	• Develop standards for integrating the leave no one behind principle and intersectionality across programmes, with clear guidance tailored to different country and thematic contexts. • Tools and technical support packages to assist UN Women presences in identifying, engaging and addressing the distinct needs of marginalized groups, including women with disabilities, indigenous women and those with diverse SOGIESC. • Embed climate risk and environmental sustainability measures in all new programme/Strategic Note design in line with UN Women's new Social and Environment Standards, including mechanisms for assessing unintended risks and strengthening safeguards for indigenous rights.	• Inclusion strategies are applied consistently across regional programming and adapted to diverse contexts. • The Regional Office and country teams have the tools and guidance needed to operationalize intersectionality and leave no one behind principles. • Regional Office programmes proactively mitigate environmental risks and reflect gender-responsive climate action.
DEEPEN	• Clarify roles and responsibilities within the Regional Office for integrating intersectionality and compliance with UN Women's Social and Environment Standards, including integrating these aspects in performance management. • Promote climate-friendly office actions, such as the use of digital documents in place of printed materials across meetings, workshops and internal reviews to reduce paper usage and associated carbon emissions. • Encourage teams to explore virtual or hybrid modalities in place of travel, where feasible, and coordinate travel across the Regional Office. • Leverage communities of practice to build internal capacity through targeted training on leave no one behind principles, safeguarding and environmental standards, and support cross-unit exchange and innovation.	• Regional Office colleagues have clarity and ownership over their roles in delivering on inclusion and sustainability commitments. • Improved institutional capacity and shared learning reinforce accountability and quality. • Regional Office carbon emissions are reduced.
SCALE	• Strengthen partnerships with feminist, SOGIESC, indigenous people, disability and youth-led organizations to co-create inclusive programming, ensuring specific engagement with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) led by persons with psychosocial disabilities, and commit in the next Strategic Note to joint gender-disability platforms in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. • Pilot and document models of inclusive programming that embed cross-cutting rights-based issues structurally and integration of environmental concerns that can be scaled or adapted across the region.	• UN Women's work is informed by and accountable to diverse communities. • The Regional Office's internal actions in support of gender-responsive climate action are aligned with the Social and Environment Standards.

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

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls worldwide. It works globally to make the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals a reality for women and girls and stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on four strategic priorities: Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems; Women have income security, decent work and economic autonomy; All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence; Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience, and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and humanitarian action. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.



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