STRENGTHENING ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR DELIVERING GENDER EQUALITY RESULTS

Corporate evaluation of the Regional Architecture of UN Women

UN WOMEN

Independent Evaluation Office

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

STRENGTHENING ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR DELIVERING GENDER EQUALITY RESULTS

Corporate evaluation of the Regional Architecture of UN Women

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 2016

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF EXHIBITS

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CO	Country Office
COAT	Country Office Assessment Tool
CSAG	Civil Society Advisory Group
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAMS	Donor Agreement Management System
DMA	Division of Management and Administration
FPI	Flagship Programming Initiative
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
HQ	Headquarters
IB	Integrated Budget
IEO	Independent Evaluation Office
MCO	Multi-country Office
MOPAN	Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network
POM	Programme Operations Manual
QCPR	Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review
RMS	Results Management System
RO	Regional Office
ROAP	Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WEE	Women's Economic Empowerment

FOREWORD

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) was created in January 2011 with the goal of contributing to the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment. The institutional set-up was designed with a regional architecture that aimed to maximize the organization's ability to deliver on its mandate. The regional architecture was intended to: bring capacity closer to the field; empower UN Women staff at the field level; reduce transaction costs arising from multiple layers of oversight for key business processes; better distinguish higher level programmatic and operational oversight and global policy work at headquarters from the day-to-day oversight and support in the field; and improve UN Women's overall relevance, efficiency and effectiveness.

The UN Women Independent Evaluation Office undertook this corporate evaluation to assess the implementation of the regional architecture from its launch in 2012 to the first quarter of 2016, with the aim of informing future plans for strengthening the institutional set-up, especially in the framework of designing the new Strategic Plan 2018-2021. The evaluation covers the relevance, organizational effectiveness and administrative efficiency of UN Women's regional architecture, including its organizational capacity to deliver the UN Women mandate across all mandates—normative, operational and United Nations coordination at the global, regional and country levels.

The evaluation concludes that UN Women's overall relevance and ability to respond to external stakeholder needs has significantly increased at all levels (global, regional and country) as a result of the regional architecture with some limitations by different office types. The majority of regional architecture's actions laid out in Executive Board papers were achieved only with two exceptions: (1) adjustments in headquarters to support regions and countries; and (2) a strong knowledge management function. The evaluation found that the regional architecture has increased UN Women's overall ability to respond and to deliver

the integrated mandate (normative, coordination and operational) in the field. However, there are variations in results by the office type. Overall, the different levels in the regional architecture support each other well, but there are limitations in efficient response due to alignment of structures, capacities and funding availability.

Drawing on UN Women achievements and challenges identified in the evaluation report, the evaluation makes four recommendations aimed at strengthening the regional architecture further: (1) UN Women should build greater flexibility into the regional architecture and deploy its type of presence strategically, while defining a clear process and criteria to be considered in making decisions about typology of presence; (2) UN Women should strengthen headquarters integration within the regional architecture framework, as mandated in the Executive Board Papers; (3) UN Women should make specific adjustments to each level in the regional architecture (regional office, multi-country office, country office, and programme presence countries) adapting to more realistic expectations corresponding to each level's capacity; and (4) UN Women should develop and strengthen knowledge sharing and learning communities.

We hope that this formative and forward-looking evaluation will be useful for UN Women management and Executive Board members in looking ahead at consolidating the regional set-up of UN Women to maximize its impact in gender equality and women's empowerment worldwide.

Sincerely,
Marco Segone
Director, Independent Evaluation Office

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction to the regional architecture

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) was established by General Assembly Resolution 64/289 on system-wide coherence to assist Member States and the UN system in progressing more effectively and efficiently towards the goal of achieving gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE).[1] UN Women was designed "fit-for-purpose" in that its mandate cuts across the three pillars of the United Nations (development, peace and security, and human rights) and integrates normative support, coordination functions and operational activities.

In early 2011, based on the goals of the Strategic Plan 2011-2013, the results of a field capacity assessment (February 2011), and the reviewed presence and capacity of other United Nations (UN) agencies, UN Women decided to expand its capacity in countries and regions.

In this context, the idea for a regional architecture was born. In its plan for the regional architecture, UN Women identified the need to increase its country presence and delegate greater authority to the field as its highest priority in an effort to improve its effectiveness and presence on the ground, and to address challenges associated with the centralized structure inherited from predecessor entities.[2]

Design of the regional architecture

In April 2012, the Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director submitted a report detailing proposed reforms of the regional architecture to the Executive Board.[3] In October 2012, the Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director presented the overall administrative, budgetary and financial implications of the regional architecture, including an overall implementation plan.[4] The UN Women Executive Board approved the regional architecture and requested UN Women to update the Executive Board regularly on its implementation, progress and challenges.

The approved option for the regional architecture was designed to: bring capacity closer to the field, empower UN Women staff at the field level, reduce transaction costs arising from multiple layers of oversight for key business processes, better distinguish higher level programmatic and operational oversight and global policy work at headquarters (HQ) from the day-to-day oversight and support in the field, and improve UN Women's overall efficiency and effectiveness.

To achieve these goals, the approved regional architecture established 6 UN Women regional offices (ROs) and 6 multi-country offices (MCOs), including transformation of 15 existing UN Women sub-regional offices into a new RO, an MCO or a country office (CO).

UN Women reported in 2013 the implementation of the regional architecture was complete.[5] All ROs had been established and were functioning, and 47 COs and 6 MCOs were operational with a full staff complement.

---

1 Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. 2013. "Progress Made on the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women Strategic Plan, 2011-2013". UNW/2013/3.

2 Executive Board of UN Women. 2012. "Report on Regional Architecture". UNW/2012/5.

3 Ibid.

4 Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. 2012. "Regional Architecture: Administrative, Budgetary and Financial Implications and Implementation Plan". UNW/2012/10.

5 UN Women. 2013. "Strategic Plan, 2014-2017: Making this the Century for Women and Gender Equality". Second Regular Session 2013, UNW/2013/6.

Background and objectives of the evaluation

This evaluation assessed the relevance, organizational effectiveness and administrative efficiency of UN Women's regional architecture. It also considered how a human rights-based approach and gender equality principles are integrated into the implementation of the regional architecture. The evaluation covered the period from 2012 to the first quarter of 2016 at country, regional and global levels, including its integration with operational work, normative support and UN coordination. The evaluation focused on 32 of the 96 countries in which UN Women has a presence.[6]

The evaluation was commissioned and managed by the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of UN Women, and was conducted by an external independent evaluation team between September 2015 and May 2016, with the active involvement of an Internal Evaluation Reference Group and an external evaluation expert as adviser.

Evaluation methodology

The design and conduct of this evaluation were enhanced by applying a gender-responsive perspective (exploring how the regional architecture enabled or constrained UN Women ability to promote GEWE), systems-thinking approaches (exploring the influence of context on the regional architecture and changes in power dynamics and processes the regional architecture brought about), business analysis (reviewing financial, staffing and fundraising processes), and an appreciative lens (analysing successful experiences to document and understand the contributions of the regional architecture and the delegation of authority to successful outcomes at all levels of the UN Women system).

A mixed-methods approach was used that included the following:

- Reviewing more than 300 documents

- Conducting 265 interviews—38 at HQ and 227 in the field

- Conducting a portfolio review that included in-depth analysis of data about the regional architecture in 6 ROs, 6 MCOs, a representative sample of 12 UN Women COs and 8 programme presence offices based on documents provided by UN Women via the Results Management System (RMS) and UN Women Extranet

- Administering and gathering responses from a global survey of 331 UN Women staff

- Conducting six case studies, including five country visits to Colombia (CO), Liberia (CO), Morocco (MCO), Tajikistan (programme presence country), Thailand (Asia and the Pacific RO) and one at HQ

- Benchmarking four other international organizations for how they address aspects that are issues in UN Women's regional architecture

Findings and conclusions

Overall, UN Women's regional architecture has contributed significantly to its ability to respond to external stakeholders and increased its effectiveness in delivering on its integrated mandate by increasing its presence in important national and regional platforms, strengthening its credibility as a UN partner of equal standing, and increasing its ability to act rapidly because of the delegation of authority. Furthermore, the regional architecture increased UN Women ability to include civil society organizations (CSOs) representing women, including the most vulnerable women, in decision-making platforms at higher levels, but it also challenged UN Women to modify its way of engaging with women's groups because it now has to provide increased attention to government stakeholders. However, because its full funding has not materialized, UN Women has faced

---

6 UN Women. 2016. "Annual Report of the Executive Director—Annex VI: Regional, Multi-country and Country Offices as of May 2016". UNW/2016/6.

challenges in responding to all stakeholders' needs and achieving the level of presence it would have liked in many countries. These funding constraints have also resulted in challenges in systems needed to support efficient linkages in the organization. Still, UN Women staff have been entrepreneurial and motivated in working within limited funding and, in many instances, are able to deliver and serve Member States and internal stakeholders, but the result is significant stress in the organization.

The following section summarizes the key evaluation findings around the topics of relevance, effectiveness, utilization of gender and human rights approaches, and administrative efficiency.

Relevance

UN Women's overall ability to respond to stakeholder needs has significantly increased at all levels (global, regional and country), with some limitations by different office types. With its significant increased presence from 59 offices in 2011 to 96 offices in 2015,[7] including regional and sub-regional presence, UN Women has positioned itself in many of the right platforms and fora to enable it to listen and respond to its external stakeholders. There is clear documentation from previous internal and external assessments that the regional architecture has increased UN Women relevance with key external stakeholders.[8,9,10,11,12,13,14] Various assessments found that UN Women has been successful at adapting to country-level needs, relevant to external stakeholders, and strong in all areas

---

7   Ibid.
8   UN Women. January 2015. "Report on Implementation of UN Women's Regional Architecture, Nov 2012- Nov 2014".
9   UN Women. "Annual Report 2014-2015".
10   UN Women. April 2016. "Mid-term Review of the Strategic Plan 2014-2016".
11   MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women". UN Women.
12   UN Women. December 2013. "Multilateral Aid Review: Update UN Women Summary Assessment".
13   UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)".
14   United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9.

of relationship management, including supporting national priorities, adjusting procedures and using country systems. These findings from past evaluations and reviews were confirmed in this evaluation's case studies, portfolio review and survey.

UN Women works within the regional architecture to ensure the universality of its mandate through the promotion of GEWE in global and regional agreements in diverse issue areas, and by HQ and ROs providing support to all, including non-presence countries. On a global level, UN Women universality is seen in its normative work through the Commission on the Status of Women and other intergovernmental bodies that has been key in providing governments and other partners with the necessary frameworks to promote GEWE in their own countries and organizations. On a regional level, UN Women's normative work in regional platforms, such as the Association of South East Asian Nations, the Union of South American Nations, the European Union and the African Union as well as sub-regional mechanisms (Mercado Común del Sur [The Southern Cone Common Market], Andean Community of Nations, Central American Integration System and Caribbean Community) has enabled Member States to develop and enact policies and programmes that support GEWE in their countries. In addition, UN Women's normative work at the regional level is often channelled through a close partnership with the UN Regional Commissions: in support of the Commission on the Status of Women's regional preparatory meetings with government and CSOs, as well as initiatives to ensure that gender equality is an integral part of other intergovernmental platforms related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The role of ROs to respond to non-presence countries has increased UN Women universality and ability to support SDGs in as many countries as possible throughout the world.

While UN Women has made significant progress in promoting universality, it experiences limitations by office type. At the country level, COs responded best to all stakeholders, while multi-country and programme presence offices were more limited in

their capacity. MCOs were challenged by the additional responsibility to support satellite programme presence offices because they are assigned similar staffing as COs but have to support multiple countries instead of one.

Programme presence offices, originally designed in the regional architecture to implement programmes only have two constraints: (1) limited access to key stakeholder platforms, because they are not recognized as actors of equal standing as other UN agencies; and (2) limited capacity to respond—on average, their workforce is one-fourth of the workforce of COs and the budgets they manage are six times smaller than COs'. Meanwhile, UN Women capacity to respond to stakeholders in non-programme presence countries is limited, and stakeholders in these countries are best served by global and regional agreements incorporating GEWE.

Effectiveness

The regional architecture has been rolled out rapidly and in accordance with the Executive Board Papers'[15] guidance and expectations with two exceptions: (1) HQ structure has not been adequately adjusted to support regions and countries; and (2) the prescribed robust knowledge management and internal communication functions have not been adequately developed. UN Women has succeeded in rolling out the regional architecture overall in accordance to the Executive Board Papers, especially around the establishment of the different types of offices, approving the delegation of authority, transferring some operations functions to ROs, and increasing capacity at regional and country levels.

15 MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women." UN Women.

EXHIBIT 1:

Regional architecture theory of change embedded in Executive Board Papers

REGIONAL ARCHITECTURE ACTION
- Establishment of 6 regional offices and 6 multi-country offices
- Evolution of the current UN-Women sub-regional offices into ROs, MCOs or COs
- Greater decentralization of authority to the field, including moving mid- and lower-level oversight functions from HQ to ROs
- Transfer of some technical and operations functions from HQ to the field
- Corresponding changes at HQ to reflect changed roles

OUTPUTS
- Decentralized decision and approval mechanisms
- Appropriate decision-making authority for UN-Women representatives, including with regard to financial resources
- Increases in country national capacity
- Even capacity at all levels of the organization by recruiting new senior leaders
- Aligned lines of reporting for effective oversight
- Increased South-South cooperation
- Adequate technical capacity at the field level
- Increased regional initiatives supporting countries and sharing lessons
- Consistent internal communication and knowledge-sharing

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES
- Substantive engagement with regional and sub-regional expert and intergovernmental bodies in GEWE
- Relevant and timely support to national governments and partners
- Effective delivery of results for women and girls at the national level, as envisaged in its strategic plan and in response to national priorities
- Overall strengthened capacity of the organization
- Strengthened ability to draw upon regional and national experience and expertise to address its universal mandate.

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES
- As a dynamic and strong champion for women and girls, UN Women provides them with a powerful voice at the global, regional and local levels to achieve the:
  - Elimination of discrimination against women and girls
  - Empowerment of women
  - Achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security.

Legend:
- Completed or well under way
- Early instances where this is taking place; more remains to be done
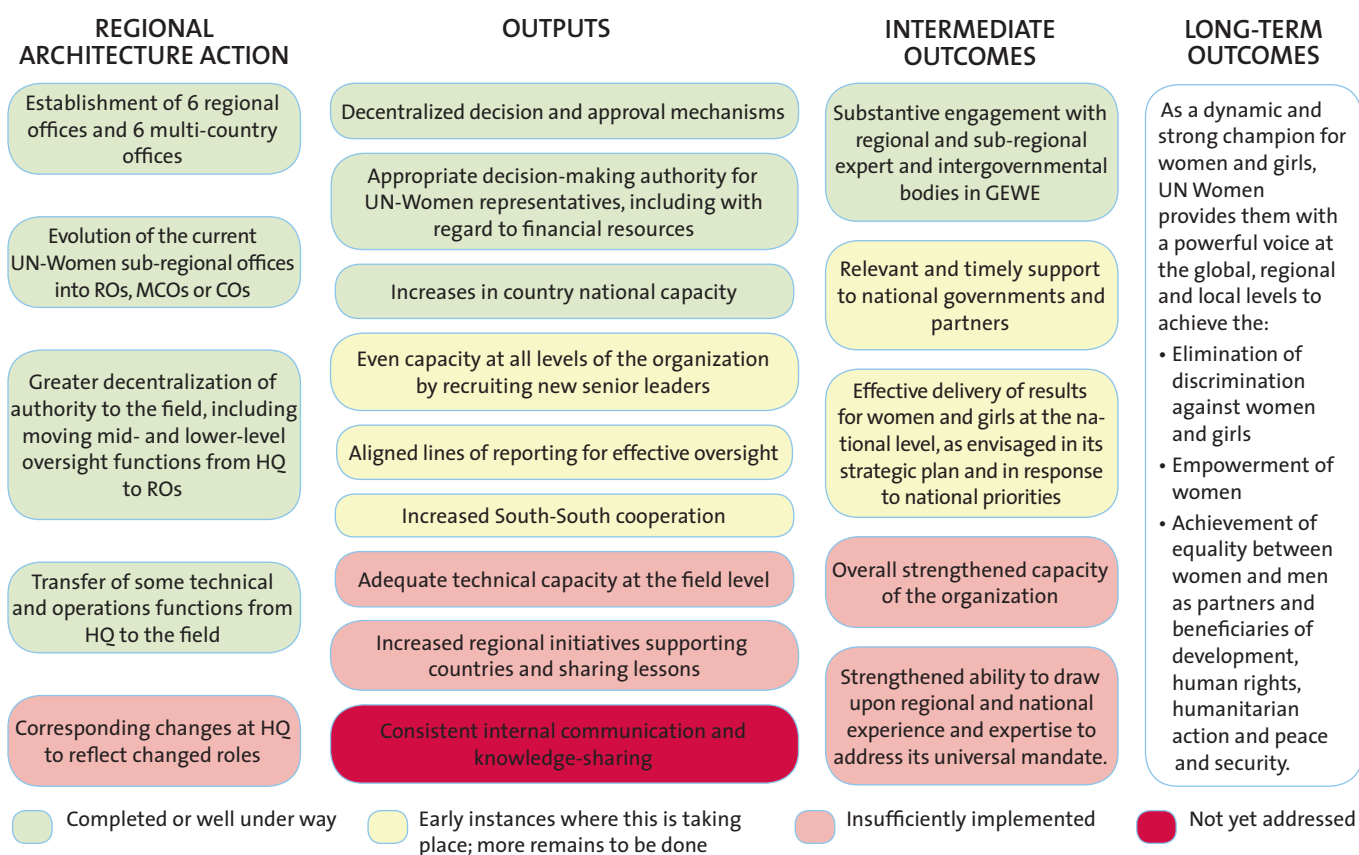- Insufficiently implemented
- Not yet addressed

Exhibit 1 above presents the theory of change of the regional architecture underlying the Executive Board Papers, using the language from the Executive Board Papers.

Given the speed of regional architecture rollout, it is not surprising that there are aspects that still require completion, including making adjustments in HQ to support the regional architecture and establishing robust knowledge management and internal communication functions. At this time, the field reports to the Programme Division, and there are weak structural and reporting linkages (not even a dotted line) between the field and other parts of HQ—specifically there are weak linkages between the field and the Policy Division in Pillar B[16] and with Pillar A and the Division of Management and Administration (DMA). In fact, only *ad hoc* linkages were reported between HQ and the Policy Division and DMA. The existing weak linkages in HQ and the gap in knowledge management and communication create inefficiencies and duplication of effort, which constrain the organization's ability to provide clear direction and priorities, as well as support effective delivery on the mandate.

The regional architecture has increased UN Women's overall ability to implement the integrated mandate in the field (normative, coordination and operational) with some limitations by programme presence countries. This evaluation found ample evidence in the field of UN Women delivering on all aspects of the mandate, and UN Women's delivery created synergy between the three aspects of the mandate. This finding is aligned with

similar ones from previous external assessments and evaluations.[17,18,19,20,21,22,23,24,25]

The evidence showed that the global and regional levels appropriately fulfil the normative and coordination mandates. The regional level is also delivering on the operational aspect for regional funds and supporting countries to deliver on their own programmes. There is evidence that MCOs and COs deliver on all aspects of the mandate, with COs being the most effective overall because they have the highest capacity. Programme presence offices experienced challenges to deliver on the normative and coordination aspects of the mandate, because they have limited access to relevant governmental and UN platforms and more limited staffing. Programme presence countries seemed best organized to manage programmes and were less able to fulfil the normative and coordination roles because they are not recognized as actors of equal standing as other UN agencies. As such, they do not have representational functions, nor are they allocated core resources to support free standing normative or coordination initiatives. Governments and UN partners in these programme presence countries, however, demand and expect UN Women to provide high-level policy, coordination and normative support—beyond the delivery of non-core projects and programmes.

16 UN Women. December 2013. "Multilateral Aid Review: Update UN Women Summary Assessment".

17 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)".
18 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9.
19 Multilateral Aid Review. December 2013. "Update UN Women Summary Assessment"
20 UN Women. December 2014. "An Empowered Future: Corporate Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to Women's Economic Empowerment".
21 UN Women. September 2015. "Multi-Country Portfolio Evaluation of Kazakhstan Multi-Country Office for Strategic Note 2014-2015".
22 MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women." UN Women.
23 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)".
24 UN Women. April 2016. "Mid-term Review of the Strategic Plan 2014-2017".
25 UN Women. 2014. "UN Women Annual Report 2014-2015, Data Companion".

Furthermore, this evaluation found that the challenges reported related to integration of the mandate were mostly because of capacity limitations to implement all the existing workplans completely and at a high level of quality. Document review, portfolio review and the case studies showed that UN Women staff at regional and country levels were well aware of and inspired by the synergies between the three aspects of the mandate, and they strategically integrated all three aspects of the mandate into their workplans, leveraging access to and influence on key stakeholders, as well as access to funds to promote GEWE.

UN Women has some systems and information for monitoring the performance of the regional architecture, and it is in the process of developing additional systems and refining the existing ones. At the time of the evaluation, gaps remained in information availability due to flaws in systems and processes for monitoring and reporting. UN Women has recently established several systems to monitor the performance of the regional architecture, and it is rapidly refining those systems and developing additional ones to enable more effective monitoring and reporting. UN Women continues to focus on results-based management and roll out new systems to improve the monitoring of effectiveness, four of which[26] were rolled out during the course of this evaluation.

At the time of this evaluation, UN Women gathered information through planning and reporting processes in strategic plans, annual workplans and annual reports, as well as issuance of certified financial statements, which provide useful financial information and are used as an accountability tool for donors. Yet, capacity to understand the regional architecture's functioning through the data collected is currently limited and inefficient, and capacity building for monitoring was offered sporadically and just-in-time at the time of rollout of these systems.

Previous assessments[27,28,29] have noted limitations in the UN Women monitoring and reporting system, citing a lack of baseline data and identification of results and performance indicators, which results in presenting an incomplete picture of UN Women's expected contributions to the outcomes identified in the results framework. This is supported by portfolio review interviews, the case studies and the quantitative analysis. Because knowledge management has not been prioritized by the organization, there are also challenges in the "ownership" of data quality and knowledge-sharing responsibilities in the organization, which makes it more difficult to lead and expedite knowledge sharing and use from the existing and new data, even with improved systems. Challenges in knowledge management were identified in several reviews[30,31,32] and also confirmed through the case studies, portfolio review and the survey.

Current re-engineering process initiatives at UN Women have a strong monitoring and reporting component, including improvements through Programme Division initiatives in the RMS, donor reporting, human resources and fast tracking processes to enable quick response in humanitarian crisis situations. Senior management has a compelling vision for how the integrated monitoring systems will work, but this vision is not yet fully shared and understood throughout the organization.

---

26 New reporting and monitoring processes rolled out: DAMS, RMS, Corporate Dashboard and Humanitarian Response Workflow

27 UN Women. December 2013. "Multilateral Aid Review: Update UN Women Summary Assessment".

28 MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women". UN Women. p. ix.

29 UN Women. December 2014. "An Empowered Future: orporate Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to Women's Economic Empowerment". p. 41, p. 51.

30 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9. p. 18.

31 MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women". UN Women. p. 25.

32 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 54.

Gender analysis and human rights approaches

The regional architecture has increased UN Women's overall ability to focus and capacity to apply rigorous gender analysis and human rights approaches in programme design, monitoring and implementation at regional and country levels, while at the same time, it has created a need to redefine UN Women pathways to reach and support the most vulnerable women. UN Women's regional architecture has increased the inclusion of rigorous gender and human rights approaches in programme design—for example, through the Flagship Programming Initiatives (FPIs) and through UN Women's growing role in mainstreaming gender perspectives in the peace process in some countries. Stakeholders recognize UN Women ability to reach and bring civil society to the table as an important comparative advantage that makes UN Women a valued partner in important deliberations on policies and programmes. This is supported by evidence in other reviews,[33,34] as well as the case studies and portfolio review.

With the regional architecture, UN Women interaction with external partners has been strengthened. However, there was a shift in business model from the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), which used to mainly deliver small grants to CSOs, to UN Women, which aims to balance the attention and resources between government and civil society. The regional architecture has also created opportunities to increase participation of vulnerable women's voices at higher levels of the system. The UN Women approach to engaging civil society does not clearly address the shift in attention and resources that has taken place, and it has not fully defined UN Women's new roles enabled by the regional architecture, including how to prioritize reaching the most vulnerable women as a larger and more formal organization. The Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) Evaluation also found weaknesses in UN Women ability to support the inclusion and participation of

rural and marginalized groups. At present, the existing UN Women procedures for engaging partners and vendors (the Project Cooperation Agreement and procurement procedures in the Programme Operations Manual [POM]) are not appropriate and create challenges for reaching the most vulnerable women's groups. Yet, even as UN Women is becoming more formalized, trust funds at HQ enable UN Women to identify and collaborate with emerging CSOs, helping UN Women partnerships not to become hierarchical and closed, but instead to create pathways for inclusion of new partners and voices, especially those of the most marginalized women.

Some reviews[35,36,37] present evidence on capacity limits to influence others in gender analysis. Part of the limitations relate to the shortage of UN Women staff to provide this support; for example, shortage of adequate numbers of policy advisors at regional levels to cover every impact area. Additionally, while the HQ Policy Division supports a range of countries, the staff with policy expertise at HQ are not always easily accessible to all countries who need their support, and they do not have the capacity to support all substantive programmatic needs of the field, especially given the high demands they receive from others in HQ.

UN Women has important strengths in the mix of its staff competencies and culture in the field that, if managed and maintained, help position UN Women well to implement its integrated mandate and deliver on the 2030 Agenda. A key asset for UN Women is staff's strong commitment to the mandate and a culture of collaboration in the field for all office types. The overall UN system's bureaucratic hierarchy is still felt within UN Women, especially at HQ. Ultimately, the combination of staff with substantive programmatic (feminist) backgrounds and operations staff with strengths in programme management place

---

33 Ibid., p. 61, p. 69.
34 UN Women. September 2015. "Multi-Country Portfolio Evaluation of Kazakhstan Multi-Country Office for Strategic Note 2014-2015". p. 42.

35 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9. p. 14.
36 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 73.
37 UN Women. April 2016. "Mid-term Review of the Strategic Plan 2014-2017".

the organization in a unique position to implement a transformative mandate in line with the 2030 Agenda.

Administrative efficiency

Overall, the different levels in the regional architecture support each other well, with some limitations. The field appreciates UN Women HQ support in operations backstopping; RO support in operations is valued by countries; MCO support is valued by satellite programme presence offices; and ROs and HQ appreciate the field's responsiveness. Specific positive feedback was received about the Programme Division, which is the field's main backstopping team, the useful and timely advice of the Finance Section, the easy access and communication of the Human Resources Division, and the support by the Policy Division in certain thematic areas. As evidenced in this evaluation's efforts to obtain valid and up-to-date data, there is responsiveness, flexibility and strong informal working relationships between different levels of the regional architecture in UN Women.

There are a few limitations that create inefficiencies in the organization. HQ structure is not aligned to provide adequate and much needed thematic support to ROs. This finding was also supported by evidence in other reviews.[38,39] Furthermore, there is no dotted line between policy advisors, coordination staff, DMA staff in HQ, and counterpart staff in ROs (except for Regional Security Specialists based in ROs who have a direct reporting line, both technical and supervisory, to the HQ Security Team).[40] This results in weak communities of practice, knowledge management/knowledge sharing, and also makes headquarters responsiveness uneven—especially given the many intra-headquarters demands from offices with greater proximity and seniority than field colleagues.

Moreover, the more even distribution of capacity to the field mandated by the Executive Board Papers has not been completely implemented: 42 per cent of UN Women's senior leaders are in headquarters; regional offices do not have adequate numbers of policy advisors to fulfil the requirements at regional level and respond to country needs; and there are also challenges in regional office capacity in financial management, human resources and procurement (also shown in recent Audit findings).[41] Additionally, ROs have some challenges to link their regional programmes to country priorities. ROs are encouraged to mobilize funds at the regional level for both regional and country-level activities, taking into account that regional projects should be implemented by COs. However, this has presented a limitation from the RO perspective because funders of regional initiatives require accountability and reporting at the regional level and are not comfortable working with COs as their counterpart.

Regional Offices and COs were best positioned to use the delegation of authority to increase their efficiency, making faster decisions tailored to their contexts. Their ability for faster approvals has increased donor confidence and supported UN Women fundraising goals at regional and country levels. This greater independence and capacity of ROs and COs has also enabled them to express more clearly what they need from other levels. There are, however, significant differences between COs in terms of delivery, resource mobilization, staffing, budgets and budget/staff ratios. There are few patterns in these variations, with changing contexts and special circumstances providing important insights. This means that the ability of COs to fundraise and to expend the resources they have budgeted to delivering services is influenced by many contextual factors. Such variation means that the office typology in the regional architecture should not be too rigid.

While several recent initiatives aim to strengthen linkages and the responsiveness of HQ to the field, corporate strategies are not fully communicated throughout the regional architecture, challenging UN

---

38 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 66.

39 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9. p. 17.

40 Following data collection, a direct reporting line, from the Chief of Accounts and Finance staff at HQ and the field was added and implemented in new job descriptions.

41 UN Board of Auditors. June 2016 Report.

Women in setting priorities. Given the rapid pace of quality improvement of UN Women processes driven by HQ, there is also unclear understanding of the sequencing and benefits of changes being rolled out. Visibility and understanding of the regional architecture—the role of different levels, updates on changes, and understanding of linkages and expectations—vary by level.

In the absence of clear criteria for different types of offices, a process for transitioning from one type of office to another and flexibility to make such transition possible, UN Women is constrained in its ability to maximize its effectiveness for a given level of funding. Based on feedback on the portfolio review, case studies and survey, staff are unsure about the plans and processes for any given country designation according to the regional architecture. In fact, some staff thought that the purpose of programme presence countries was to graduate, while unsure about who would make that decision and on what basis; others thought the regional architecture was complete and would not change. Document review, including recent internal documents, revealed that there are no written or shared criteria considered in designating the type of presence UN Women ought to have in different countries, nor is there an agreed process for transitioning countries to a different type of presence. Thus, this is not an internal communication issue but an area where the organization does not have a policy at present.

There is a trade-off between the number of countries where UN Women can be present and the quality and capacity of presence in any given country in terms of the organization's ability to deliver on the mandate. Senior management is currently in the process of trying to clarify a corporate policy on this issue.

UN Women has made progress in some administrative and management systems in terms of efficiency, yet there still remain significant inefficiencies in several systems, which UN Women is in the process of studying and improving at a rapid pace. UN Women has been successful in addressing several independent audit findings, as reported by the UN Board of Auditors in 2016 and an external auditor in 2011.[42] One of the greatest strengths for UN Women efficiency is in its financial management capacity as reported by the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) Assessment in 2014 and confirmed during this evaluation by all office types.

In areas with challenges, this evaluation found evidence that UN Women is now engaged in numerous initiatives to re-engineer and improve systems efficiency, particularly human resources and donor reporting. Evidence of improvements in efficiency was found in several initiatives outlined in the 2015 Human Resources Annual Report and in the rollout of a new Fast Track process to increase efficiency and flexibility in humanitarian situations. The Donor Agreement Management System (DAMS), which was rolled out in February of 2016, is the corporate database for all signed donors agreements, including terms and conditions. The design remedies inefficiencies by tracking overdue donor reports and sending reminders to offices of report deadlines. Therefore, many inefficiencies identified by this evaluation are the subject of internal improvement efforts and likely to be rectified in the coming months.

The issues that continue to be a challenge without a clear solution are procurement and staffing capacity. Procurement challenges were reported in the most recent audit of the UN Board of Auditors[43] and the 2015 Human Resources Annual Report[44] and confirmed by all country level types. The most recent recommendation by the UN Board of Auditors added that UN Women must ensure that the appropriate staff resources are available and an automation tool is developed so as to expedite the financial closures of projects. However, implementation of this recommendation is still unclear.[45]

42 UN Women. "UN Women 2016-2017 — Integrated Budget". p. 11.
43 UN Board of Auditors. 2015. "United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Financial Report and Audited Financial Statements". 2015 A/71/5/Add.12.
44 February 2016. "Annual Report 2015: Human Resources".
45 UN Board of Auditors. June 2016 Report.

In spite of these limitations, UN Women staff is engaged and entrepreneurial and works hard to create alternative options to deliver—even when that means duplication of effort and significant workloads and stress. The pace of recent, current and planned changes is extremely fast, allowing minimal time for capacity building and adjustments, which has resulted in additional stress in the organization, even as staff work hard to keep up and comply with new requirements.

UN Women has been challenged from a regional architecture design based on budget availability assumptions, which had not materialized at the time of the evaluation. Although the regional architecture was rolled out with almost half of the funding originally promised, UN Women continues to work tirelessly to improve and grow the organization's funding stream. An analysis of financial statements[46] and UN Women reports[47] shows that core funding decreased from $163.7 million in 2014 to $136.1 million in 2015. At the same time, non-core resources continued to grow, reaching $170.9 million, a 7 per cent increase over 2014. Private sector contributions reached $11.8 million in 2015, a 31 per cent increase from the previous year, bolstered by the first-ever business and philanthropy leaders' forum in 2015. The organization continues to diversify funding resources as the most recent midterm review of the Strategic Plan reported—26 donors contributed to UN Women for the first time in 2015, and 44 donors contributed multi-year pledges. Evidence of increased funding was reported in audited financial statements for 2014 for both regular and other resources with decrease in regular resources reported for 2015.

Even with increased funding, however, UN Women still falls short of the originally envisioned $500 million budget on which its design is based. The organization is making efforts to adapt to this reality, but it has not yet adjusted its expectations of what each level of the

regional architecture and the organization as a whole can deliver at the current level of funding. As reported in previous evaluations, including the Normative and Coordination Evaluations[48,49] and MOPAN,[50] the lack of funding has constrained UN Women ability to completely fulfil its integrated mandate in the way it was originally envisioned. The funding shortfall, coupled with the HQ structural challenges, has weakened HQ to serve the field efficiently and has resulted in overly ambitious expectations and weak coordinated action on several fronts.

Even though there is a formal funding mobilization strategy, it is still unclear and lacks cohesion from the field's perspective. Evidence from a staff survey, portfolio review and case studies reported a need for greater support in strategic resource mobilization from ROs and HQ. Although FPIs are starting to address this problem, their purpose and relevance were still reportedly unclear to many in the field.

Recommendations

The evaluation has identified four recommendations that are critical for UN Women's future effectiveness:

Recommendation 1: UN Women should build greater flexibility into the regional architecture and deploy its types of presence strategically while defining a clear process and criteria to be considered in making decisions about typology of presence.

The delegation of authority has provided the flexibility to UN Women to adapt its approach and programme at country level, and the regional architecture should include more flexibility in shaping the presence of UN Women in each country. There is significant variation between countries and one size does not fit all. UN

---

46 UN Women. "UN Women Financial Statements 2013-2015".

47 Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. 2015. "Progress Made on the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women Strategic Plan, 2014-2017, Including the Midterm Review of the Strategic Plan". UNW/2016/6.

48 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 27.

49 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9. p. 8.

50 MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women". UN Women. p. 3.

Women also has a finite number of resources that it needs to deploy for maximum coverage and impact toward GEWE.

A strategic and cost-effective regional architecture. UN Women should adjust its expectations of what each type of presence can achieve in a country and organize its regional architecture to best leverage its assets. UN Women should think about how its regional architecture enables it to deliver on its integrated mandate as a whole, rather than in each country. Different types of presence have differing abilities to deliver depending on capacity (workforce and budget), the delegation of authority, and official recognition by the host government. In this more diverse and flexible typology, countries may benefit from UN Women in a number of ways including with:

- A strong presence in the country advocating for reforms and leading the UN family and other partners in promoting GEWE

- A more limited presence in a country leveraging programmes (including joint programmes) to influence and encourage UN partners and other strategic partners to promote GEWE

- No physical presence and supporting a country through policy assistance from a RO that shapes country legislation

Considerations for type of presence. The type of presence in a country may depend on availability of co-financing by the country, the openness of the government to partner on the gender agenda, the existing opportunities for influencing the legislative framework (such as if the country is in the process of reform or peacebuilding), the existing opportunities and need to reach and prioritize women's needs (especially the most vulnerable women), and the existing capacity of other UN agencies to implement parts of the gender agenda (economies of scale).

A clear process for deciding on type of presence. To make flexibility work, it will be important to have a clear process and transparent considerations for making decisions for each country presence, including making changes overtime. We recommend embedding this process in the UN Women existing strategic planning process that currently involves the development of the Strategic Note. ROs and HQ should share the responsibility for reviewing, confirming or changing decisions for type of presence or non-presence in each country through well-defined steps. UN Women must have the flexibility to make decisions to invest its limited resources in a regional architecture that maximizes its impact.

In this way, UN Women would fulfil the universality of its mandate—maximizing for the whole world rather than stretching to achieve the exact same things in every country.

Recommendation 2: UN Women should strengthen HQ integration within the regional architecture framework, as mandated in the Executive Board Papers.

UN Women HQ serves a dual role (as do ROs) of promoting GEWE in global platforms and supporting the field. We recommend developing a better orientation of HQ toward serving the field as its "back office." HQ should conduct a full functional review of its divisions and prioritize its functions strategically to serve the field, matching its allocations of resources accordingly.

Orientation to the field. HQ divisions other than programme need to be better structurally linked with the field and work more coherently—building on the FPIs and Integrated Annual Work Planning. Allocations of funds across HQ functions should be made with a clear consideration of field needs, possibly even with input from the field about what they appreciate the most from HQ services and what they need additionally. This field orientation cannot come on top of the existing push and incentives to serve internal requests at HQ level, because it will only add to the overwork and stress. It needs to be accompanied by defining more limited boundaries of what UN Women will and will not do in HQ platforms. Otherwise, staff will continue to be pulled in two different directions.

Harmonize priorities and allocation of resources through functional analysis of HQ. UN Women senior management is clearly passionate about the world of UN

Women and its mandate, and this commitment to GEWE needs to drive the functional analysis. As a small organization, UN Women needs to choose strategically where and how it will be present at HQ and where it will not be present (and possibly rely on strategic partners), and maximize how it will be organized to best serve the field. In the chain of impact for GEWE, UN Women HQ has a critical role to play in supporting its regional architecture, and it needs better and stronger boundaries to create the space and incentives for HQ staff to orient themselves to serving the field. UN Women currently does many things that are important and add value, and it will be difficult to choose. However, by not making the difficult choice to be strategically selective, staff get stretched and less time remains for responding to field requests. Therefore, we recommend that senior management work together to make adjustments to HQ to support the regional architecture in the best possible way.

Implement an internal communication strategy. UN Women has already recognized the need for better internal communication. We recommend HQ develop an internal communication strategy for the whole organization that will communicate plans for changes, the rationale and message of why these changes are important and how they benefit the organization, and provide a progress report on how the organization is doing, what it is learning and what is coming next. Especially at this time of rapid, ongoing changes in the regional architecture, UN Women needs to communicate new developments and updates, as well as continue to share the motivation and goals of those changes. This communication will create greater visibility within UN Women and encourage every division and office to feel part of a great whole, understand what is happening or about to happen, and become inspired in the way these changes are positioning UN Women to promote GEWE in the best way.

Recommendation 3: UN Women should make specific adjustments to each level in the regional architecture, adapting to more realistic expectations corresponding to each level's capacity.

Stakeholders should try to ensure that promises of budget are maintained to match coherence between mandate and institutional set up. However, if this is not taking place at the magnitude requested, UN Women should consider making some specific adjustments to different levels of the regional architecture with an aim to create more realistic expectations of what different office types can achieve.

ROs. To respond to country needs, ROs require increased capacity in substantive programmatic areas. We recommend adding policy advisors specialists to ROs and allowing for more P2, P3 and national staff with language capacity relevant to the region in the required competencies. We further recommend a rotation policy between HQ and ROs, especially to include policy advisors. This will greatly contribute to making UN Women a learning organization and also strengthen linkages between levels in the regional architecture. In addition, we echo the recommendation of the recent UN Board of Auditors to ensure that the appropriate staff resources are available and an automation tool is developed so as to expedite the financial closures of projects.[51] Finally, UN Women should revisit the guidance on the role of ROs in fundraising, especially in regions where funds are available for regional and sub-regional programmes, with a review of the role of regional offices tailored to each region, coordination between HQ and countries on managing donor outreach, and clarification of the path through which countries will be substantively involved and benefit from regional programmes.

MCOs. We recommend that UN Women adjust its expectation of MCOs, taking into account the significant differences in the contexts of the six existing MCOs and the generally lower capacity of MCOs to deliver fully on the UN Women mandate.

- Fiji and the Caribbean MCOs should be retained as they are because the MCO structure allows the most efficient coverage of all small island countries.

- India and South Africa MCOs, with large home countries, should either receive a great deal more

51   UN Board of Auditors. June 2016 Report.

capacity or be transitioned to COs given the size and complexity of their host country, but they should still remain engaged both with programme presence and COs of neighbouring countries with sub-regional affinity. The advantage of a transition to COs is that they will no longer have to support programme presence countries operationally but will still remain in relationships based on cultural and geographical affinity thus enabling sub-regional coordination.

• Morocco and Kazakhstan MCOs, countries with smaller operations, should be transitioned to COs. Satellite programme presence countries should be considered to transition to COs or remain as programme presence countries. All satellite programme presence countries will be moved to the corresponding RO. The transitioned COs should still remain in relationships based on cultural and geographical affinity thus enabling sub-regional coordination.

COs. COs should continue to operate and, where possible, should receive a higher delegation of authority depending on capacity. COs with high budgets should receive additional support in operational management in order to increase efficiency and compliance with administrative and financial standards.

Programme presence offices. Programme presence countries should focus on managing programmes and fundraising, with delivery on the normative and coordination mandates as secondary. They do not have the formal standing, access to platforms, or capacity to deliver on the normative and coordination mandates, except through the programmes they manage.

Recommendation 4: UN Women should develop and strengthen knowledge sharing and learning communities.

Active and robust learning communities will contribute to stronger programme design, increased creativity and greater success with fundraising. The regional architecture and the delegation of authority have enabled UN Women to get involved in substantive programmatic areas and reform activities in many countries, leading partnerships, and creating greater involvement of women's groups in policy platforms. To

support this work in the front lines and to learn from the work in countries, UN Women needs to develop knowledge sharing and knowledge management systems and processes.

Placement of knowledge management. We recommend that the functional analysis in Recommendation 2 include this important priority and the tasks that enable it. The natural place for knowledge management in substantive programmatic areas seems to be the Policy Division because of its thematic expertise and the DMA for administrative support. However, determining the placement of knowledge management should happen only after a functional analysis to inventory and map capacity and priorities for different parts of headquarters.

Prioritizing and shaping knowledge management. HQ and ROs staff have already been undertaking knowledge management and knowledge sharing activities, many of which are much appreciated by their colleagues in countries and are reported to be very useful. We recommend increasing the profile of knowledge management and providing guidance on good practices in knowledge management so that learning communities in thematic areas and operations include some useful features, as resources permit. For example, data repositories (probably on Sharepoint) should be organized in similar or parallel ways so that staff are easily oriented to new areas; each community would benefit from consistent communications possibly through an informal newsletter; staff mapped to a learning community should easily know who is in the group and where to address questions; and every learning community should encourage presentation and discussion featuring country knowledge and expertise. The overall knowledge management strategy of UN Women should also include appropriate connections to the existing knowledge platforms and networks of partners. Finally, continued dual investment in knowledge management systems, relationships and collaboration, as well as incentives and recognition will enable UN Women to build strong learning communities.

Mastery and innovation take place throughout the organization and, when shared, will inspire UN Women colleagues to higher levels of effectiveness

and efficiency. In this evaluation, for example, practices worth sharing included: Colombia's territorial strategy; systems to support operations developed by the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) that was already shared with other ROs; the integration of GEWE in new development topics, such as mainstreaming gender perspectives in the Migration Policy of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) by ROAP; and the sub-regional strategy managed by the Morocco MCO. By sharing in appropriate settings, UN Women staff initiatives can benefit others and that emulation is its own reward for those who figured out a solution to a shared challenge. Such a practice of peer learning is an energizing, non-hierarchical way to enable UN Women to be a learning organization.

LIST OF FINDINGS

1. BACKGROUND

1.1
Overview

This report presents the evaluation of UN Women's regional architecture. The evaluation was commissioned and managed by the UN Women IEO and was conducted by EnCompass LLC between September 2015 and March 2016.

The report is presented in five chapters:
1. Background
2. Evaluation context
3. Findings
4. Reflections
5. Conclusions
6. Recommendations

Annexes are presented in Volume II and Volume III.

1.2
Purpose, Objectives and Scope

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the design, planning and implementation of the regional architecture from its launch in 2012 to the first quarter of 2016.[52] The evaluation was formative in nature and assessed the relevance, organizational effectiveness and administrative efficiency of UN Women's regional architecture, including its organizational capacity to deliver the UN Women mandate across all roles—normative, operational and UN coordination at the global, regional and country levels.

According to the Terms of Reference, included in **Volume 2, Annex A,** the specific objectives of the evaluation were to:

- Assess the relevance of regional architecture, particularly whether it meets the needs of key UN Women stakeholders at global, regional and country levels

---

52 Last quarter includes ongoing processes that are relevant to the regional architecture and will inform it accordingly.

> **EXHIBIT 2:**
> **Working definitions of evaluation criteria**
>
> **Relevance** is the extent to which the organizational relevance responds to the needs and priorities of partner countries and beneficiaries and aligns with global priorities.
>
> **Organizational effectiveness** is the extent to which an organization is able to fulfil its goals.
>
> **Administrative efficiency** addresses linkages and alignment between different levels of the organization and relates to how different work processes contribute to the overall value added in an organization.

- Assess the organizational effectiveness of regional architecture to deliver the UN Women mandate across all roles—advocacy, normative, policy, UN coordination and programmatic at global, regional and country levels

- Assess the efficiency of regional architecture's administrative systems, structure and processes, including mechanisms to ensure efficient communication linkages between HQ and the field

- Analyse how effective and efficient the regional architecture has been in promoting gender responsiveness and human rights-based approaches in programme management and administrative systems

- Provide forward-looking recommendations for strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of the regional architecture

The evaluation sought to understand how the regional architecture was being implemented across global, regional and country levels. The evaluation focused on 32 of the 96 countries in which UN Women has a presence.[53]

Relevance, organizational effectiveness and administrative efficiency were the three main criteria that provided the analytical framework for the evaluation. Each of these is defined in **Exhibit 2**.

1.3
Evaluation Approach

The regional architecture is relatively recent and, in some cases, staff have been recently assigned to fill key posts. For this reason, a formative evaluation was deemed to be the most appropriate and would allow for a prospective and proactive orientation to provide direction for planning and programme management and opportunities for learning. Through the evaluation, analysis of data combined with feedback collected enabled improvements and served a quality assurance purpose. [53]

Organization and Management of the Evaluation

IEO was responsible for the overall management of the evaluation process and constituted a quality assurance system for the evaluation to ensure that it was conducted in accordance with the UN Women Evaluation Policy, the United Nations Evaluation Group Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System and other key guidance documents. An IEO staff member accompanied the team in data collection.

An Internal Evaluation Reference Group was formed that included 18 senior managers and staff from HQ, ROs, MCOs and COs. The Reference Group was a source of knowledge and quality assurance for the evaluation. The Reference Group ensured the evaluation was relevant to staff and stakeholders and corrected any factual errors.

Ongoing consultation and communication with UN Women and the Internal Evaluation Reference Group facilitated a joint learning and planning process, with built-in checkpoints to ensure that the evaluation stayed on track and was focused on the evaluation goals and objectives.

Data collection methods

A mixed-methods approach was used, consisting of three levels of analysis from four streams of data collection. These included: a document review; an in-depth country portfolio review (documents and interviews); a global survey of UN Women staff; and six case studies—including one at HQ, five country visits as well as a review of a non-presence country without a country visit—for an in-depth study of country-level experiences with the regional architecture. Each of the four streams of data collection served different, but complementary purposes; selectively engaged stakeholder groups that could provide the most relevant, useful data to address the evaluation questions; and allowed for triangulation of data across different sources and methods. The evaluation matrix is featured in **Volume 3, Annex A.**

Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview guide to expand on the findings of the desk review and to investigate the perspectives of key stakeholder groups on the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the regional architecture, including the contributions and added value of the regional architecture to promoting gender equality and human rights-based programming. The selection of interviewees was based on information from the document review and country case studies. The evaluation team conducted 265 interviews, 38 at HQ and 227 in the field.[54] The list of interviewees is featured in **Volume 2, Annex B** and the sample interview protocols are featured in **Volume 3, Annex B**.

Desk review

The desk review involved a systematic review and analysis of at least five types of documents: (1) UN Women policy and strategic planning documents, including reports to the Executive Board; (2) the UN Women Operational Manual and guidelines for all levels of the UN Women system, but in particular those related to the regional architecture; (3) reports from previous

---

53 UN Women. 2016. "Annual Report of the Executive Director— Annex VI: Regional, Multi-country and Country Offices as of May 2016". UNW/2016/6.

54 By data collection method, 209 case study interviews, 56 portfolio review interviews.

surveys and evaluations of UN Women regarding relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, including ongoing evaluations and processes; (4) financial reports; and (5) recent internal reports written by UN Women, such as the Annual Human Resources Report and Midterm Review of Strategic Plan 2014-2017. The desk review also included selected documents from other UN agencies or the UN-wide system to serve as benchmarks or provide context on the existing decentralization efforts in the United Nations. More than 300 documents were reviewed, a complete list of which can be found in **Volume 2, Annex C.**

Case studies

The in-depth case studies consisted of an in-depth desk review and semi-structured interviews with a non-programme presence country, one field visit to HQ and five field visits to countries selected based on criteria developed in consultation with IEO. Selection criteria included type of office, geographic distribution, country context-income and humanitarian context. The final sample included Colombia (CO), Liberia (CO), Morocco (MCO), Tajikistan (programme presence country), and Thailand (ROAP). The case study and portfolio review (see next evaluation component) countries are presented in **Exhibit 3**.

EXHIBIT 3:

Overview of the portfolio review and case study countries
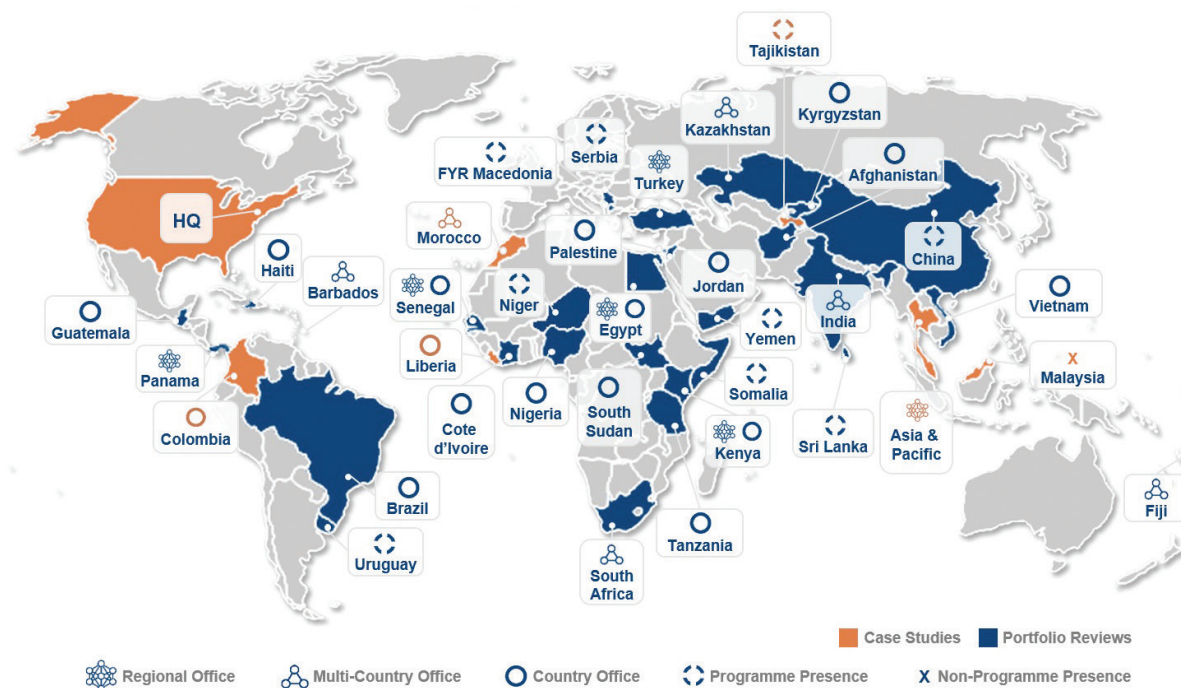
In-depth portfolio review

The portfolio review included in-depth analysis of data about the regional architecture in 6 ROs, 6 MCOs, a representative sample of 14 UN Women COs and 8 programme presences based on documents provided by UN Women via the RMS and UN Women Extranet. Data were reviewed across countries to compare indicators across relevance, efficiency and effectiveness. The qualitative summary data are featured in **Volume 3, Annex H I**. Data sources for the desk review and the quantitative analysis are presented in **Exhibit 4**.

response rate was 14 per cent with 331 responses out of a total of 2,400 surveyed. The completion rate (those answering the last question of the survey) was 59 per cent. The survey instrument and data are featured in **Volume 3, Annexes E and F.**

Benchmarking

Benchmarking was used to explore how other organizations address aspects that are issues in UN Women's regional architecture. To benchmark different elements, we selected organizations that had a

Desk review and quantitative analysis data sources

Quantitative Analysis Key Data Resources

- COAT 2014 & 2015
- Delivery Reports 2014, 2015
- Human Resources Annual Report Data
- RMS- Resource Allocation by Impact Area

In Depth Desk Review: +300 Documents Reviewed

Past Evaluations	Executive Board Documents	Annual Reporting Documents	Budgeting & Monitoring Documents	HQ Guidance & Policy Documents
•Coordination Evaluation •Normative Evaluation	Exec. Board Report on the Regional Architecture	•Strategic Notes •Annual workplans	•RMS Data •Annual budgeting documents	Midterm Review of Strategic Plan

Survey

A web-based survey was conducted online for internal UN Women staff members to extend and validate information from the interviews and in-depth studies. The survey used structured and open-ended questions to gather quantitative data on stakeholder perceptions; ratings on the relevance, effectiveness and administrative efficiency of the regional architecture; and ways in which they can be improved. The

particularly comprehensive or creative approach, or an approach that offered a completely different way of thinking. To the extent possible, we also selected organizations that faced similar issues. The purpose was not to recommend that UN Women emulate another organization but rather to highlight different types of approaches, criteria and frames as stimulation for creative thinking. **Exhibit 5** presents the aspects of four different organizations used in benchmarking.

Cases for benchmarking in relation to UN Women's regional architecture

Organization for benchmarking	Purpose
Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)	Comprehensive approach to achieve mandate coordinating with UN partners
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	Approach for middle-income countries
United States Agency for International Development (USAID)	Placement and role of policy in the organizational structure with an eye to setting clear directions and priorities
World Bank Group	Organizational structure related to knowledge management and building communities of practice

Data Analysis and approaches

This section will detail all approaches and frameworks used for design, data collection, and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data (see **Exhibit 6**).

- **Case studies** were used to examine in depth how the regional architecture was rolled out and how it influenced UN Women relevance, effectiveness and efficiency.

- **Appreciative inquiry** was used throughout the evaluation as follows: in planning for the evaluation by engaging in extensive consultations that included appreciative conversations and visioning primarily with the UN Women Internal Evaluation Reference Group; in creating an interview guide for field visits and portfolio review interviews that included an appreciative protocol; in conducting briefings at the country level that included participatory interpretation of data; in interpreting data from all sources that included in-person participatory processes with senior management and the Evaluation Reference Group; and in analysing data by using an appreciative lens to look at successful experiences and understanding their root causes and identifying key enabling and constraining factors in the regional architecture's effectiveness.

- **Outcome mapping** was applied to explore the role of partners in achieving desired outcomes. Implicit theory of change mapping was also used to enable an assessment of the regional architecture fulfilled as envisioned in the Executive Board Papers.

EXHIBIT 6:
Overview of main data analysis methods

Case studies	Appreciative inquiry	Outcome mapping
Implicit theory of change mapping	Quality improvement analysis	Qualitative data analysis
Financial analysis	Staffing analysis	Organisational analysis
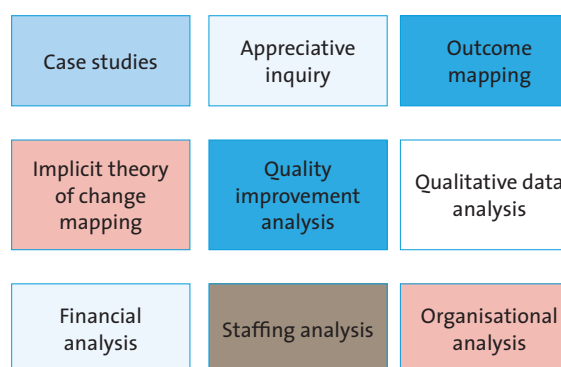
- **Quality improvement** tools were applied to conduct process analysis and identify root causes. They were also used to explore external stakeholders' perspectives related to relevance and internal stakeholders' perspectives related to effectiveness and efficiency.

- **Qualitative data analysis** was used—including content analysis of interviews—isolating and depicting perspectives of different elements of the regional architecture and developing a pictorial model synthesising these perspectives.

- **Financial and staffing analyses** were conducted using Country Office Assessment Tool (COAT) and staff data from 2014 and 2015 to understand the full cost of functions within the regional architecture and the indirect cost burden, explore

differences in efficiency of operations by office type and within typology, and track changes over time. *Correlation analysis* was conducted to explore correlation between outputs and outcomes with delivery rates, management ratios and workforce data, respectively. Furthermore, the analysis included comparison of output and outcome data with resource allocation and staffing to explore overall correlation between delivery, budgets and staffing, as well as any patterns related to the presence of relevant policy advisors in regions.

- **Organizational assessment analysis** provided the overall framework and was used to explore enabling and constraining factors using the variables outlined in the Model of Lusthaus et al.[55] assessing issues of capacity, motivation and context of the organization.

1.4
Ethics, Gender Equality and Human Rights

This evaluation was conducted in accordance with all UN Women evaluation norms and standards. This includes the United Nations Evaluation Group Ethical Guidelines, Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System and the UN Women Evaluation Policy. The evaluation was also based on gender and human rights principles, and adhered to the UN norms and standards for evaluation in the UN system.[56] The evaluation examined how UN Women's regional architecture is enabling the organization to reach the most vulnerable women and remain relevant, effective and efficient in fulfilling this goal. The evaluation team conducted numerous feedback

sessions in country case studies as well as at HQ to discuss preliminary findings, communicate results of the evaluation and equip key stakeholders with the knowledge they needed to make changes for the organization. The evaluation team brought together an Internal Evaluation Reference Group made up of field staff from all over the world, representing different regions and UN Women typologies (MCO, CO, programme presence) to discuss the findings and provide further information to the evaluation team.

The evaluation included questions that used a gender lens in all evaluation criteria and analysis. Furthermore, the evaluation analysed how the regional architecture contributed to inequities or empowerment, and resulted in unfair or more equitable power relationships both among staff, as well with different types of external stakeholders, especially the most vulnerable women's groups.

The process was iterative and participatory. During the inception, data collection and analysis phases, evaluation stakeholders (particularly end users of the evaluation) participated in interviews and group discussions with the evaluation team to share their expectations, needs and feedback related to the evaluation products and process. Staff from all levels were included in the evaluation process. At the country level, evaluation stakeholders were actively involved in contributing to the findings and recommendations of the case study through a participatory process that emphasized the voice of women and other community members in assessing change. The evaluation stimulated internal dialogue in the organization, ensuring that all perspectives are represented.

---

55 Lusthaus, C., Adrien, M., Anderson, G., Carden, F. and G. Montalvan. 2002. "Organization Assessment: A Framework for Improving Performance". International Research Centre. Accessible at: http://www.idrc.ca/EN/Resources/Publications/Pages/IDRCBookDetails.aspx?PublicationID=241

56 UN Evaluation Group, "Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN System". Accessible at: http://www.uneval.org/normsandstandards/index.jsp?doc_cat_source_id=4; UN Evaluation Group, "Integrating Human Rights and Gender and Equality in Evaluation—Towards UNEG Guidance". Accessible at: http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=1401

1.5
Evaluation Constraints and Limitations

Exhibit 7 highlights key limitations and associated mitigation strategies used throughout the evaluation. The two key constraints included that UN Women organizational policies and processes were in constant flux throughout the evaluation, and that the availability and currency of data from UN Women changed throughout the evaluation.

Ultimately, regional architecture is only one of several elements that influence the success of UN Women in achieving its mission. Any evaluation that looks at one of many elements, such as this one, will be limited by its focus. UN Women will be well served to look at a synthesis of the many complementary evaluations it has been conducting, including: meta-analysis of evaluations, coordination, normative, regional architecture, partnerships, country portfolio evaluations, etc.

EXHIBIT 7:
Evaluation limitations and mitigation strategies

EVALUATION LIMITATION	MITIGATION STRATEGY
This evaluation took place during significant changes that influenced the regional architecture, such as new leadership, a new approach to resource mobilization, a review of the efficiency of certain aspects of the regional architecture, new efforts of collaborative planning at the regional level, etc. It was challenging to evaluate something that was in constant flux.	The evaluation team, with support from IEO, went to extra lengths to remain informed about the latest developments and to incorporate recognition about ongoing and planned reforms.
Data were often not up-to-date or changed throughout the evaluation, making it difficult to analyse and interpret. UN Women rolled out new systems to collect and monitor data, and the data resided in a variety of places that changed throughout the evaluation. Access to documents was extremely challenging during the portfolio review because some of those documents resided at the country level and were collected differently at the country and HQ levels.	UN Women went through a great deal of effort to share with the evaluation team up-to-date, verified data—especially workforce and budget data.
Analysis of human resources and budget data was challenging because the RMS, COAT, and staffing data were not linked and validated at the time of the evaluation, and expense data for 2015 were not available—even though they became available after the analysis was completed.	The evaluation team used delivery data from December 2015 COAT and December 2014 COAT, which were closest to evaluation data that were verified.
The survey had a tension between short and superficial versus comprehensive and low completion rate. Revisions led to delays and the final survey was only in English. As a result, no finding is dependent on the survey as a key data source, but the survey is only used as a supplemental source.	Survey results were used only as a supplemental source. In fact, survey results were consistent with other data sources.

2. EVALUATION CONTEXT

This chapter describes the context for the evaluation and includes sections on the evolution of the UN Women regional architecture and issues related to that evolution.

2.1
UN Context

A number of **global initiatives** have taken place in the last few years, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, the 20-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, the adoption of the Political Declaration at the 59th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women and the 15-year review of the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325. The prioritization of gender equality in the 2030 Agenda and these other global agendas point to amplification of the UN Women mandate and scope of work. This requires careful adjustment and planning by UN Women, especially in the current context of limited resources.

The United Nations is also engaged in a continuous process of change and **reform** to strengthen its ability to meet new demands and deliver its vital services in the most effective and efficient ways. This means constant emphasis on transparency, accountability, integrity, efficiency and flexibility, and creating an environment where improvement is expected and innovation is welcomed. Current reform efforts are aimed at delivering results to those most in need, doing more with what the United Nations has and strengthening accountability.

In the 2005 World Summit (A/60/1), Member States recommended in the **UN System-wide Coherence Framework** the implementation of reforms of operational activities for development aimed at a more effective, efficient, coherent, coordinated and better performing UN country presence with a strengthened role of the senior resident official and a common management, programming and monitoring framework.

In response to this request, the Secretary General appointed the High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment, which finalized its report in November 2006. One of the key recommendations of the Panel was that the UN system should "**Deliver as One**" at the country level—with one leader, one programme, one budget and, where appropriate, one office. The panel recommended coherence and consolidation of UN activities with appropriate mechanisms to support this, linking the performance and results of UN organizations to funding and overhauling UN business practices to ensure achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

The **United Nations Development Assistance Framework** (UNDAF) is a programme document between a government and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) that describes the collective actions and strategies of the United Nations to the achievement of national development. One of the priorities for UN Women has been to integrate gender equality into UNDAFs, primarily through their participation in the UN Development Group Task Team on Gender Equality. UN Women tracks, as a key indicator, the percentage of UNDAFs and common country programme documents finalized with dedicated results and resources on gender equality.[57] The Coordination Evaluation indicated that 61 per

---

57 UN Women Mid-Term Review and Annual Report of Strategic Plan. n.d. "Overview of Development Results Framework (DRF) and Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency Framework (OEEF): Results 2015. Provisional". p. 34.

cent of UNDAFs now have gender-specific results at the outcome level, although a lack of consistency in the way that gender is integrated was also reported.[58]

The Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) of the operational system of the United Nations is a process by which the members of the UN General Assembly review the effectiveness and funding of all 27 UN development programmes, funds and specialised agencies. UN Women has played an important role in ensuring that gender equality was strongly integrated into the QCPR, including having a paragraph dedicated to GEWE. The QCPR increases accountability within UN entities and reaffirms the coordination role of UN Women in operational activities for development.[59] Much attention has been focused on the upcoming QCPR of operational activities for development of the UN system, and there are strong indications that the review will have a major impact on operational activities of all UN entities, including UN Women.

2.2
Background on UN Women

The UN General Assembly created UN Women in July 2010 in response to longstanding challenges faced by the United Nations in its efforts to promote gender equality.[60]

The new organization was established by UN Member States at the urging of more than 300 CSOs worldwide, which united through the Gender Equality Architecture Reform Campaign to call for a more coherent way to address gender equality in the UN reform process.

UN Women has a triple mandate that encompasses normative support, coordination and operational functions. UN Women focuses on the following six impact areas:

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

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

3. Preventing and eliminating violence against women and girls

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

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

6. Supporting the development of global norms and policies on GEWE

In 2011, the Executive Board approved $479 million with a focus on gradual strengthening and expansion of the presence of UN Women in the field, but the actual budget ended up being $227 million.[61]

UN Women works not only in and across the United Nations but also with a variety of development partners, including governments, intergovernmental entities, non-governmental and civil society partners, bilateral and multilateral organizations, and the private sector. The ability of UN Women to work flexibly in this environment with this wide range of actors is a critical requirement for success.

Rationale for the regional architecture

UN Women began in January 2011 with the goal of achieving GEWE. The regional architecture aimed to maximize the organization's ability to deliver on its mandate and was intended to address challenges such as: uneven capacity, overly centralized decision and approval mechanisms leading to delays and high transaction costs, misaligned lines of reporting,

58 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 46.
59 Ibid., p. 32.
60 Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. 2013. "Progress Made on the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women Strategic Plan, 2011-2013". UNW/2013/3.

61 "Progress Made on the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women Strategic Plan, 2011-2013". UNW/2012/4, p. 25.

inconsistent internal communication and knowledge sharing, and limited decision-making authority for those in leadership.[62]

In a response to some of these challenges, UN Women prepared the 2011–2013 Strategic Plan, which recommended the following:[63]

- Drive more effective and efficient UN system coordination and strategic partnerships, and play a GEWE knowledge hub role

- Develop a strong learning culture founded on results-based management, reporting, knowledge management and evaluation

- Enhance organizational effectiveness with robust capacity at country, regional and corporate levels

- Mobilize and leverage significantly greater resources for GEWE

In early 2011, based on the goals of the Strategic Plan 2011-2013, the results of a field capacity assessment (February 2011), and the reviewed presence and capacity of other UN agencies, UN Women decided to expand its capacity in countries and regions.

To facilitate this process, a series of regional meetings was held in September and October 2011 with staff from COs, ROs and HQ, and a UN Women leadership retreat was held in January 2012 for all UN Women representatives and senior leaders from the field and HQ. They identified the following priority needs for UN Women moving forward:[64]

- Decision-making authority and status of UN Women representatives at the country level commensurate with their programming, interagency and representational functions

- Sufficient and predictable financial resources to facilitate strategic programmes

- Secure contracts for staff

- Appropriate technical and operational capacity at the country level

- Region-specific policy expertise, located close to COs to foster high-quality programming

Simpler and more standardized business processes

Better communications and knowledge sharing at all levels.

In this context, the idea for a regional architecture was born. In its plan for the regional architecture, UN Women identified the need to increase its country presence and delegate greater authority to the field as its highest priority in an effort to improve its effectiveness and presence on the ground, and to address weaknesses associated with the centralized structure inherited from predecessor entities.[65]

Design of the regional architecture

UN Women contracted an external consulting firm to conduct an analysis that would provide a set of options for the regional architecture for the senior leadership of UN Women to consider. The analysis lasted from January to March 2012 and included approximately 330 interviews with Member States, UN agencies, regional commissions, civil society representatives and UN Women staff in the field and at HQ. In addition, the mandate, functions, capabilities, resources and organizing structures of UN Women were discussed through an all-staff survey in three languages, select field visits and videoconferences with 18 field offices. The team conducting the analysis also looked at the regional architectures of other organizations, both from within the UN system and outside, to explore options for structures, their evolution, and under what conditions and to what extent they have worked.

62 Executive Board of UN Women. 2012. "Report on Regional Architecture". UNW/2012/5.

63 UN Women. "Strategic Plan, 2011-2013". UNW/2011/9. p. 2.

64 Ibid., p. 5.

65 Executive Board of UN Women. 2012. "Report on Regional Architecture". UNW/2012/5.

In April 2014, the Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director submitted a report detailing proposed reforms on the regional architecture to the Executive Board.[66] In October 2012, the Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director presented the overall administrative, budgetary and financial implications of the regional architecture, including an overall implementation plan.[67] The UN Women Executive Board approved the regional architecture and requested UN Women to update the Executive Board regularly on its implementation, progress and challenges.

Evolution of regional architecture

The approved option for the regional architecture was designed to:[68] bring capacity closer to the field, empower UN Women staff at the field level, reduce transaction costs arising from multiple layers of oversight for key business processes, better distinguish higher level programmatic and operational oversight and global policy work at HQ from the day-to-day oversight and support in the field, and improve UN Women's overall efficiency and effectiveness.

To achieve these goals, the approved regional architecture established 6 UN Women ROs and 6 MCOs, including transforming 15 existing UN Women sub-ROs into 1 new RO, MCO or CO.

HQ was designated to provide high-level strategic oversight, generate global technical and policy knowledge, deliver corporate guidance on strategic planning and results-based management, emphasize global research and analysis, and engage in inter-agency coordination at the global level. The six ROs were given the responsibility for managerial and programme oversight, quality assurance, technical and operational support, and policy advice for COs in their region, including the UN Women normative function. They were also designated as the lead for inter-agency

coordination at the regional level. MCOs and COs were designated to deliver UN Women support to government and other partners upon their request and, in line with the UN Women mandate, manage funds and provide a technical and advocacy role.

In terms of transactions, the regional architecture specified that HQ would approve high-value transactions, conduct international recruitments, supervise ROs and provide overall strategic direction for regional and country-level programming. ROs would approve medium-value transactions, conduct national recruitments, supervise COs and MCOs, and develop regional strategies and approaches. COs and MCOs would manage country programmes and have delegated authority to conduct lower value transactions and enter into agreements to a higher extent than previously afforded to them.[69]

As noted in the previous section, during the rollout of the regional architecture, a number of factors prompted the wider UN system to critically assess its readiness to meet challenges and opportunities, including a changing development context, financing landscape, new actors, and a departure from the traditional divides between North and South. In September 2015, UN Member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs. The 2030 Agenda includes a stand-alone goal on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, as well as more than 40 gender-sensitive targets in other goals. It also underlines that gender perspectives must be mainstreamed across the entire agenda.[70]

As a result of this context, additions and modifications were made to the original regional architecture. These included:

---

66 Ibid.
67 Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. 2012. "Regional Architecture: Administrative, Budgetary and Financial Implications and Implementation Plan". UNW/2012/10.
68 Ibid., pp. 4-5.

69 Executive Board of UN Women. "Regional Architecture, Progress Towards a Harmonized Cost-recovery Policy and Proposed Approach for Calculating the Operational Reserve for the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women". UNW/2012/11. p. 4.
70 United Nations. "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". A/RES/70/1.

- Introduction of a new matrix management for the programme, policy and intergovernmental areas to increase interdivisional collaboration and synergy[71]

- Introduction of FPIs to ensure that UN Women is "fit for purpose" in the post-2015 development agenda[72]

- Draft Decision 2015/6 requesting UN Women to undertake an analysis of the post structure to specify how posts related to normative and operational functions would be covered in the future; integrated budgets (IBs) will be presented to the Executive Board no later than in its 2018–2019 budget proposal[73]

- Signing of the *UN Women Leadership Charter: Towards a more unified and collaborative UN Women*, following the Global Retreat 2015, which agreed to the principles as "leadership without a title"[74]

- Revisions of the Peer Review Group Process, including an increased focus on the implementation of the SDGs, integration of FPIs into strategic notes, and allowing offices to collectively review their draft annual workplans at the regional level and, thus, share knowledge and experiences with each other, rather than only at the HQ level[75]

- Wide number of process mapping and re-engineering initiatives led by HQ

UN Women reported in 2013 the implementation of the regional architecture was complete.[76] All ROs had been established and were functioning, and 47 COs and 6 MCOs were fully operational with a full staff complement.

The regional architecture has been implemented during a time where the agency was given less funding than what was initially anticipated. The original proposed budget for UN Women was $1 billion. The UN Women budget was reduced by half due to the recommendation of the Secretary-General.[77] Therefore, despite a 20 per cent increase from 2011 to 2013, the level of voluntary contributions in 2012-2013 was still 51 per cent below the original estimate in 2011 and 31 per cent lower than the revised 2012 budget. These were both below the amount that the UN Women Executive Board approved and deemed necessary to deliver on the organization's mandate.[78]

---

71 Email communication (01-08-15) on accountability for interdivisional collaboration and synergy – Policy, Programme and Strategic Partnerships Directors.
72 UN Women. 2015. "Flagship Programming Initiatives Booklet".
73 September 2015. "Draft Decision 2015/6 on Integrated Budget for the Biennium 2016-2017".
74 September 2015. UN Women Leadership Charter.
75 Memo sent by Director of Programme Division, UN Women. 29 October 2015.
76 UN Women. 2013. "Strategic Plan, 2014-2017: Making this the Century for Women and Gender Equality". Second Regular Session 2013, UNW/2013/6.

77 Charlesworth, H. and C. Chinkin. 2013. "The Creation of UN Women". RegNet research paper series, 2013/7. Regulatory Institutions Network. RegNet. Canberra, Australia. p. 15.
78 Integrated budget estimates for UN Women biennium 2014-2015.

3
FINDINGS

This section presents findings on the four evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and gender equality and human rights.

3.1
Relevance of UN Women's Regional Architecture

This section examines the relevance of UN Women's regional architecture, particularly the extent to which it has met the needs of key UN Women stakeholders at the global, regional and country levels.

EVALUATION QUESTION 1. How well does the regional architecture respond to the needs of governments, civil society and UN agencies at the global, regional and country levels? Are any improvements and adjustments needed (and what are they) to meet the needs of key stakeholders, including women and girls, and the most marginalized women?

Finding 1: Overall, the regional architecture has significantly increased UN Women status, visibility and relevance, making it a stronger partner in working with governments, UN agencies, donors and CSOs. While the regional architecture increased UN Women ability to meet the needs of governments, the UN system, donors and CSOs, there is significant variation by office type.

There is clear documentation from previous external assessments, all of which examine different aspects of UN Women, that the regional architecture has increased UN Women relevance with key external stakeholders.[79] Evaluations of UN Women's normative and coordination mandates reported that UN Women is the most successful at adapting to country-level

> Relevance is the extent to which an organization responds to the needs and priorities of partner countries and beneficiaries, and aligns with global priorities.

needs and was relevant to external stakeholders.[80],[81] In 2014, MOPAN, a network of UN donors, rated UN Women as "strong" in all areas of relationship management, including supporting national priorities, adjusting procedures and using country systems.[82]

The extent to which the regional architecture has increased UN Women relevance is also clear in its increased presence in countries throughout the world. UN Women increased its presence from 59 offices of limited capacity in 2011 to 96 offices in 2016, which include 6 ROs, 6 MCOs, 44 COs and 40 programme presence offices.[83] This also resulted in the increase in UN Women field workforce from 213 in 2011 to 2,047 in 2015.[84] Thus, in this short time, UN Women increased its presence in countries and regions with access to key country and UN platforms, which has enabled it to identify and respond to Member States' needs.

---

79 UN Women. December 2013. "Multilateral Aid Review: Update UN Women Summary Assessment". p. 7.

80 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 73.

81 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9. p. 20.

82 MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women". UN Women. p. viii, p. 19.

83 UN Women. 2016. "Annual Report of the Executive Director— Annex VI: Regional, Multi-country and Country Offices as of May 2016". UNW/2016/6.

84 February 2016. "Annual Report 2015: Human Resources". p. 14.

Donors, government stakeholders and UN Women offices reported UN Women's increased presence and responsiveness to meet their needs since the rollout of the regional architecture.[85],[86] For example, both in the Colombia CO and the ROAP case studies, donors and UN partners spoke of the increased ability of UN Women to respond to donors due to the regional architecture, which they saw as increased visibility, increased capacity to administer funds and increased capacity to contribute substantively to thematic

Documents finalized with dedicated results and resources on gender equality.[87] In addition, offices reported their increased relevance and visibility in these groups due to UN Women's regional architecture and the organization's mandate, which has made them a more legitimate partner of higher standing among other UN agencies.

Although ROs reported that they had the overall ability to meet stakeholders' needs, the demand for

TAJIKISTAN CASE STUDY

With a limited number of donors and development partners in Tajikistan, the profile and impact of even smaller UN agencies are potentially large. UN Women is well respected in Tajikistan, is widely credited with an understanding of the country gender context, and has a strong relationship with its government counterparts.

Its status as a programme presence country, however, hinders UN Women's effectiveness in Tajikistan. The lack of in-country senior leadership and delegation of authority has created the perception among donors and other UN agencies interviewed that efficient negotiations and decision-making must wait for the MCO representative's visits. As a result, UN Women does not have the clout that it could potentially have within the UN community and with donors or government officials in the country.

areas. During portfolio review interviews, ROs, MCOs and COs reported a better ability to fulfil donors' and governments' needs due to UN Women's increased presence in country fora and delegation of authority. For example, five out of six ROs reported increased engagement, visibility and relevance with donors, governments and UN agencies due to being present and understanding country contexts.

UN Women ability to respond to the needs of UN agencies has increased, as evidenced by increased involvement of UN Women in UNCTs. UN Women has met or exceeded many targets set in its Strategic Plan, including leading GEWE inter-agency working groups, the number of agencies that track and report on allocations and expenditure using gender markers, the number of UNCTs that implement performance indicators on gender equality, and the percentage of UNDAFs and Common Country Programme

substantive programmatic guidance from external stakeholders was too high for the few policy advisors assigned to each RO. ROs also reported difficulty in fulfilling CSO needs with the expanded roles that ROs needed to play with new partners, governments and the UN family. The number of policy advisors currently placed at each RO simultaneously limits the extent to which ROs can respond to programmatic capacity needed of all external stakeholders, as well as their satellite offices. In addition, ROs reported that the Civil Society Advisory Groups (CSAGs) are still developing but have not been as effective as envisioned due to lack of funding for these groups and lack of clarity on the part of CSOs for the purpose of these groups at regional levels.

---

85 Ibid., pp. 51-52.
86 Case study reports, 5/5 offices; portfolio review interviews, 27/29 offices reporting increased relevance.

87 UN Women Mid-Term Review and Annual Report of Strategic Plan. June 2016; Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. 2015. "Progress Made on the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women Strategic Plan, 2014-2017, Including the Midterm Review of the Strategic Plan". UNW/2016/6.

The reported ability of MCOs to meet the needs of external stakeholders was mixed. Five out of five MCOs interviewed in the portfolio review reported an increased ability to meet the needs of donors and the UN agencies, while only half reported an ability to meet the needs of government stakeholders. Past evaluations, including the MCO Kazakhstan evaluation, found that they respond to stakeholders, but in more limited ways in the MCO context because there are not enough senior-level staff available in all satellite offices to engage with the government at the highest levels.[88] In addition, in the portfolio review, MCOs that were interviewed were most likely to report the least amount of change in meeting stakeholders' needs because they already had high capacity as UNIFEM sub-ROs. In interviews for the Morocco case study, staff agreed that the MCO has seen a major increase in its overall credibility and legitimacy in its satellite countries but not to the extent that it has meant the Morocco MCO itself is able to be relevant to government stake-holders' needs.

All 14 COs interviewed in the portfolio review reported increased relevance and ability to meet stakeholders' needs due to their delegation of authority, and a new ability to respond more quickly and have more authority in what they are able to accomplish at the country level. In the Liberia case study, external stakeholders acknowledged the CO's greater role, visibility, and credible and programmatic competence in terms of staff quality and quantity.

Programme presence offices reported an increased ability to meet governments' and UN agencies' needs because their presence on the ground, although limited, is valued. However, beyond sheer physical presence in country, many programme presence offices reported limitations in their ability to meet the needs of all stakeholders due to limited programmatic capacity and delegation of authority. Only one out of eight programme presence offices interviewed reported the ability to meet donors' needs.

Exhibit 8 summarizes the ability of each office type to respond to the various stakeholders.

---

88 UN Women. September 2015. "Multi-Country Portfolio Evaluation of Kazakhstan Multi-Country Office for Strategic Note 2014-2015". p. 59.

Response to stakeholders by office type

	Governments	UN system	Donors	CSOs
ROs	Increased ability to respond through presence in regional platforms[1,2]	Increased ability to respond through presence and influence in regional platforms[3]	Increased ability to respond due to delegation of authority and opportunity to engage through access to funding for regional initiatives, especially from development banks[4]	Successful collaboration with CSOs[5] but attention is shared with regional UN and governmental platforms [6,7]
MCOs	Access to gender machinery in home country but little access in satellite programme presence countries[8,9]	Access to UN platforms in home country but little access in satellite programme presence offices[10,11]	Access to funding for sub-regional initiatives[12]	More limited capacity to respond, except in relationships with sub-regional initiatives[13]
COs	Increased ability to respond through delegation of authority, presence and visibility in national platforms[14]	Increased ability to respond through delegation of authority, presence and leadership in national platforms[15,16]	Access to funding for programme implementation, including joint programmes[17]	COs are adapting to the shifting role of CSOs from partners as individual organizations to partnership with organized CSO representation
Programme presence offices	Weak capacity to respond due to limited access to government platforms[18]	Weak capacity to respond due to low access to UN platforms[19]	Some access to donor funding for programme implementation[20]	Close relationships with individual CSO partners[21]

1   UN Women Mid-Term Review and Annual Report of Strategic Plan. n.d. "Overview of Development Results Framework (DRF) and Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency Framework (OEEF): Results 2015. Provisional". p. 34.
2   Case study and portfolio review interviews: 6/6 offices
3   Case study and portfolio review interviews: 5/6 offices
4   Ibid.
5   Ibid., p. 34.
6   UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 61, p. 69.
7   Case study and portfolio review interviews : 3/6 offices
8   Case study and portfolio review interviews : 4/6 offices
9   United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9. p. 15-16.
10 Case study and portfolio review interviews: 6/6 offices
11 UN Women. September 2015. "Multi-Country Portfolio Evaluation of Kazakhstan Multi-Country Office for Strategic Note 2014-2015". p. 42.
12 Ibid., p. 45.
13 Case study and portfolio review interviews: 6/6 offices reporting shift from the Commission on the Status of Women to focus with government and variable relationship with CSAGs.
14 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9. p. 9.
15 UN Women Mid-Term Review and Annual Report of Strategic Plan. n.d. "Overview of Development Results Framework (DRF) and Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency Framework (OEEF): Results 2015. Provisional". p. 34.
16 Case study and portfolio review interviews: 14/14 offices
17 Case study and portfolio review interviews: 13/14 offices
18 Case study and portfolio review interviews: 8/9 offices
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
21 UN Women. September 2015. "Multi-Country Portfolio Evaluation of Kazakhstan Multi-Country Office for Strategic Note 2014-2015". p. 42.

Finding 2: UN Women has had successes in working with CSOs, but with the rollout of the regional architecture, offices are still working on how to balance simultaneously meeting the needs of governments and CSOs, which often represent marginalized women.

There have been documented successes in UN Women work with CSOs since the rollout of the regional architecture. In the most recent review of the Strategic Plan to the Executive Board, there were clear examples of successes in working with CSOs, including the establishment of strategic partnerships with civil society groups at all levels of the regional architecture, an enhanced role of CSAGs, and a strengthened role of and partnership with civil society advocacy on gender equality in intergovernmental processes.[89] Another example is the UN Trust Fund on Ending Violence Against Women (hereinafter, UN Trust Fund)—a multilateral, grant-making mechanism established in 1996 by General Assembly Resolution 50/166. The UN Trust Fund is administered on behalf of the United Nations by UN Women and currently supports more than 100 initiatives in 76 countries and territories, with a total value of $56 million in grants. Another mechanism through which UN Women supports CSOs is the Fund for Gender Equality, a global grant-making mechanism dedicated to supporting women-led CSO programming for women's political and economic empowerment, especially targeting marginalized women at the grass-roots level. The fund works in coordination with UN Women field-level focal points to provide grantees with programmatic assistance, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and partnership building.[90]

However, all types of offices mentioned the varied ability to respond to government stakeholders and CSOs simultaneously. For example, half of all COs interviewed (6 of 12) reported a shift from focusing on CSOs to focusing on government stakeholders in response to trying to focus on the normative mandate. HQ has established CSAGs and they have been rolled out throughout the regional architecture as a way to try and adapt to this shifting context and still

meet CSOs' needs. Nonetheless, the organization has only established 43 per cent of its target in setting up CSAGs.[91] In case studies and the portfolio review, as well as the regional architecture staff survey conducted during this evaluation, when asked about satisfaction in meeting stakeholders' needs, staff expressed the least confidence in meeting the needs of marginalized women.

EVALUATION QUESTION 2. How can UN Women ensure that the regional architecture is fit to ensure the universality of the SDGs and UN Women's mandate?

Universality means that all Member States have committed to implementing the 17 SDGs in their own countries.[92] The universality of the SDGs and the UN Women mandate have created an expectation for UN Women to respond to all countries in several SDGs. UN Women is expected to respond even in countries where it does not have presence. Furthermore, the universality of the SDGs and the UN Women mandate requires UN Women to respond to stakeholders in every sector—migration, transportation, banking, employment, housing, education, health, peace and security, etc.

Finding 3: UN Women works within the regional architecture to ensure the universality of its mandate through the promotion of GEWE in global and regional agreements in diverse issue areas and by HQ and the RO providing support to non-presence countries. While UN Women has made significant progress in promoting universality, there are limitations by office type.

In the midterm report to the Executive Board, it was documented that when the UN Women Strategic

---

89 UN Women. April 2016. "Mid-term Review of the Strategic Plan 2014-2017".

90 HQ site visit interviews

91 This number represents original targets of 45 CSAGs as reported in the UN Women Mid-Term Review and Annual Report of Strategic Plan. n.d. "Overview of Development Results Framework (DRF) and Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency Framework (OEEF): Results 2015. Provisional". p. 34. Since this report has been written, the Strategic Plan has been finalized with an updated target of 50. This would bring the percentage to 60 per cent. This updated information can be found at: UN Women Mid-Term Review and Annual Report of Strategic Plan. June 2016. "Annex II, Revised Results Framework". p. 23.

92 UN Women Executive Director Note to Secretary General on Fit for Purpose (internal use only) . October 2015.

Plan was drafted in 2013, it took into account a position paper produced by UN Women on the post-2015 development agenda, which argued for a stand-alone goal on achieving GEWE, as well as gender mainstreaming across other goals. The paper also called for a new agenda to address structural drivers of gender inequality, most of which were included in the 2030 Agenda. For this reason, UN Women concluded that the Strategic Plan responds to priorities in 2030 Agenda and SDGs.[93]

On a global level, UN Women's universality is seen in its normative work in the Commission on the Status of Women that has been key in providing governments and other partners with the necessary frameworks to promote GEWE in their own countries and organizations. On a regional level, UN Women's normative work in regional fora, such as ASEAN, has enabled Member States to enact policies and programmes that support GEWE in their countries.

In the rollout of the regional architecture, ROs, with support of HQ, were designated as responsible to respond to non-presence countries' requests.[94] The role of UN Women to respond to non- presence countries has increased UN Women's universality and ability to support SDGs in as many countries as possible throughout the world. An example of such a reaction is ROAP support to Malaysia in response to that government's request in coordination with the resident representative.[95]

While UN Women has made significant progress in promoting universality, there have been limitations by office type. ROs report challenges in meeting the needs of programme presence offices because they also strive to support MCOs and COs.[96] MCOs reported their limited capacity to support their satellite countries while functioning as a CO themselves.[97]

Programme presences report limited ability to fulfil all stakeholders' needs in the triple mandate due to their limited capacity.[98] Non-presence countries receive only limited, on-demand support, and ROs stretch to meet that demand.[99]

Furthermore, the evaluation team found that the placement of UN Women offices (following other UN agency office placement) does not take into account the existing capacity and coverage of the GEWE mandate by other UN partners.

The next section presents the UNAIDS strategy for universality[100],[101] and office presence as an example of another universality of the UN Women mandate, which is not the case for most other UN agencies (except UNAIDS).

---

93 UN Women. April 2016. "Mid-term Review of the Strategic Plan 2014-2017". p. 64.

94 Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. 2012. "Regional Architecture: Administrative, Budgetary and Financial Implications and Implementation Plan". UNW/2012/10. p. 10.

95 Malaysia case study interviews

96 Case study and portfolio review interviews: 4/6 ROs

97 Case study and portfolio review interviews: 4/6 MCOs

98 Case study and portfolio review interviews: 9/9 programme presence offices

99 ROAP and Malaysia case study interviews

100 UNAIDS. "Getting to Zero: UNAIDS Strategy 2011-2015". Accessible at: http://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/unaidspublication/2010/JC2034_UNAIDS_Strategy_en.pdf

101 UNAIDS. 2011. "The Governance Handbook". Accessible at: http://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/JC1682_GovernanceHandbook_March2011_en.pdf

Established in 1994-1995 with a primary coordination function, UNAIDS approached universality by building joint programmes and transferring between $5 million and $40 million per year to agencies for their HIV/AIDS programming. Transferring funds gave UNAIDS a seat at the table and some strength in inter-agency UN platforms.

While the funds were often used to set up HIV/AIDS offices within agencies rather than for programming, they did ensure that the receiving agencies kept some focus on HIV/AIDS, which was important because UNAIDS worried that its establishment would be reducing the focus on HIV/AIDS programming in other agencies.

Setting up flagship programmes at the global level was challenging, leading to battles with many agencies that saw UNAIDS as a threat, i.e., as a competing point that was taking over the HIV/AIDS work. UNAIDS learned that success in its HIV/AIDS agenda depended on relationships and worked best where no one acted territorially. The UNAIDS programme directors spent a significant portion of their time working on these relationships and looking for common ground.

Not every agency held the same views as UNAIDS, however, and when common ground could not be found, UNAIDS pursued and advocated its own approach. For example, in the face of the view that HIV/AIDS was a medical issue, UNAIDS advocated that HIV/AIDS was a more complex issue—social, political, psychological, financial, etc. In the face of a director in a UN entity unwilling to support sex education for adolescents, UNAIDS set up its own programming.

EXHIBIT 9:

UN agencies act as "boundary partners" for UN Women in the GEWE mandate
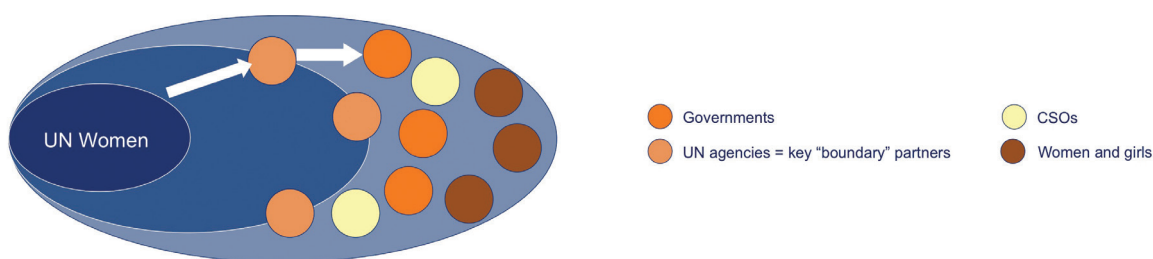
Reflection from the UNAIDS approach: If UN Women adapted the UNAIDS perspective, it would consider the GEWE agenda as a "whole UN" issue, and think about elements of capacity and action it wishes to see in its UN partners. This type of thinking is grounded in an *outcome mapping* frame (**Exhibit 9**). In other words, UN Women would focus not only on how it can influence other UN agencies to incorporate and promote the GEWE agenda, but also on sharing the burden and relying on other UN agencies to carry primary responsibility for certain aspects of GEWE or for all of it in certain countries where UN Women could not be present. Taking this way of thinking further, UN Women, when making decisions about where to locate its offices, would have taken into account the GEWE capacity of the existing UN partners in countries, adjusting the office structure and priorities to match the needs of the countries.

3.2
Effectiveness of UN Women's Regional Architecture

This section examines the organizational effectiveness of the regional architecture to deliver the UN Women mandate across all roles—normative, coordination and operational at global, regional and country levels— including their contribution to global results, as well as HQ support to the field. UN Women programming aims to integrate the triple mandate.

EVALUATION QUESTION 3. To what extent and in what ways have the objectives, set in Executive Board Paper UNW/2012/10, to establish an effective regional architecture been met?

Finding 4: Many elements of the regional architecture's strategy have been achieved in a timely and comprehensive manner, especially given the speed of the regional architecture's rollout. A few critical elements of the regional architecture strategy have not been adequately addressed to date.

The evaluation team used language from the Executive Board Paper on the approved regional architecture and created a theory of change for it[102] (see **Exhibit 10**). As noted in green, many of the elements of the strategy have been achieved.

One of the key planned actions of the regional architecture was to establish or convert sub-ROs to ROs, MCOs and COs, and give them delegation of authority, which was achieved.[103],[104]

UN Women also successfully moved oversight functions from HQ to ROs through establishment of ROs and subsequent delegation of authority. New oversight roles of HQ were established, and substantive programmatic and operational knowledge was transferred from HQ to ROs through training of staff in leadership and operations.[105] This is seen in the higher workforce number in the field—2,047 in 2015 in comparison to 213 in 2011—and in the increased presence of senior leadership in ROs.[106] UN Women established in total 6 ROs, 6 MCOs, 44 COs and 40 programme presence offices.[107] All elements of the regional architecture strategy that have been accomplished, based on language from the Executive Board Papers, include:[108]

• Establishment of six ROs and six MCOs

• Evolution of the current UN Women sub-ROs into regional or MCOs

• Greater decentralization of authority to the field, including moving mid- and lower level oversight functions from HQ to ROs

• Transfer of some technical and operations functions from HQ to the field

• Decentralized decision and approval mechanisms

• Appropriate decision-making authority for UN Women representatives, including with regard to financial resources

• Increases in country national capacity

Exhibit 10 presents the theory of change extracted from the Executive Board Papers in order to enable the evaluation team to respond to this evaluation question. Several aspects of the elements in this theory of change are addressed more fully in other parts of this report.

---

102 Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. 2012. "Regional Architecture: Administrative, Budgetary and Financial Implications and Implementation Plan". UNW/2012/10. p. 4.

103 UN Women. September 2013. "Policies and Procedures for Delegation of Authority".

104 UN Women. April 2016. "Mid-term Review of the Strategic Plan 2014-2017".

105 UN Women. January 2015. "Report on Implementation of UN Women's Regional Architecture, Nov 2012- Nov 2014".

106 February 2016. "Annual Report 2015: Human Resources". p. 14.

107 UN Women. 2016. "Annual Report of the Executive Director— Annex VI: Regional, Multi-country and Country Offices as of May 2016". UNW/2016/6.

108 Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. 2012. "Regional Architecture: Administrative, Budgetary and Financial Implications and Implementation Plan". UNW/2012/10. p. 5.

Theory of change for the regional architecture

REGIONAL ARCHITECTURE ACTION	OUTPUTS	INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES	LONG-TERM OUTCOMES
Establishment of 6 regional offices and 6 multi-country offices	Decentralized decision and approval mechanisms	Substantive engagement with regional and sub-regional expert and intergovernmental bodies in GEWE	As a dynamic and strong champion for women and girls, UN Women provides them with a powerful voice at the global, regional and local levels to achieve the:
Evolution of the current UN-Women sub-regional offices into ROs, MCOs or COs	Appropriate decision-making authority for UN-Women representatives, including with regard to financial resources	Relevant and timely support to national governments and partners	• Elimination of discrimination against women and girls
Greater decentralization of authority to the field, including moving mid- and lower-level oversight functions from HQ to ROs	Increases in country national capacity	Effective delivery of results for women and girls at the national level, as envisaged in its strategic plan and in response to national priorities	• Empowerment of women
	Even capacity at all levels of the organization by recruiting new senior leaders		• Achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security.
	Aligned lines of reporting for effective oversight		
Transfer of some technical and operations functions from HQ to the field	Increased South-South cooperation	Overall strengthened capacity of the organization	
	Adequate technical capacity at the field level		
	Increased regional initiatives supporting countries and sharing lessons	Strengthened ability to draw upon regional and national experience and expertise to address its universal mandate.	
Corresponding changes at HQ to reflect changed roles	Consistent internal communication and knowledge-sharing		

Completed or well under way   Early instances where this is taking place; more remains to be done   Insufficiently implemented   Not yet addressed

All levels of the regional architecture recognized the results of these accomplishments. In the UN Women Global Workforce Survey, 74 per cent responded that the implementation of the regional architecture has supported HQ to focus more on conducting and supporting strategic, global advocacy initiatives on GEWE, while allowing ROs, COs and MCOs to focus on implementation of the triple mandate.[109]

Those elements of the regional architecture strategy that have not been sufficiently implemented or yet addressed are summarized below, linking relevant findings to each issue.

109 UN Women. 2014 "UN Women Global Workforce Survey".

• **Corresponding changes at HQ to reflect changed roles (Action):** Several important changes were made in the Programme Division, but HQ has not sufficiently linked Pillar A, Pillar B's policy divisions, and Pillar C with the field. (See Finding 16 and Finding 18)

• **Even capacity at all levels of the organization by recruiting new senior leaders (Output):** The evaluation found uneven capacity, with 42 per cent of senior leaders in HQ, insufficient policy advisors for substantive programmatic leadership in regions, and insufficient staffing in MCOs and programme presence countries. (See Finding 17, Finding 19 and Finding 21)

• **Aligned lines of reporting for effective oversight (Output):** There is a clear supervision line of the field

to the Programme Division, but policy advisors and DMA staff do not currently have clear substantive reporting lines to HQ (except for Regional Security Specialists based in ROs who have a direct reporting line to the HQ Security Team). (See Finding 18)

- **Increased South-South cooperation (Output):** The roles of HQ and ROs in promoting South-South cooperation through communities of practice are not yet clear. (See Finding 18)

- **Adequate technical capacity at the field level (Output):** There are only 15 policy advisors distributed among six ROs. (See Finding 19)

- **Increased regional initiatives supporting countries and sharing lessons (Output):** With HQ guidance to halt regional fundraising, regional initiatives may lose their funding.[110] (See Finding 31)

- **Consistent internal communication and knowledge sharing (Output):** UN Women does not have a consistent internal communication or a knowledge management function. (See Finding 7 and Finding 8)

- **Relevant and timely support to national governments and partners (Outcome):** UN Women is sometimes hampered by limited capacity and inefficient systems. (See Finding 18)

- **Effective delivery of results for women and girls at the national level, as envisaged in its Strategic Plan and in response to national priorities (Outcome):** The regional architecture has increased UN Women effectiveness, but there are limitations based on typology as presented in findings under the effectiveness criterion. (See Finding 9, Finding 10, Finding 11, Finding 12, Finding 13, Finding 14, Finding 15, Finding 16, Finding 17 and Finding 18).

- **Strengthened ability to draw upon regional and national experience and expertise to address its universal mandate (Outcome):** Drawing upon expertise at various levels to address its universal mandate

is challenging due to the above-mentioned issues. (See Finding 3 and Finding 4)

EVALUATION QUESTION 4. To what extent and why does the regional architecture contribute to UN Women's achievements in the operational, normative and coordination mandate at global, regional and country levels in an effective manner? Are any improvements or adjustments to the institutional setup needed to enhance effectiveness?

Finding 5: UN Women has made significant progress in implementing its triple mandate as a whole, with significant contributions at global, regional and country levels for COs and MCOs. In spite of the overall success, some offices face constraints in their ability to deliver on all aspects of the mandate.

There has been clear documentation of the ways in which UN Women has made significant achievements in implementing the triple mandate since rollout of the regional architecture. The regional architecture has enabled UN Women to deliver at global and regional levels at all aspects of the mandate. Increased access and visibility has enabled UN Women to deliver on the coordination and normative mandates at global and regional levels.

The CO is best positioned to deliver on the three aspects of the mandates at the country level. The CO has sufficient authority and resources to deliver. MCOs and programme presence countries are more limited in their ability to deliver on the coordination and normative aspects of the mandate but have been delivering on the operational mandate.

Evidence on UN Women offices' ability to deliver on all aspects of the mandate

At the **global/HQ level**, there has been increased participation in chairing and providing technical assistance to the Inter-agency Network on Women and Gender Equality and Task Team for Gender Equality of the United Nations Development Programme

---

110 ROAP case study and HQ interviews

(UNDP).[111] There has also been progress on gender mainstreaming and gender marker, mobilization of UN system for Beijing +20[112] and planned results in the Strategic Plan.[113],[114] By increasing its influence in global platforms and among UN agencies, as well as increasing its ability to manage programmes, the regional architecture is contributing to UN Women ability to deliver on all aspects of the mandate.

At the **regional/RO level**, there has been strengthening of the normative mandate through increased visibility and positive results of normative GEWE framework. The normative evaluation found that, despite resource levels being lower than originally envisioned, UN Women enhanced the visibility of, and attention to, GEWE through its normative support work. The evaluation reported that, "Nearly all Member States, United Nations partners and UN Women staff interviewed asserted that gender equality and the empowerment of women, as championed by UN Women senior management and country programme representatives, were addressed more prominently than before."[115] Staff and stakeholders volunteered that increasing visibility and awareness of GEWE was one of the three most important results that UN Women normative support work had achieved since its creation.[116] For example, the normative evaluation further found that in Senegal, UN Women enhanced the visibility of the UN Joint Programme on GEWE and advocated with ministries the use of gender-responsive tools in public management. UN Women, including its ROs, has also contributed to enhancing the normative framework at the regional level. It has effectively supported regional intergovernmental bodies, such as ASEAN and the

Council of Europe, in the process leading up to the approval of conventions and declarations, particularly in the area of ending violence against women.[117] Further evidence suggests that ROs have provided clear leadership in intergovernmental processes. [118] Depending on the cluster of organizations it is working alongside, UN Women has filled gaps in the existing coordination architecture by establishing inter-agency groups focused on GEWE where these did not exist previously, for example in the Europe and Central Asia region.[119] Also, there has been strengthened joint action at the regional level, large increases in UNDAFs with specific results on gender equality,[120] and effective support to MCOs and COs in fulfilling coordination and normative mandates.[121] Finally, ROs have increased their ability to support countries in their regions on the operational part of the mandate, although sometimes they still reach out directly to HQ for support.

At the **MCO level**, UN Women is addressing challenges in normative and coordination work, and it is improving. The Multi-Country Portfolio Evaluation of Kazakhstan found that UN Women has correctly identified the major challenges involved in UN coordination and normative work and is working on improving them. There was an example of the Extended Gender Theme Group in Tajikistan and the UN Partnership Framework for Development in Kazakhstan. The evaluation also found that the MCO was best positioned to fulfil the coordination mandate over normative and operational mandates.[122] There was also increased presence, including participation on System-wide Action Plan and joint programming.[123] Finally, there was reported strategic focus and interest in supporting

---

111 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 30.
112 UN Women. 2014. "UN Women Annual Report 2014-2015, Data Companion".
113 UN Women. April 2016. "Mid-term Review of the Strategic Plan 2014-2017".
114 MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women". UN Women. p. 29.
115 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9.
116 Ibid., pp. 8-9.

117 Ibid., p. 12.
118 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 30.
119 Ibid., p. 22.
120 UN Women. 2014. "UN Women Annual Report 2014-2015, Data Companion".
121 Portfolio interviews: 1/5 MCOs, 4/12 COs
122 UN Women. September 2015. "Multi-Country Portfolio Evaluation of Kazakhstan Multi-Country Office for Strategic Note 2014-2015". p. 42.
123 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 39.

a mutual commitment to promoting the GEWE mandate recognized by government partners and CSOs. In Fiji, the Gender Working Group supported national reporting on the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women by Pacific Island countries. In 2014, with the support of UN agencies and development partners, 10 Pacific Island countries submitted the *2014 Asia Pacific Survey on Progress and Implementation of the 12 Critical Areas of Concern of the Beijing Platform for Action* and 7 Pacific Island countries submitted national reviews.[124] Examples most often reported by staff were successes in WEE and ending violence against women.[125]

In **COs**, there was increased presence of UN Women in different platforms and a number of joint programmes with other UN agencies.[126] Using their increased presence and relationships with civil society, donors and UN agencies, COs catalysed gender agenda for countries.[127] The normative evaluation reported that the majority of resident coordinator's surveyed (67 per cent) stated that greater visibility of gender equality norms and standards was the main added value that UN Women brought to their countries of operations. A growing number of programmes increased visibility of UN Women, and larger roles of UN Women across thematic areas. There were also increased and diversified CO partnerships that have allowed COs to better fulfil normative and coordination mandate.[128] Finally, the target of percentage of UNDAFs finalized and dedicated results and resources on gender equality were exceeded.[129]

For **programme presence countries**, RO visits were reported to increase legitimacy and ability for programme presence offices to implement the UN Women mandate, although overall it is limited.[130] The portfolio review found that there was the greatest ability to implement the operational mandate in comparison to normative and coordination.[131] Most programme presence countries reported most successes in WEE over any other impact areas. In Tajikistan, UN Women had by necessity prioritized the operational mandate, raising funds needed to support programmes and maintain the programme presence. The current work has been facilitated by long-standing relationships with non-governmental organizations that originated with UNIFEM. By partnering with these organizations in remote areas, UN Women programmes are able to reach some of Tajikistan's most marginalized women with interventions that meet their most acute needs.[132]

Limitations on fulfilling the triple mandate by different levels of the regional architecture

Although UN Women has made great strides in fulfilling the triple mandate, there have been some limitations by different office types.

At the **global/HQ level**, there has been limited ability for all field offices to fulfil all thematic areas[133] and limited ability to position UN Women in relation to other actors within the UN system. The coordination evaluation confirmed the findings of the Joint Evaluation on Joint Programmes on GEWE, which noted a sense of bilateralism (UN agencies working in silos) prevailing within the modality of joint programmes.[134]

At the **regional/RO level**, there has been limited capacity to support all satellites in technical assistance

---

124 Ibid., p.36.
125 Portfolio review interviews: 4/5 MCO mentioned WEE and 3/5 MCO mentioned eliminating violence against women.
126 Ibid., p.16.
127 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9. p. 10.
128 Portfolio review interviews: 7/12 COs reporting, 5/12 reporting for eliminating violence against women
129 UN Women Mid-Term Review and Annual Report of Strategic Plan. n.d. "Overview of Development Results Framework (DRF) and Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency Framework (OEEF): Results 2015. Provisional". p. 34.

130 Tajikistan case study; portfolio review interviews: 5/5 ROs reporting
131 Portfolio review interviews offices reporting most success in WEE
132 Tajikistan case study
133 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9. p. 17.
134 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 39.

needed to fulfil all three mandates[135] and lack of clarity regarding where to prioritize energy within the triple mandate[136] (coordination and normative versus operational).

At the **MCO level**, there has been limited capacity to support all programme presence offices in fulfilling the triple mandate, particularly coordination and normative.[137] It was also found that there has been a bias towards working in the country where the MCO is located. The normative evaluation found that UN Women's UN partnerships around its normative support work have been stronger in those countries where it has a presence.[138] These limitations vary across MCOs.

COs were best positioned to fulfil the triple mandate, but they still rely on support from HQ and the RO due to their staffing structure, and support from RO given the limitations in their delegation of authority.

Regarding **programme presence countries,** previous evaluations found results are the strongest where UN Women has presence.[139] Resident coordinators in countries with a UN Women presence consistently rated it more positively on its participation in the UNCT than resident coordinators in countries where it was not present.[140] Programme presence countries had limited capacity to receive support from HQ, MCOs and ROs, and weak capacity to fulfil all three parts of the mandate.[141]

Regarding **non-presence countries,** ROs noted the limited capacity to support them due to their limited staff and resource capacity.[142] There was also variable

ability to fulfil different parts of the mandate based on demand, partnerships and the presence of a UN resident coordinator.[143] There is evidence in the coordination evaluation that there is a correlation between the Inter-agency Network on Women and Gender Equality's participation and delegation of authority: 10 out of 14 offices (71 per cent) with delegation of authority (MCOs and COs) participate in other Inter-agency Working Groups, while only 3 out of 14 offices (21 per cent) with no delegated authority clearly mention participating in other Inter-agency Working Groups.[144]

EVALUATION QUESTION 5. What systems and processes (formal and informal) are in place to monitor and assess the effectiveness of regional architecture? Are the systems working adequately and do they feed the organization with useful lessons?

Finding 6: Although starting from a weak results culture, there is evidence that UN Women has developed and continues to rapidly deploy monitoring and reporting systems for the organization.

At inception, UN Women inherited from UNIFEM a weak "results culture," including poorly defined objectives, which made it difficult for management of the organization to drive for better results.[145] The other three organizations that formed UN Women—Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General of Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women, the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women—were too small and the nature of their work did not lend itself to a results orientation.

Since the regional architecture, UN Women has focused on results-based management and rollout of new systems to improve monitoring of effectiveness. Initial improvements were documented in the 2014

135 Case study and portfolio review interviews: 6/6 ROs
136 Case study and portfolio review interviews: 6/6 ROs
137 Case study and portfolio review interviews: 4/6 MCOs
138 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9. p. 20.
139 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". pp. 27-29.
140 Ibid, p. 20.
141   Portfolio review interviews: 7/7 programme presence offices
142 ROAP case study

143 Malaysia case study
144 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 15.
145 UN Women. December 2013. "Multilateral Aid Review: Update UN Women Summary Assessment". p. 3.

MOPAN review, which rated UN Women "strong" for its use of performance information to inform decision-making at the country level.[146] The review noted it was still too early in the regional architecture rollout for many documented examples of using performance information for revising strategies, policies or country-level interventions, but interviews with staff and comments from survey respondents confirmed UN Women senior management was providing leadership for adopting and strengthening a results-based approach. UN Women continues to improve upon and roll out new processes for the regional architecture, even in the last year.

feed the organization with important information. For example, the information gathered in annual reports, strategic plans and annual workplans is incorporated into the COAT, a tool used by the organization as a snapshot in time to assess performance by monitoring indicators, such as delivery rates, resource mobilization targets and donor reporting statistics. The COAT was a key source of information for this evaluation, because it is currently one of the only fora that allow the organization to compare data across typologies and regions simultaneously. In order for the COAT to be accurate, all countries continue to submit annual workplans and strategic notes on a timely and regular basis.

EXHIBIT 11:
New reporting and monitoring processes since the regional architecture

(In bold = rolled out since the beginning of this evaluation)

Process	Stage of rollout and description
Annual reports	Input and updated in RMS
Peer review process of annual workplans/strategic notes	Rolled out, reviewed by RO and then input into RMS by field office
Quarterly reports	No longer in use, replaced by RMS
RMS	**Rolled out in December 2015, continues to improve and update**
Atlas	UNDP product that is not currently linked to programme information
Regular auditing reports	Consistent audits of UN Women overall and field offices, use UN Board of Auditors audit report financial statements
Dashboard	**Rolled out in 2015, still in Beta mode, not linked to Atlas**
DAMS	**Launched in February 2016**
Humanitarian response workflow	**Rolled out in February 2016 to adapt to crises situations**
Global Accountability and Tracking Evaluation System (GATE)	Rolled out in 2013

Since this review, UN Women continues to focus on results-based management and rollout of new systems to improve the monitoring of effectiveness, four of which were rolled out during the course of conducting this evaluation (see **Exhibit 11**). Processes rolled out during the course of this evaluation are bolded.

The processes that have been more established within UN Women have proven to work adequately and

Another example of a useful process that has given the organization important financial information is the consistent annual issuance of certified financial statements. These statements show the organization the number of certified donor reports that are submitted and approved in a year by the Finance Section. Certified financial statements increased from 300 in 2012 to 600 in 2015, a statistic that shows an increase in donor funding and accurate reporting. These data can be used as an accountability tool to

---

146 MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women". UN Women. p. 12.

donors at the end of each year.[147] This demonstrates an increase in the commitment to transparent, efficient and accurate reporting—an improvement from an earlier finding that UN Women does not have a results culture.[148]

Finding 7: Current systems fall short in providing information needed for results-based management and measuring impact, as well as for feeding the organization useful lessons.

Previous reviews have noted limitations in the UN Women monitoring and reporting system, citing a lack of baseline data and identification of results and performance indicators, which results in presenting an incomplete picture of UN Women's expected contributions to the outcomes identified in the results framework.[149],[150],[151]

For example, the MOPAN reported the limitations in reporting based on a lack of baseline data, identification of results and performance indicators within the UN Women reporting system. This limitation in performance indicators, it was reported, resulted in an incomplete picture of UN Women's expected contributions to the outcomes identified in its results framework.[152] This was also seen during this evaluation because the number of outcomes and outputs reported in each impact area in the Strategic Plan, which was pointed to as an indicator of success by the organization, did not have clear correlations with the amount of resources committed to these impact levels. Consequently, having a large number of outputs and outcomes in

a certain area did not correlate with how the funds were spent by an office, nor did it mean that the area with the most outputs and outcomes was the most important. Finally, impact data were not included. Therefore, more information is needed to understand the ways money was spent, which areas were prioritized and the difference UN Women was making in any given thematic area.

The new RMS is making strides in collecting data and linking them to project performance, and it is being recognized in the field as a useful step forward—7 out of 12 COs reported positive views of the RMS overall, although the rollout was difficult. However, the current system still contains limitations for capturing impact-level data and clear guidance on how to measure outcome and output, and "low-level" output data—an issue brought up in previous evaluations.[153]

The focus on delivery over impact-level data was another limitation noted by offices. In case studies and portfolio reviews, 11 out of 35 countries reported lack of emphasis on impact-level indicators and an increased focus on delivery as a measure of success rather than impact.[154] In portfolio interviews, when asking country-level staff how they determined the amount of progress in each outcome, output and activity, the process was unclear and based on their subjective perspective of the project, rather than clear indicators or benchmarks of success.

The focus on delivery rates as a measure of success is also a limitation, as can be seen throughout this report's quantitative analysis. In all analyses, delivery rates were compared as a variable to see if there were patterns in budgets, management ratios, staffing, etc. However, offices varied significantly by geography, typology and context, and delivery rates were not seen as a consistent measure of success. Here are examples (more detail on these can be found in the efficiency section of this report):

---

147 Certified Financial Statements or certified financial donor reports as of 31 December 2015, prepared and signed by the Chief of Accounts.

148 UN Women. December 2013. "Multilateral Aid Review: Update UN Women Summary Assessment". p. 3.

149 Ibid., p. 11.

150 MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women". UN Women. p. ix.

151 UN Women. December 2014. "An Empowered Future: Corporate Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to Women's Economic Empowerment". p. 41, p. 51.

152 MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women". UN Women. p. 11.

153 Ibid., p.vii, p. 35.

154 Portfolio review: 5 COs, 2 ROs and 1 programme presence office mentioned limitations; Case studies: Colombia, Tajikistan and ROAP

- Offices with higher budgets did not consistently have higher (or lower) delivery rates. This meant that offices with more money did not have more trouble spending that money (nor were they better positioned to spend it).

- Offices with higher management ratios did not have higher (or lower) delivery rates. We expected that higher management ratios might mean there was more support outside of programme funds available to spend on core functions to provide the oversight necessary to spend the money in the budget. However, this was not the case, nor was the opposite true.

- Office with higher workforce (staff plus non-staff) did not have higher delivery rates. We expected that greater workforce numbers might mean there were more people to provide the oversight necessary to spend the money in the budget. This was also not supported by the data.

UN Women has recognized many of the limitations in the heavy reliance on delivery rates and COAT data, and it has continued to adapt its systems. UN Women rolled out the Humanitarian Response Fast Track for human resources, procurement and reporting, which is aimed at adapting to processes in conflict zones. In addition, new systems continue to be improved, including linking the RMS to Atlas, confirming data in the Dashboard and the rollout of the new DAMS.

Finding 8: A weak knowledge management function hampers the organization from extracting useful lessons, establishing active communities of practice and being a learning organization.

Knowledge management is not prioritized in the regional architecture and has been identified as a key issue that needs to be addressed. Past evaluations and reviews have reported the lack of a knowledge management strategy in translating and communicating strategies, policies, and learning between HQ and the

field and across offices.[155],[156],[157] HQ and field offices also reported internal coordination and knowledge sharing within HQ, and between HQ and the field as a key issue to be addressed by senior leadership.[158] The Policy Division reported that it is planning ways to address knowledge sharing, and senior management is well aware of its importance; yet there is still no corporate, strategic guidance for knowledge sharing.

In portfolio review interviews, case studies and the survey, all office typologies highlighted wanting better horizontal communication across regions and offices. In portfolio review interviews, a want for greater internal communication and knowledge sharing was one of the most reported wishes across all office types. MCOs, COs and programme presence offices reported that horizontal communication is very ad hoc and based on personal relationships rather than strategic communities of learning.[159],[160] Additionally, communication from ROs to their satellite offices had mixed feedback. Although all ROs reported supporting knowledge sharing to and across their satellite offices through webinars, trainings and yearly meetings, only 3 out of 12 COs mentioned any knowledge management support from their RO, while almost all (6 out of 7) programme presence offices reported limited capacity for knowledge management and learning.

Use of the existing knowledge management resources designed by HQ is also variable in the field. In the coordination evaluation, it was reported that an e-learning campus, which became fully operational in 2015, did not appear to be well known by UN Women staff—even within the Gender Theme Groups, the

155 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9. p. 18.

156 MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women". UN Women. p. 25.

157 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 54.

158 Case study interviews: ROAP, Tajikistan, HQ

159 Portfolio reviews: 4/5MCOs , 4/12 COs and 6/7programme presence offices

160 Case study interviews: ROAP, Tajikistan, HQ

primary audience meant for these resources.[161] In the UN Women regional architecture evaluation survey, a significant proportion of staff responded that they "didn't know" the following UN Women resources: UN Women Evaluation Resources (20 per cent, n=209), Virtual Knowledge Centre to End Violence against Women and Girls (28 per cent, N=208) and Knowledge Gateway for WEE (20 per cent, N=209).[162]

The example of the World Bank Group included below demonstrates an advanced model of not only incorporating knowledge management in a development

THE WORLD BANK GROUP'S APPROACH TO KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Since 1996, the World Bank Group recognized the importance of knowledge management and invested in structures, processes and support systems to share, manage and use knowledge. The World Bank's website is one of the 35 largest in the world, and its intranet enables access to knowledge and expertise.

To support knowledge management internally, parallel to the formal reporting structure, staff was mapped to networks and linked in learning communities led by programmatic anchor departments. Networks included: Human Development, Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management, Private Sector and Infrastructure, etc. The objectives and responsibilities of the networks were many: reduce fragmentation, increase information flow, set priorities, manage quality, run the information system, consolidate external partnerships, vet staff promotions and disseminate best practices.

In May 2010, the World Bank formed the Knowledge and Learning Council, comprising members of the Bank's senior management, to catalyse new approaches to the way the organization managed and disseminated its knowledge work. The Knowledge and Learning Council guided this agenda forward, aiming to achieve greater connectivity within the World Bank Group and with external partners. The World Bank saw the power of knowledge as a key contributor to development impact.

The term "knowledge economy" has been coined to reflect this increased importance of knowledge. A knowledge economy is one where organizations and people acquire, create, disseminate and use knowledge more effectively for greater economic and social development. The World Bank Group now sees itself in the knowledge business, and it aims to develop knowledge and learning capacity in the countries where it works.

This "knowledge revolution" manifests itself in many different ways: links between science and technology; innovation; increased importance of education and lifelong learning; and investment in research and development; as well as ICT explosion, which brings worldwide interdependency and connectivity. The World Bank's strategic partnership in knowledge include UNDP and USAID.

As UN Women engages in its own design of its knowledge management function, it would benefit from reviewing the World Bank's approach, especially regarding: staff engagement and fostering communities of practice, leadership for knowledge management, and systems that support knowledge sharing and archiving.

---

161 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 45.

162 UN Women. "UN Women Regional Architecture Evaluation Survey – Volume 3".

organization, but also leading with knowledge and learning.[163,164,165,166,167,168,169]

Finding 9: Decentralization of the planning and reporting process has improved, but it is too early to determine its effectiveness; to date, the evidence is mixed.

As part of the regional architecture, UN Women adopted a peer review process where ROs and COs develop Strategic Notes and annual workplans that are peer reviewed by the RO and then approved at HQ.[170] This process is clearly laid out in the POM, which continues to be reviewed and adjusted as needed.[171] New guidance continues to come out regarding the Peer Review Group Process and how to ensure it is adapted to changing contexts.[172]

Several ROs, MCOs, COs and programme presence offices reported that the peer review process was working well.[173] However, some COs reported a lack of coordination in receiving feedback from HQ and ROs (contradictory comments), not getting the level of programmatic feedback desired from ROs and that the process was too time-consuming. Programme

presence offices provided feedback that, although support from the RO was useful, because annual workplans were considered part of the ROs rather than a separate document, they sometimes felt disconnected from the process.[174]

MCO staff noted that the 2015 reporting exercises were very difficult, primarily because MCOs were responsible for completing more report sections than in previous years. They also noted that this year's exercise was somewhat redundant because information was often repeated in more than one matrix (output/outcome statements and indicator progress) and in the narrative section. The biggest annual reporting issue was having to complete several annual reports simultaneously. Approving and publishing satellite country reports must be done by the MCOs and the ROs, often in condensed timeframes, which frequently led to overburdening the staff of the MCOs.

In the UN Women regional architecture survey, 24 per cent of respondents (n=208) noted that they "didn't know" if the Peer Review Group Process was resulting in greater effectiveness in their work.[175]

EVALUATION QUESTION 6. How has the regional architecture enhanced integration among normative, operation and coordination work, and what adjustments are needed to improve integration at all levels?

Finding 10: The triple mandate is integrated in the field, although there are still concerns that the structure favours operational over the normative and coordination aspects of the mandate. The structure of the regional architecture with delegation of authority has empowered COs to be the drivers of integration. There is also evidence of mandate integration at the regional level.

In a previous assessment of the impact of UN Women work, it was reported that UN Women contributions were mostly evidenced in three impact areas within the three mandates: (1) advancing global norms and standards (impact 6), (2) ending violence against

163 LaPorte, B. 8 October 2004. "The Knowledge Bank in Action". The World Bank Group. Accessible at: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/WBI/Resources/KnowledgeBankOct2004.pdf

164 https://archivesholdings.worldbank.org/environmentally-and-socially-sustainable-development-network

165 Wenger, E.C. and W.M. Snyder. "Communities of Practice: The Organizational Frontier". Harvard Business Review Report Reprint R00110. January-February 2000. p. 145. Accessible at: http://www.rareplanet.org/sites/rareplanet.org/files/Communities_of_Practice__The_Organizational_Frontier%5B1%5D.pdf

166 EnCompass LLC. June 2003. "Evaluation of the Intranet Improvements of the World Bank Group: Baseline Results".

167 EnCompass LLC. 30 January 2001. "The World Bank Intranet Usability Review".

168 EnCompass LLC. 22 January 2001. "The World Bank Intranet Strategic Review".

169 EnCompass LLC. 2 October 2003. "Evaluation of the Operation Portal of the World Bank Group: Baseline Results".

170 12 September 2014. "Progress Update on Implementation of Regional Architecture".

171 POM. "Part 2 Programme Appraisal and Approval".

172 29 October 2015. Memo regarding Peer Review Group Process.

173 Portfolio review interviews: 2/5 MCOs, 2/14 programme presence offices, 7/12 COs reported positive feedback regarding peer review group

174 4/12 COs and 3/8 programme presence offices reported negative feedback regarding peer review group

175 UN Women. "UN Women Regional Architecture Survey – Volume 3".

women (impact 3), and (3) promoting women's leadership and participation in peace and security (impact 4).[176] The WEE Evaluation of December 2014 identified the lack of a coherent strategy for knowledge management as limiting UN Women ability to integrate and maximize the benefit of its three mandates: normative, coordination and operational. It also reported widespread agreement (91 per cent of survey respondents) that UN Women programming can be better integrated with its other work related to ending violence against women, leadership and governance, and peace and security.[177]

A key issue identified by the evaluation team was the way that respondents in portfolio or case study interviews understood the term "integration." The evaluation team defined the successful integration of the three aspects of the UN Women mandate as carrying out work explicitly focused on changing laws, norms and standards toward GEWE, influencing others (including the UN family) to work together and separately on GEWE goals, and implementing programmes, including raising and managing funds in a way that maximizes impact in GEWE by UN Women and its partners. Conversely, the absence of integration would be UN Women engaged in advocacy with no understanding of and engagement in fundraising or any attention to development of strong management systems; or UN Women engaged in coordination of UN partners pushing them to lead GEWE while UN Women stayed in the background; or UN Women becoming a grant-management agency with little engagement in the policy and advocacy space. According to this understanding of integration of the mandate, the evaluation found ample evidence in case studies and the portfolio review that country strategies and work programmes generally strategically integrated all three aspects of the mandate leveraging influence and access to funds to promote GEWE. In fact, more than half of the people interviewed named UN

Women's integrated mandate toward GEWE as what inspires them the most about their work.

However, when asking staff whether or not they saw the mandate as integrated, some respondents became hesitant. In analysing their responses, it seemed that, although they were in fact implementing the integrated mandate, their main uncertainties were whether: (1) they were allocating their time and energy in an optimal way to do so most effectively and efficiently; or (2) they had enough capacity to achieve all of their goals and enough access and gravitas to be successful. In other words, there was no resistance anywhere in the organization about any aspect of the integrated mandate, and there was widespread pride and recognition of the power of leveraging all three aspects of the mandate.

COs and programme presence offices mentioned the benefits of the triple mandate as something that allowed them to be viewed more broadly by external stakeholders, as well as pushing for greater results (even if programme presence offices faced capacity limitations to deliver).[178] MCOs, COs and programme presence offices reported that increased delegation of authority allows country teams to have access to platforms that enable them to integrate mandates and work across areas to take responsibility for their projects. In Colombia, linkages were evident throughout the Colombia work programme and staff reported increased ability to work more effectively across the triple mandate due to increased visibility and, as a result, autonomy to work with a variety of actors. For example, the coordination role of UN Women provided an opportunity to develop joint programmes and collaboration in the field both with UNDP and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA); the normative work in parliament renders information that UN Women uses to guide UN partners toward a common strategy with common targets; and the normative work to mainstream a gender perspective in the peace process and increase women's political participation is enhanced with funds to implement programmes that catalyse CSO relationships and leadership of the mandate. In

176 MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women". UN Women. p. 28.

177 UN Women. December 2014. "An Empowered Future: Corporate Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to Women's Economic Empowerment". p. 122, p. 103.

178 Case studies: Colombia, Liberia, Morocco MCO and Tajikistan; 9/29 portfolio review interviews

fact, staff interviews demonstrated clear understanding of the importance of all aspects of Colombia office's work programme and the strategic synergies between the different components.

In Liberia, the regional architecture also improved the effectiveness of the CO to work across the triple mandate, with an overemphasis on the operational dimension and resource mobilization. In particular, the delegation of authority has empowered the CO to be the driver of integration, but realizing that potential depends on sufficiently skilled staff and concomitant action of resources mobilization.

The achievement of the integrated mandate by the Morocco MCO is due to its effective implementation of the regional architecture, which has proven appropriate in this particular situation, and a committed, competent and dedicated staff that has been able to take advantage of the regional architecture and promote the overall UN Women mandate.

The role of ROs has been dual: (1) to support countries in operations (including fully backstopping programme presence countries in their regions and supporting MCOs to backstop programme presence countries that are satellites to MCOs), and (2) to conduct normative and coordination work in regional platforms in ways that facilitate, guide and support normative and coordination work in countries. Since the rollout of the regional architecture, ROs had to work quickly to increase their presence and influence in regional governmental and UN bodies. It is, therefore, not surprising that ROs reported the ability to integrate the three aspects of the mandate in the field.

ROAP uses its coordination role to reinforce its normative role in regional platforms and then supports the translation of pro-GEWE agreements and policies into national-level action through programmes. In terms of coordination, ROAP's policy advisors and programme managers play an active role in the Regional Coordinating Mechanism Working Groups, the Regional Coordinating Mechanism Thematic Working Group on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, and several gender related sub-groups (Ending Violence Against Women/UNiTE; Women,

Peace and Security; Gender Statistics; and Migration). Thus, ROAP invested in establishing a positive relationship with the Economic and Social Commission of Asia and the Pacific, the regional development arm of the United Nations for the region that is made up of 53 Member States and 9 Associate Members and home to 4.1 billion people (two-thirds of the world's population). ROAP leveraged its relationship with the Economic and Social Commission of Asia and the Pacific and made important inroads in its normative work with the ASEAN, which negotiates and establishes the economic and development policy framework of the region. It is a key achievement in the normative work of ROAP to have been engaging effectively with ASEAN, which takes place primarily through the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children and the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights. As a result of its sustained engagement and partnership, ROAP has become a trusted and valued partner of ASEAN and is now able to wield influence through its established partnership. Based on this success and in line with the evaluation recommendations of ROAP's 2010-2014 Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women programming, stakeholders agreed that ROAP is well positioned to influence other structures of ASEAN across its three pillars. On the operations front, ROAP channels some of its regional funding to support programme implementation in China, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Philippines and Thailand. These programmes support the normative work in those countries, encouraging promotion of gender budgeting, engendering the education system, encouraging the local women's CSOs to speak up and promoting reforms that support GEWE.

Another example of ROAP's convening power with governments is when 44 Member States in Asia and the Pacific demonstrated renewed political commitment to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action through agreements on increased financing, accountability and partnerships, as evident in the Ministerial Declaration of the Asian Pacific Conference on Beijing+ 20. A contributing factor was ROAP's sustained advocacy, technical advisory services

and coordination with UN partners at national and regional levels.

Finding 11: There is weak guidance from HQ on how to balance among the operational, coordination and normative priorities.

Although most offices use creative ways to integrate the mandate in the field, there is also evidence of weakness in clear guidance regarding operationalizing the triple mandate related to prioritizing what is the most

mandate.[179],[180] Half of all offices interviewed in the portfolio review (14 out of 29) and all offices in case studies reported that they did not have clear guidance from HQ on how to prioritize each mandate and how to set strategies, priorities and boundaries with regards to integration of the mandates.[181]

The reporting structure of HQ affects integration of the mandate. Offices reported confusion on why the reporting structure was created to report to only one division because it made the triple mandate more

EXHIBIT 12:

Operationalizing the triple mandate in five case studies

Country	Operationalizing the mandate
ROAP	There was a clear integration of the operational mandate with normative and coordination because, in fact, normative and coordination work was funded by regional programmes. Furthermore, the implementation of normative successes in countries in the region was also supported by programmes and trust funds. Finally, coordination was geared to supporting the normative work at regional level.
Morocco MCO	While the evaluation team found that the operational mandate generally supported the other two mandates, the sheer number of activities and their nature (e.g., technical support and capacity building being the most prevalent) indicate that the growth of programming in the MCO may be having an outsized impact on the overall mandate relative to the other two mandates. Thus, the MCO experience demonstrated strong integration but challenges in prioritization among activities in a large portfolio.
Colombia CO	The Colombia CO portfolio demonstrated strong and effective integration across all aspects of the mandate, but its sheer size raised concerns about how much the work programme could expand further and boundaries might be set.
Liberia CO	Programmes in Liberia directly supported normative goals: engaging CSOs in efforts to increase women's political participation; working with UN partners in joint programming to increase WEE, especially for vulnerable women; reduce violence against women; and working on engendering emergency response and peace processes.
Tajikistan programme presence office	Tajikistan personnel reported needing help with the normative and coordination mandate. They reported most that they would like assistance from advisors in the Policy Division because the RO does not have a full complement of policy advisors, but they have no clear means of establishing contact.

important, and creating more realistic expectations and boundaries for the work programme overall. In portfolio review and case studies, the majority of offices reported being uncertain about how to balance between the operational, coordination and normative mandate, and a lack of guidance from HQ. Evaluations of two out of three parts of the mandate reported unclear guidance on how to operationalize the mandate from HQ, as well as how to integrate within the triple

difficult to implement and report on, especially in balancing priorities across the three aspects of the

179 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 70, p. 76.

180 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9. p. 18.

181 Portfolio review interviews: 5/5 ROs, 4/12 COs, 4/5 MCOs, 1/7 programme presence offices reported negatively

mandate. Offices across the typology reported weak understanding as to the breakdown of Pillar A and Pillar B and discussed difficulties in the weak linkages of the two pillars in practice.

As explained in Finding 18, this made integration of mandates more difficult when reporting and structure of HQ is not integrated.[182]

Although there was success in the idea of the triple mandate, there were some challenges in operationalizing the mandate (see **Exhibit 12**).

EVALUATION QUESTION 7. To what extent and why does the regional architecture increase UN Women's focus and capacity to apply rigorous gender analysis and human rights approach in programme design, monitoring and implementation at regional and country levels?

Finding 12: The regional architecture has given UN Women access to key platforms at global, regional and country levels to advocate effectively for a more transformative agenda.

There is clear evidence of UN Women's work on integrating human rights-based approaches and gender analysis. In the most recent evaluation of WEE, 72 per cent of UN Women respondents regarded the entity's ability to apply a human rights-based approach as one of its core strengths.[183]

In the evaluation of the UN Women coordination mandate, it was reported that UN Women is using its coordination role to support a human rights framework within the UN system by strengthening linkages between global and regional normative frameworks, and national priorities and initiatives. Examples of this include UN Women's role in enhancing UNDAFs at the country level, including being a member of the UN Development Group Human Rights Working Group (co-chairing in 2013) and contributions to the UN Development Group Guidance Note on Human

Rights for Resident Coordinators and Country Teams (2015).[184]

In the evaluation of the UN Women normative mandate, it was reported that UN Women contributed to greater gender mainstreaming in General Assembly outcomes, which included an increase in General Assembly resolutions with a gender perspective from 32 per cent in 2011 to 42 per cent in 2013.[185]

Finding 13: In programme design, UN Women has increased the participation of excluded women's groups at higher levels of decision-making in their country systems.

There is evidence of UN Women's inclusion of excluded women's groups in decision-making. In the evaluation of UN Women' contribution to WEE, there was evidence that, in some instances, COs are ensuring participation of the most marginalized women. Examples were given of Bangladesh, Jordan and Mexico, which designed country-level interventions and indicators to support implementation of international standards and treaty-body recommendation.[186]

In MCO and CO case studies, Colombia's territorialization strategy and Malaysia's partner strategy, which promote female empowerment, brought the most vulnerable women to the table with government. In Malaysia, UN Women used a strategy of working through a regional non-governmental organization committed to women's empowerment with an office in Malaysia, thus leveraging an organization that is committed to women's empowerment to deliver to Malaysia and reach the most marginalized women. Without this partnership, UN Women would not have been able to reach marginalized women in Malaysia. CSOs in Asia and the Pacific region reported

182 Case studies of Tajikistan, ROAP and HQ
183 UN Women. December 2014. "An Empowered Future: Corporate Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to Women's Economic Empowerment". p. 96.

184 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 53.
185 UN Women Mid-Term Review and Annual Report of Strategic Plan. n.d. "Overview of Development Results Framework (DRF) and Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency Framework (OEEF): Results 2015. Provisional". p. 34.
186 UN Women. December 2014. "An Empowered Future: Corporate Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to Women's Economic Empowerment". p. 97.

appreciation for ROAP's support in bringing them to the table in important conversations about human rights, such as in ending violence against women and migration, including facilitating funding so that they can be in important deliberations in person.

The delegation of authority has enabled UN Women to step into new relationships with influential development partners, enabling it to forge a path for CSOs and women's organizations to be involved. For instance, through its territorial strategy, the Colombia CO demonstrated a feminist approach to its work by making efforts to include the most marginalized women, showing respect for issues that are relevant in remote areas and working through partnerships that plant the seeds of sustainability.

UN Women's structure continues to adapt to try and incorporate women's groups in decision-making. The delegation of authority has enabled UN Women offices' access to formal platforms with the goal to influence policy by working directly with governments. UN Women staff and external stakeholders interviewed in case studies were clear that an important role of UN Women was to bring CSOs' voices into conversations with governments, other UN agencies and donors.

Situated in the Programme Division at HQ, the Fund for Gender Equality is a global grant-making mechanism dedicated to support of women-led civil society programming for women's political and economic empowerment, especially targeting marginalized women at the grass-roots level. In addition to an extensive selection process of grantees, Fund for Gender Equality specialists work in coordination with UN Women field-level focal points to provide grantees with technical assistance, monitoring and evaluation of programmes, and partnership building. In one example, the Fund supported a women-led CSO in Bolivia that influenced national-level political reform incorporating a women´s rights and a gender perspective

into the new Constitution.[187] The UN Women Office in Bolivia is currently building on the past success of this programme to promote the actual implementation of the approved gender-sensitive legislation. This trust fund complements UN Women's ability to identify and collaborate with emerging CSOs, helping UN Women partnerships not to become hierarchical and closed, but to create paths for inclusion of new partners and voices, especially those of the most marginalized women.

Finding 14: Capacity constraints limit UN Women ability to assist others in ensuring that gender analysis is part of programme design, monitoring and implementation at the country level.

Previous evaluations have cited UN Women's limited capacity to influence others in gender analysis. The coordination evaluation reported a limited capacity of UN Women to push the UN system further as an organization in gender analysis and accountability, due to internal challenges in creating an enabling culture for gender.[188] The normative evaluation states that, although UN Women was successful in development of gender equality norms, its implementation of these norms was limited.[189] Finally, the most recent report on the Strategic Plan stated that implementation of some key gender equality indicator targets were "off track." For example, the percentage increase in the number of humanitarian appeals and strategies that include a gender analysis was reported as "off track." [190]

Although UN Women incorporates gender analysis in design, there is uncertainty regarding the impact

187 Bolivia: Productive Patrimonial Assets Building and Citizenship Programme for Women in Extreme Poverty Case Study of the Joint Programme with UNDP, UN Women, United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization

188 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 73.

189 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9. p. 14.

190 UN Women. June 2016. "2015 Data Companion and Scorecard". p. 24.

of these interventions among staff.[191] The shortage of regional policy advisors creates an additional challenge—for example, there is only one ending violence against women adviser and (as explained in Finding 17) no ROs have regional policy advisors that cover every impact area. Furthermore, the current reporting systems do not track impact, resulting in incompleteness in the accountability for GEWE impact and depriving the organization of valuable data that could demonstrate the results of strong gender analysis.

Finding 15: Formalization of UN Women's role and processes has created some challenges in its ability to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable women and girls.

The WEE Evaluation (December 2014) reported that in an internal staff survey, staff ranked UN Women's ability to support the inclusion and participation of rural and marginalized groups as the lowest among its institutional capacities, with only 31 per cent indicating UN Women performed either outstandingly or well in this area.[192] The evaluation suggested that evidence from the case studies and survey demonstrates that UN Women needs to expand its efforts to enable more direct participation of excluded groups in higher level and country-level normative processes including rural, poor and marginalized women, and also men and boys.

Furthermore, as the regional architecture increased UN Women status in countries and demanded a shift in its focus to governmental and UN platforms, UN Women increasingly relies on CSAGs as a formal mechanism set up to advise UN Women on how to ensure CSOs are represented in global, regional and country fora. These groups include women who are in leadership positions, and they themselves might be challenged to reach marginalized women and may not represent their interests. The coordination evaluation found the CSAGs have been implemented with varying levels of success and often lack clarity

and purpose. The report provided an example of the difference in an RO (ROAP) where they are working well with high levels of satisfaction on both sides in comparison to an MCO (South Africa) where there was confusion and dissatisfaction with the role to the point that members have resigned.[193] In the most recent review of the UN Women Strategic Plan, the number of CSAGs that function at regional and country levels only met 43 per cent of the UN Women target.[194]

The rigid systems laid out in the POM do not ensure sufficient flexibility to enable UN Women to be strategic in its partnerships with grass-roots organizations, nor are they aligned with the capacity of civil society partners (see Finding 29). For example, in the Tajikistan case study, it was noted that the UN Women rules were too rigid for dealing with CSOs and challenged partnerships the RO tries to establish. Also in the Tajikistan office, a few non-governmental organization coalition members who would like to work with UN Women at the community level felt that there was a lack of transparency regarding financial processes, which they had difficulty following. They noted that some online applications for proposals were in English only and required a fast Internet connection, thereby excluding many of them.[195] As the evaluation was being finalized, DMA informed the evaluation team that the Procurement Office has proactively begun efforts to address the issues raised in this finding.

---

191 Case study interviews in Colombia, Liberia, ROAP and Tajikistan

192 UN Women. December 2014. "An Empowered Future: Corporate Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to Women's Economic Empowerment". p. 96.

193 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 69.

194 UN Women Mid-Term Review and Annual Report of Strategic Plan. n.d. "Overview of Development Results Framework (DRF) and Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency Framework (OEEF): Results 2015. Provisional". p. 34.

195 Tajikistan case study

3.3
Efficiency of UN Women's Regional Architecture

This section examines the efficiency of the regional architecture's administrative systems, structure and processes, including mechanisms to ensure efficient communication linkages between HQ and the field, and within ROs, MCOs and COs.

EVALUATION QUESTION 8. To what extent has the regional architecture been designed and implemented in a way that is responsive to needs, changes and actions emerging at the different levels of the organization (HQ, ROs, MCOs and COs)?

Finding 16: HQ support is mostly responsive to administrative and finance needs of the field, with some limitations because of constraints in capacity. Meanwhile, substantive programmatic support from HQ was reported by the field as varied and mostly ad hoc.

Rollout of new systems, including the Peer Review Process, RMS and DAMS, is aimed at helping the regional architecture be more responsive.

Seven out of 29 office interviews in the portfolio review spontaneously mentioned useful and timely advice received from Finance.[196] Offices reported month-end closure reporting and operational advice given by Finance as extremely useful in their daily operations. This stood out as unusually positive praise, because no other part of HQ was praised spontaneously. ROs reported receiving useful operational support from regional advisors, but worried that COs reach out to them directly, bypassing ROs.[197]

COs and MCOs reported variable substantive programmatic support from HQ in the form of missions, webinars and individual support. However, most was *ad hoc* and partially based on regional contexts or personal relationships.[198] HQ reports that its support

takes the form of: assistance with programme design and project document formulation, expert referrals, provision of training tools, development of knowledge products on relevant thematic areas that can be regionalized or rolled out nationally, quality control and peer reviewing knowledge products developed at the country level, provision of data and technical advice as needed.

Survey results showed many are unsure of the nature of HQ support because, on average, 30 per cent (n=61) of respondents answered "don't know" when asked about different types of support provided by HQ to the field. This shows that it is difficult to know all the functions within the regional architecture from different vantage points.[199]

Finding 17: COs, MCOs and programme presence offices all saw support from ROs as valued and important.

All COs interviewed, four MCOs and two programme presence offices interviewed reported essential operational and oversight support from their ROs. Offices reported the work of the RO increased efficiency and relevance by providing oversight and operational support in work planning, implementation and reporting. Colombia reported the support of the Americas and Caribbean RO in assisting with the fast growth of their CO.[200] For Tajikistan, the most important support from the RO comes in the form of occasional training on substantive programmatic components, such as the rollout and use of the RMS. Contact with the RO is limited, but staff reported that when they do see RO personnel, they can ask for explanation of unfamiliar concepts, such as "strategic partnership."[201]

Offices also reported significant improvements in efficiency due to their relationship with the RO and subsequent improvements in fulfilling coordination

---

196 Portfolio review interviews: 3/12 COs, 4/8 programme presence offices, 1/5 MCOs
197 Case studies and portfolio review interviews: 3/6 ROs, 5/12 COs, 1/9 programme presence offices
198 Portfolio review interviews: 3/5 MCOs, 3/12 COs

199 UN Women. "UN Women Regional Architecture Survey – Volume 3"
200 CO Colombia case study
201 Programme presence Tajikistan case study

and normative mandates by being able to respond to stakeholders more efficiently. Presence of an RO in a region allowed MCOs and COs greater opportunities to be efficient in responses to stakeholders in the region and to know what is going on in the regional context.[202]

The Morocco MCO has made significant progress in inculcating the business principles underlying the regional architecture's administrative efficiency and mastering the corresponding business practices and processes that enable the MCO to function efficiently. As a general sentiment, MCO staff found the regional architecture—both at HQ and in the RO of Arab States—to be providing a satisfactory level of support for relevant processes. The RO of Arab States took the lead in facilitating a discussion with the MCO member-COs to determine which flagship programmes should be focused on in the sub-region. MCO staff made a special note of highlighting that they did not view the RO as a competitor for donor funding in the sub-region.

The Liberia CO staff noted that the RO provided useful support in discussing and arriving at the outcomes and indicators found in the Strategic Note/Annual Workplan (Development Results Framework/Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency Framework), as well as ensuring that adequate resources were devoted to evaluations, both of which were viewed as quality assurance functions.

Finding 18: There are incomplete structural, reporting and communication linkages within HQ, and between HQ and the field, which create challenges and inefficiencies for the field to receive the support it needs from HQ.

The current structure of HQ that designates reporting of the field to the Programme Office in Pillar B limits the efficiency of the regional architecture. At present, there is no formal linkage (dotted line) to the Policy Office in Pillar B or to Pillars A and C (DMA) (except for Regional Security Specialists based in ROs who have a direct reporting line, both technical and supervisory, to

the HQ Security Team).[203],[204] Despite efforts to establish clear structural linkages to better implement the triple mandate (e.g., FPIs and the Integrated Work Planning), there are still challenges in the ability of UN Women to set direction and priorities, and to enable learning throughout the organization. **Exhibit 13** on the following page shows how, at present, only formal connections exist between the Programme Division and the field, while other parts of HQ are structurally disconnected.

The current structure limits the ability of HQ to respond to substantive programmatic support needs of field offices,[205],[206] but there is *ad hoc* support given to countries by different HQ offices. The HQ Policy Division reported that some HQ policy teams provide substantive programme support to COs, with up to 60 per cent of some policy staff's time being spent in providing policy support to COs. In spite of these efforts, however, unmet needs persist.

The HQ structure has also led to confusion regarding roles: RO, MCO and CO staff, as well as programme office staff, were generally unclear on which country support tasks are performed by HQ versus ROs. For example, all ROs interviewed reported confusion regarding their roles and responsibilities in providing substantive programmatic advice to MCOs, COs and programme presence offices in comparison to HQ's role in this same regard.[207] UN Women staff in case studies and the portfolio review reported that the structure and responsibilities of HQ for overseeing the implementation of the triple mandate in the field lack clarity, and there is some duplication in guidance between HQ and the corresponding RO—for example, use of different narrative templates for donor reporting, etc.

---

202 Portfolio review interviews: 1/5 MCOs, 4/12 COs; ROAP case study

203 Following data collection, a direct reporting line, from the Chief of Accounts and Finance staff at HQ and the field was added and implemented in new job descriptions.
204 UN Women. "UN Women Organigram, 2015".
205 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9. p. 17.
206 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 66.
207 Case study and portfolio review interviews: 6/6 ROs reporting

Weak linkages between parts of HQ and the field
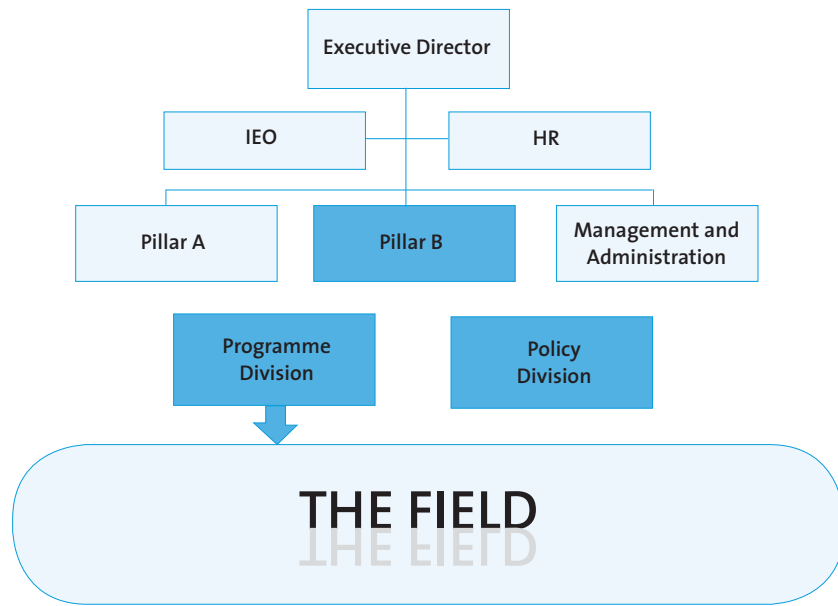
THE POLICY FUNCTION AT USAID

For USAID, policy is a critical function and is seen as driving programmes through USAID's overall policy framework that guides all of its strategies, programmes and activities and is called the Programme Cycle. The custodian of the policy function is the USAID Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning, which plays a central role under the USAID Administrator. The Bureau links with thematic bureaus in developing specialized policies because thematic bureaus are responsible for providing technical leadership, research and field support for worldwide activities in each thematic area. It also links with regional bureaus—e.g., the Asia Bureau, the Africa Bureau, etc. —to enlist them in supporting the field to implement thematic and overall policies. Thus, all other parts of USAID are called to support USAID missions in the field to adhere to Policy, Planning and Learning's policies. Established in June 2010, the Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning plays a key role in helping USAID be the "premier development agency." Its structure includes the following offices:

Policy: Leads the Agency in formulating and implementing policy and strategy, ensures policy coherence and coordination, informs external audiences about USAID direction, ensures development perspectives are actively considered in foreign and national security policy formulation, and reinvigorates USAID leadership within the development community.

Strategic and Programme Planning: Leads Agency efforts to revitalize country and regional strategic planning and project design and enhances institutional capacity in development programmes as part of the USAID Forward Reform Agenda.

Learning, Evaluation and Research: Catalyzes USAID's transformation into an effective learning organization.

Donor Engagement: Facilitates Agency engagement with bilateral and multilateral donors, supports the attainment of international development cooperation policy coherence, and advances USAID priorities within the international development community.

It is useful to review how USAID has organized its policy function both with thematic bureaus—e.g., the Global Health Bureau,[208] the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment,[209] etc.—and a smaller, more nimble policy group under the USAID Administrator's Office—the Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning.[210] The advantages of this structure are elaborated above.

Finding 19: The substantive programmatic capacity of ROs is inadequate to meet the demand from countries and at the regional level, and HQ is not able to support ROs and countries sufficiently either.

When ROs originated, the Executive Board Paper authorized policy advisors and types were desig-

positions were never completely filled. With 16 policy advisors distributed among the 6 ROs, a policy adviser has to cover an average of 15 countries and several key regional platforms—at a minimum 1 for the UN, and an average of 15 for regional country cooperation, as well as engagement in global advocacy campaigns initiated by HQ.[212]

Exhibit 14 shows the presence of policy advisors by expertise type and their responsibilities.

The limited number of RO policy advisors has constrained their ability to respond to MCOs, COs and programme presence offices. Also, ROs have responded by "downgrading" or filling positions with lower

Responsibilities and presence of policy advisors in ROs[213]

Responsibilities of a policy advisor stationed at an RO (on average)
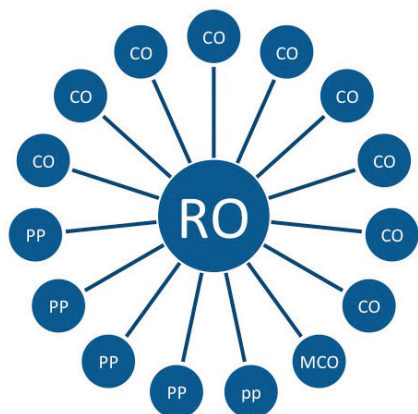
Presence of policy advisors in ROs as of April 2016

	Political Participation	Peace and Security	EVAW	WEE	HIV/AIDS
RO Egypt	X			X	
RO Kenya		X		X	X
RO Panama	X		X		X
RO Senegal		X		X	
RO Turkey		X		X	
RO Thailand		X		X	X

nated across regions.[211] However, due to the limited budget previously mentioned, regional policy adviser

appointments (coordinator, analyst and contractor) to maintain lower salaries and manage within limited budgets, resulting in even lower capacity to respond to more complex questions in thematic areas. For example, in one RO, there is a programme coordinator for ending violence against women instead of a

208 https://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/organization/bureaus/bureau-global-health

209 https://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/organization/bureaus/bureau-economic-growth-education-and-environment

210 https://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/organization/bureaus/bureau-policy-planning-and-learning

211 Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. 2012. "Regional Architecture: Administrative, Budgetary and Financial Implications and Implementation Plan". UNW/2012/10.

212 Annual Reports 2015; e-mail correspondence with ROs, February 2015

213 The number of policy advisors fluctuates depending on funding and turnover. The above chart reflects the number of policy advisors in place in April 2016.

policy adviser. However, these positions often lack the needed capacity, authority and programmatic expertise to fulfil the role of policy advisors. In interviews, the number one wish by all RO staff members was consistently greater capacity in terms of staffing of advisors to support their COs. There are on average two to three policy advisors per RO who are meant to support MCOs, COs and programme presence offices. Consequently, some offices fall to the bottom—in this case the programme presence offices. ROs reported in case study and portfolio interviews that they have limited capacity to support programme presence and non-programme presence countries, in addition to their responsibilities to MCOs, COs and regional-level priorities.[214] Although the HQ Policy Division also undertakes programmatic support to different levels of the regional architecture, their role as envisioned by the regional architecture is to play more of an oversight and operational supporting role. Therefore, they are not staffed to fulfil the needed gaps in programmatic guidance and capacity.

MCOs, COs and programme presence countries also reported limited staffing and subsequent limited programmatic support. In the portfolio review, 6 of 12 COs, 3 of 6 MCOs, and 5 of 7 programme presence offices interviewed reported that the support they received from their ROs was limited in substantive programmatic support and guidance due to staffing and capacity challenges in the RO. Several staff noted that the Liberia CO's demand for RO support increased over time, particularly with the rollout of the RMS, but there was no corresponding increase in RO support in managing reporting into the RMS. In the Tajikistan case study, staff reported that programmatic, thematic support is exactly the kind of support from the RO that Tajikistan programme presence would value the most. However, the RO had been slow to be fully staffed with policy advisors, and the ones they have received are not specialists in the areas most relevant to Tajikistan's projects.[215]

Feedback from the portfolio review and case studies showed an unmet need for support in gender analysis for programme design. In Colombia, for example, when the CO needed support in gender budgeting, it received guidance from the Americas and the Caribbean RO to reach out to a few other countries that were already working on this issue (appropriately encouraging South-South cooperation), and to an expert co-financed by the RO and located in Ecuador. In the issue of migration policy, which is a critical issue in Asia, ROAP was unable to access expertise in the UN Women system in HQ or other countries and had to develop UN Women's approach on its own. The good news is that UN Women's dedicated staff has found solutions through informal networks.

Additionally, staff with policy expertise at HQ is not easily accessible to the field and, in spite of *ad hoc* support offered to countries by the Policy Division, does not have the adequate capacity to support all substantive programmatic needs of the field. There are currently 62 staff in the Policy Division, including programme analysts, policy specialists, administrative assistants, and programme and project managers.[216] These 62 staff cover a number of programmatic areas under the six thematic areas, and are currently serving 96 countries' programmatic needs both directly and through ROs. Finally, with 42 per cent of senior leaders in HQ, leadership capacity in the organization is uneven in favour of HQ.[217]

In conclusion, there are several contributing factors to insufficient policy guidance and support in UN Women, including the insufficient policy capacity at all levels of the regional architecture, weak formal linkages (dotted lines) between those working in policy in the field and counterparts in HQ, and low prioritization for knowledge sharing and communities of practice (see **Exhibit 15**).

---

214 Case study and portfolio review interviews: 5/6 ROs
215 Tajikistan case study

216 This only includes staff; staffing information provided by Human Resources based on 2015 Annual Report Data
217 February 2016. "Annual Report 2015: Human Resources".

Contributing factors to the insufficient response to need for policy advice in thematic areas

HQ

Insufficient capacity to fulfil dual role of supporting HQ and countries.
Lack of integration in HQ.
Lack of even dotted line connection between Policy/Pillar B and policy advisors in ROs.
Knowledge management and sharing systems and processes are weak and do not designate a formal role for Policy to lead communities of practice.

REGIONAL OFFICES

Too few policy advisors in regional offices who divide their time between influencing GEWE in regional platforms and also support countries.
Not always clear where to turn at HQ, and how to get response (KM weakness and no dotted lines to Policy in HQ).

COUNTRIES

Uneven policy capacity to support development of strategies and pro-gramme design.
Unclear on where needed knowledge exists in the UN Women system when regional offices do not have a policy advisor in the relevant issue.

Unmet need for policy advice in thematic areas for strategy development and programme design

Finding 20: There is divergence in regional funding capacity between ROs due to different contexts and prioritization.

As seen in **Exhibit 16**, there was great variation between ROs in the funds managed per person team varied. It could be a result of more regional resources available in Asia and fewer country resources for middle- and upper-middle-income countries that required regional management of funds. Or it could be a prioritization of regional initia-tives versus country support. There is such diversity

EXHIBIT 16:

Range of delivery $ per person (staff and non-staff) in ROs in 2015
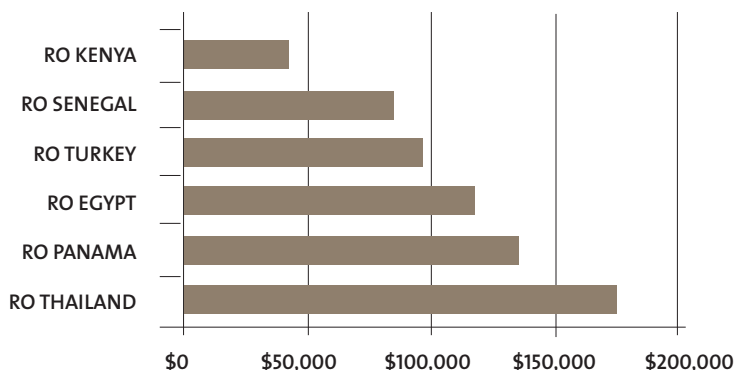
employed at each RO: ROAP handles more than four times what the East and Southern Africa RO handles.[218] Explanations shared with the evaluation in RO contexts that the quantitative data do not have a single, consistent interpretation; even controlling for the number of staff and success in fundraising are dependent on context.

218 COAT December 2015; Delivery as of 31 December 2015, run date 13 January 2016

ROs also support countries from a multitude of contexts and with different programmatic priorities. Some ROs support more middle- and upper-middle-income countries (e.g., ROAP and the Americas and the Caribbean RO), which implies a different role as compared with ROs supporting lower income countries. For example, offices in upper-middle-income countries described the importance of assistance in resource mobilization, while lower income countries valued resource mobilization but also needed more substantive programmatic assistance.[219] Regions also reported different programmatic priorities. For example, migration is a key issue primarily for countries in Asia and the Pacific and Arab States.[220,221]

With HQ guidance to halt regional fundraising, regional initiatives may lose their funding.[222]

Finding 21: The expectations on what MCOs can deliver are unrealistic due to an ambitious scope of work and limited capacity.

The description in the Executive Board Papers states that, "representatives of MCOs represent UN Women in more than one country simultaneously, including on multiple United Nations country teams (UNCT) simultaneously" and, therefore, "will require capacity to reflect the additional responsibility of representing the UN Women mandate on other UNCTs." [223] However, this capacity is variable based on office context. MCOs differences break down into two main categories—island and non-island MCOs.

Nevertheless, neither MCO has been given the capacity promised in the Executive Board Papers to represent their increased responsibility.

219 Portfolio review interviews: 5/12 COs
220 14 September 2015. "Project Document: ASEAN Migration WEE".
221 Regional Office for Arab States Annual Report 2015, ROAP case study
222 ROAP case study and HQ
223 Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. 2012. "Regional Architecture: Administrative, Budgetary and Financial Implications and Implementation Plan". UNW/2012/10. p. 9.

Range of delivery $ per person (staff and non-staff) in ROs in 2015
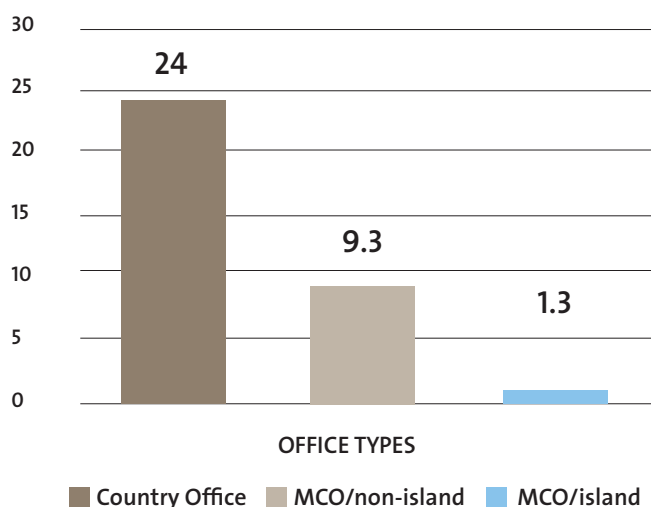
As seen in **Exhibit 17**, in 2016, compared to COs, non-island MCOs have on average 2.58 times fewer staff per country, and only 25 per cent of a representative's attention. It is not surprising that island MCOs have activities in very few islands because they have, on average, 18.58 times fewer staff as compared to COs.[224]

The current MCO structure has limited its ability to respond to its satellite countries. MCOs budgets in comparison to COs are only on average $800,000 higher. Delivery amounts are almost the same. In addition, three out of five MCOs in portfolio interviews reported difficulty in supporting the triple mandate within their satellite countries, as well as in their own country. However, the support and relationship between MCOs and programme presence offices are variable based on the context. In the Morocco MCO case study, because the MCO itself felt under-resourced, MCO staff called for a greater RO presence in the Morocco MCO, including helping programme presence countries gain better visibility with their host governments. In the Tajikistan case study, it was found that the programme presence

224 Staffing information provided by Human Resources based on 2015 Annual Report Data

offices depended heavily on the MCO for programmatic and operation support. Nonetheless, in ROAP, the MCOs did not have a strong relationship with their satellite programme presence office(s).[225]

Finding 22: The expectations for how programme presence offices can deliver need to be adjusted in accordance to their objective and capacity.

Programme presence offices were designed for delivery of programmes, and yet, there is an expectation that they should also be engaged in normative work and coordination, just as COs and MCOs. Similarly, countries with a UN Women gender adviser in a resident coordinators office are expected to deliver on the integrated mandate. These expectations are not realistic because these two structures do not ensure adequate capacity to deliver.

There is a clear difference when comparing COs' to programme presence office's capacity to respond.

that only function with non-staff (supported by non-core funding), delivery rates differ greatly (see **Exhibit 18**).[226]

Differences in programme presence offices' capacity were confirmed in case study and portfolio review interviews. Four out of five ROs and three out of five MCOs reported difficulty in supporting and interacting with programme presence offices due to their limited capacity.

Programme presence offices in the portfolio review and the case study showed adequate operational capacity but relied heavily on their MCO and RO for support in all aspects of their work. The Morocco MCO case study found that, although the MCO model provided value added (e.g., programmatic and operational support and oversight) to the two programme presence countries, these programme presence countries still expressed a strong desire for greater delegation of authority.

EXHIBIT 18:

Programme presence offices' more limited capacity, budget and delivery as compared to COs[225]

	Total staff	Total non- staff	Total workforce	Programmable budget 2015	2015 Delivery rate
Average CO	9	20	29	$3,918,743	85%
Average programme presence country	1	6	7	$617,346	57%

In the portfolio review, COs had on average 22 more workforce than programme presence offices—14 more non-staff and 8 more staff. In addition, COs' budgets were on average six times higher than programme presence offices'. Programme presence offices continue to dominate the bottom of delivery rates for 2014 to 2015, averaging 58 per cent compared to the CO average of 85 per cent. Staffing issues in programme presence offices, which are almost completely reliant on non-core funding, can also be seen as affecting their ability to meet stakeholders' needs. When comparing programme presence offices that have staff to those

Evaluation Question 9. How efficient and responsive is the regional architecture in terms of delegation of authority, decision-making processes and methods for setting direction? To what extent and why are the roles and responsibilities, coordination of labour and coordination of systems clear and efficient?

---

225 ROAP and Tajikistan case study
226 COAT 2014, COAT 2015, Delivery as of 31 December 2015 run date 13 Jan 2016
227 Workforce information provided by Human Resources, April 2015

Finding 23: Delegation of authority has made processes and decision-making more efficient.

Delegation of authority was rolled out to ROs, MCOs, and COs from 2 February 2013 (Morocco MCO, Palestine CO) until 2 December 2015 (Egypt CO). [228] In this time, UN Women went from delivering $130 million in country programmes in 2013 to approximately $150 million in 2014. UN Women also achieved an overall implementation rate of approximately 86 per cent.[229]

ROs and COs were most likely to report the benefits of delegation of authority in case study and portfolio interviews. ROs and COs pointed to the delegation of authority as making their offices more efficient in work with external stakeholders and improving their overall ability to fulfil the triple mandate.[230] Examples include Colombia's engagement in mainstreaming gender perspectives in the peace process, and ROAP's engagement in engendering the ASEAN migration policy and working closely with the Economic and Social Commission of Asia and the Pacific.

The Liberia case study found that the regional architecture and the delegation of authority have increased the administrative efficiency of the Liberia CO, improving its ability to engage with partners and achieve CO results. Nonetheless, they still leave several areas of unnecessary non-delegation of authority further constraining efficiencies reinforced by the lack of clarity in regional architecture roles and responsibilities. Furthermore, both Project Cooperative Agreements and Letters of Agreement, which were now done locally (within the agreed-upon delegation of authority threshold), had improved the timeliness and decreased transactions costs with CSOs and government partners, respectively; the same pertains to the approvals of Project Cooperation Agreements. For processes requiring RO approval on contracting, the turnaround time had also improved.

Finding 24: A large majority of offices requested increased delegation of authority to continue to improve their efficiency, particularly in donor reporting and approvals.

In case studies, portfolio reviews and the survey, one of the top requests by COs was increased delegation of authority.[231] While several recent initiatives aim to strengthen linkages and the responsiveness of HQ to the field, corporate strategies are not fully communicated throughout the regional architecture, challenging UN Women in setting priorities. Given the rapid pace of quality improvement of UN Women processes driven by HQ, there is unclear understanding of priorities, sequencing and benefits.

FPIs that require countries to negotiate a minimum of $1 million in programmes provide clear direction for higher volume fundraising and prioritize working at a larger scale in order to ensure the sustainability of UN Women. Yet, different levels of the regional architecture—from the RO on down—still do not fully understand the motivation for FPIs or the urgent need for funding that motivates the $1 million target. They see it as an additional HQ directive rather than a change in the way of doing business. In Tajikistan, the FPIs were not part of the fundraising strategy. The office is currently challenged to raise money for projects at a fraction of the $1 million level required by the initiative. For example, the Kazakhstan MCO, in its Resource Mobilization Strategy for 2016-2020 reported that the $1 million threshold was a reach. Still, Kazakhstan is trying to fulfil the expectations of the FPIs: the FPI theme of Gender Inequality of Disaster Risk Management is reflected in the Tajikistan Strategic Note.[232]

At this time, HQ promotes both the FPIs and working at scale, and emphasizes working with CSOs and reaching the most vulnerable women as a priority. Thus, even though the organization understands well the need for resource mobilization, there is uncertainty on how to reach vulnerable women with the movement to larger grants. For example, in the Women's Political Empowerment and Leadership FPI design, key outcomes of the design call for outputs such as:

228 List of Delegations of Authority, 4 September 2015
229 UN Women. January 2015. "Report on Implementation of UN Women's Regional Architecture, Nov 2012- Nov 2014".
230 Portfolio review interviews: 4/5 ROs, 12/12 COs, 2/5 MCOs

231 Portfolio review interviews: 2/5 ROs, 4/12 COs
232 Tajikistan case study, ROAP case study, Colombia case study; portfolio review interviews: 2/12 COs, 1/6 MCOs

increased technical capacity of women to engage in leadership contests; enhanced women's capacity to conduct competitive, well-resourced campaigns; and the creation and sustaining of networks to support women leaders. The role that UN Women might play in bringing about these outputs, however, is unclear—and maybe appropriately so to create space for field offices to adapt to local needs. Yet, if a particular UN Women office elects to play an active programmatic role in such activities, the time engaged in hands-on activities at the grass-roots level translates to smaller programmes and less time to manage larger pools of funding. Furthermore, it raises the question of whether UN Women sees itself more as a catalyst creating access to funding and policy influence for women's groups, or whether UN Women is engaged in hands-on grass-roots activism alongside CSOs. In the absence of a common vision on exactly how UN Women intends to reach the most marginalized CSOs, countries are unclear about corporate priorities and try to do both—move to scale while continuing with small grants. Therefore, there is still work to be done to clarify the most cost-effective roadmap on how to integrate all UN Women priorities into a cohesive, realistic and balanced set of corporate priorities.

Finding 25: There were significant variations in CO performance in delivery. Size of total workforce in COs did not consistently influence the delivery rates, and there was no correlation between budget size and delivery rates.

COs varied substantially in context and performance, and had no clear patterns in terms of delivery rates, budget size or management ratios. CO budgets varied from $1.3 to $17.4 million and had from 6 to 22 staff and 9 to 62 non-staff.[236]

Offices with higher budgets or the highest workforce numbers did not consistently have higher (or lower) delivery rates. Consequently, offices with more money or more staff and non-staff did not have more trouble spending that money (nor were they better able to spend it). **Exhibit 20** demonstrates this lack of correlation.

The top five delivery rates came from four different regions and various country sizes (Brazil versus Haiti), from 15 to 25 staff members. The bottom five delivery rates also varied substantially in terms of regional context (Africa, Arab States, Eastern Europe, Latin

---

EXHIBIT 19:

Recently initiated process and systems improvements from HQ

New initiative, guidance or system	Year of rollout
FPI	2015
RMS	2015
Resource Mobilization Role of ROs redefined	2015
Dashboard	2015-2016 (still in Beta)
Humanitarian Response Work Flow	2016
DAMS	2016

Finally, with so many new and rapidly rolled out initiatives by HQ (see **Exhibit 19**), the field is unclear on the sequencing, status and priorities among them.[233,234,235]

America and the Caribbean), with sizes of budget from $1.3 million to $17 million, and staffing from 20 to 51 members.

---

233 Portfolio review interviews: 8/29 countries provided negative feedback on rollout of RMS
234 UN Women Regional Architecture Evaluation Survey: 24 per cent (n=211) of respondents reported RMS guidance was very weak, weak or inadequate; across all systems on average 18 per cent (n=209) reported guidance was very weak, weak or inadequate
235 ROAP case study, Colombia case study

236 COAT, 2014, COAT 2015, Workforce Information provided by Human Resources, April 2015

Delivery rates were not correlated with budget size or total workforce

Country	Total workforce	Delivery rate 2014	Delivery rate 2015	Annual 2015 Workplan budget
JORDAN	25	110%	102%	$4,285,485
LIBERIA	26	82%	99%	$4,701,196
BRAZIL	19	92%	96%	$4,149,838
HAITI	15	82%	94%	$1,330,080
SOUTH SUDAN	18	94%	93%	$2,265,380
AFGHANISTAN	84	75%	86%	$17,429,851
VIETNAM	20	82%	85%	$2,816,883
COTE D'IVOIRE	20	41%	85%	$1,498,132
GUATEMALA	22	75%	82%	$3,317,803
COLOMBIA	36	72%	79%	$5,876,064
KYRGYZSTAN	51	83%	79%	$1,984,391
TANZANIA	23	99%	77%	$6,953,638
OCCUPIED PALESTIN-IAN TERRITORIES	30	80%	67%	$4,270,462
NIGERIA	20	80%	61%	$3,873,794

Finding 26: There were unclear criteria for initial selection and designation of countries as ROs, MCOs, COs and programme presence offices, as well as how offices' roles change and adapt to the regional architecture.

There is evidence of little clarity in designation and criteria for typologies. At the beginning of the regional architecture, criteria were laid out for the roles of each office, with more specific expectations for ROs in comparison to MCOs, COs and programme presence offices. MCOs and COs were described as similar entities, while programme presence offices were described as "other modalities" with vague description of their designation.[237]

Furthermore, the reasoning for why offices were transitioned to COs or programme presence offices remains unclear. Prior to the regional architecture, some UNIFEM COs were designated as "supported by IB" and some as "not supported by IB." Those offices "not supported by IB" evolved either into COs or programme presence offices, while all offices supported by IB converted into COs.[238] There is no documentation in background review that explained the reasoning for why some offices became COs, while others became programme presence.

Portfolio review interviews reported a lack of clarity in how countries were designated as each typology and how those decisions were made at HQ and ROs.[239] Furthermore, there was evidence of weak communication or lack of clarity in regards to changing roles of offices—for example, how a programme presence office can transition to a CO or even whether such a transition is desirable. Some staff reported a conviction that the purpose of programme presence countries is to graduate to COs, while others simply did not know. In case studies and the portfolio review, some programme presence offices reported they were clearly on the path to becoming a CO, while

237 Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. 2012. "Regional Architecture: Administrative, Budgetary and Financial Implications and Implementation Plan". UNW/2012/10. p. 11.

238 PowerPoint presentation on rollout of the regional architecture

239 Portfolio review interviews: 5/5 ROs, 5/5 MCOs, 3/12 COs, 3/8 programme presence offices

other programme presence offices did not see this as a possibility for the future. Even those that believed they were in the process of transitioning were unclear as to why they were chosen to transition.[240] Further probing at HQ on the thinking behind the designation of offices revealed that the issues being considered were complex, strategic and political. For example, one country was being considered for transition from programme presence to a CO because of its potential for leadership and sub-regional influence in women's empowerment. Another was being considered for becoming a new programme presence country, in spite of its existing large women's programmes, because of its important influence with development banks and private donors. Also, there was no established process and time for reviewing typology assignments, and there was not a designated set of people who were tasked with such a review.

ROs, MCOs and COs reported being unsure when and why changes will be initiated from HQ and how they are expected to be involved. For example, one of the main complaints by ROs, COs and programme presence offices was the lack of warning by HQ that the RMS system was coming and that offices needed to prepare to set time aside to adjust to this new system.[241] Another example is that they knew there was a redesign of donor reporting process, but they had no sense of the timing, rollout and their expected role in it.[242]

ROs were told not to engage in regional fundraising in order not to compete with countries in their region, but their coordination and normative responsibilities at the regional level (that are funded by regional fundraising) were not deprioritized.[243] They were, therefore, unclear about the implied message regarding the ROs' normative and coordination functions.

Finding 27: There are differing degrees of visibility of the regional architecture and access to information from different levels of the organization.

In terms of the efficiency of linkages between the different levels of UN Women's regional architecture, there is an expectation that each level has the information it needs from and about other levels, and the organization has a clear and shared view of activities and needs at every level. In fact, each level of the regional architecture has different visibility into other levels, and few respondents demonstrated an appreciation of the role of their particular level in the whole of the architecture. Some levels, such as programme presence offices that are satellites to MCOs, have very low visibility in the regional architecture—they do not "see" a lot of it and are not "seen" very clearly by other levels. The limited visibility seems to be due to the significant responsibilities of fulfilling the UN Women mandate and working with so many different stakeholders, as well as limitations in internal communication and weaknesses in knowledge management in UN Women. Synthesizing information from case studies, portfolio interviews and past evaluations, **Exhibit 21** presents a view of the regional architecture from different levels of the system.

---

240 Case study interview ROAP; portfolio review interviews with select programme presence offices
241 Portfolio review interviews: 2/5 ROs, 5/12 COs, 1 programme presence office reported negative rollout of RMS and other systems
242 Ibid.
243 ROAP case study and HQ
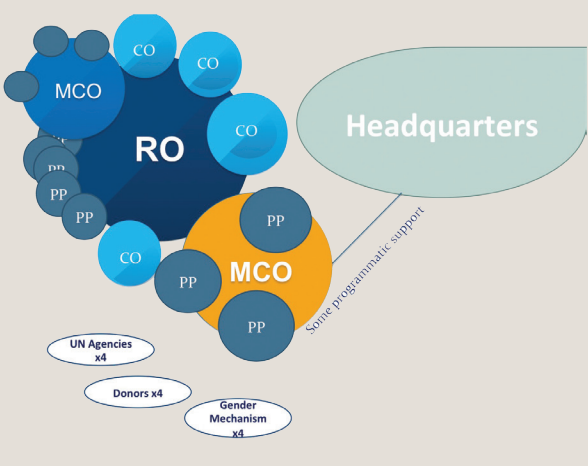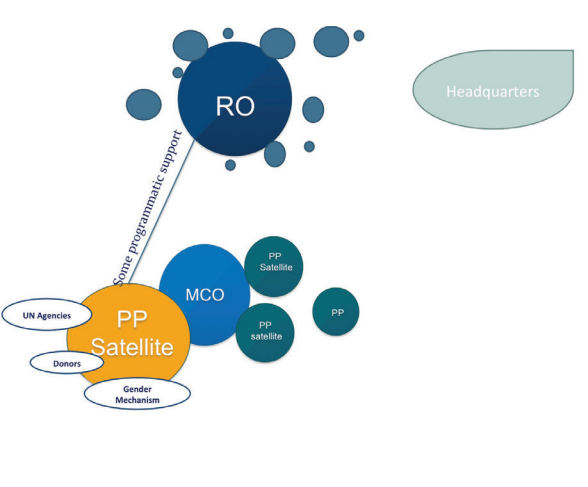
Visibility of UN Women regional architecture from different levels of the system

Lens and focus	View of UN Women regional architecture
HQ lens: HQ is involved in supporting global GEWE platforms, UN partner coordination, ROs and some COs (e.g., ones receiving humanitarian assistance), developing policies, responding to the Executive Board, ensuring compliance, and monitoring the overall performance of the organization. HQ leaders are deeply involved in planning for resource mobilization in light of the shortfall from the promised budget. They are also in the process of reviewing key processes that support the regional architecture's efficiency. While HQ leaders and the Programme Division have constant awareness of all levels of the regional architecture, HQ staff is mostly focused on responding to HQ demands.	
RO lens: A busy office actively present in key regional platforms that influence GEWE in all countries in the region, RO staff divide their time between regional advocacy, support for countries, backstopping programme presence countries (and even non-presence countries) and responding to HQ. RO success requires funds for regional advocacy and capacity to provide substantive programmatic and operational support to countries. ROs have had to work hard to establish their credibility with actors in regional platforms. ROs would like to receive more timely warning and briefing on changes initiated by HQ so they are better able to support rollout to countries in their region. RO leaders are somewhat aware of what is happening at HQ and other regions. Other RO staff, however, is mostly unaware of the structure and activities at HQ, and only a few are aware of what other regions are doing in areas of mutual interest.	
MCO lens: With several satellite programme presence offices to support, MCOs have, on average, 2.5 times fewer workforce members than COs to devote per country in their purview. They strive to have sustained presence in key country platforms that influence GEWE in all MCO countries. The representative has to divide her or his attention among all countries and travels a lot. MCOs collaborate with CSOs and manage programmes well. They stretch to support all MCO countries operationally and have challenges in fulfilling the coordination role. MCO leaders are aware of activities and resources in the RO in their region, and they are aware of activities at HQ in the Programme Unit. They are burdened with the responsibility of acting both as a CO with a fraction of the resources and an RO with responsibilities of supporting programme presence countries. MCOs are not aware of other countries in their region outside the MCO cluster, or of other regions, due to limited time.	

Lens and focus	View of UN Women regional architecture
CO lens: With increased presence in key country platforms that influence GEWE, COs coordinate UN partners, facilitate and collaborate with CSOs, manage programmes and advocate for GEWE—especially reaching the most vulnerable women. COs stretch to keep up with all directives from ROs and HQ—e.g., new campaigns, new reporting requirements, fundraising for FPIs, supporting evaluations, etc. Sometimes, the justification for directives is not clear to COs, even though they try to comply. Some countries are challenged by the exclusive use of English in campaigns, reporting, etc. COs worry about their budget allocation and do not find the criteria for allocations clear. COs are aware of their ROs. Awareness of HQ varies, with higher awareness for humanitarian crises and countries with existing past relationships. COs are becoming increasingly aware of other countries in their region. They are generally not aware of what is happening in other regions.	
Programme presence, MCO satellite office lens: With limited resources and staff, an MCO-satellite programme presence country sees only a fraction of the regional architecture. The programme presence country is familiar with its MCO and is possibly aware of the RO policy advisors. Programme presence country staff collaborates well with CSO partners and are busy managing programmes advocating for GEWE—especially focused on reaching the most vulnerable women. They have limited access to UN platforms or gender mechanisms because they do not have high enough status, and offices are not led by UN Women staff. Programme presence offices worry about the end date of their programmes, but they are mostly not engaged in fundraising. New HQ initiatives are not clear to programme presence offices, and they have limited capacity to manage, report or deliver on the integrated mandate. They are happy to see the MCO representative and wish they had more of her or his time.	

EVALUATION QUESTION 10. How efficient is the use of financial and human resources and information technology systems in the framework of the regional architecture?

Finding 28: The regional architecture has contributed to increasing the efficiency of systems and UN Women continues to improve the quality of these systems, such as financial management, human resources and donor reporting, to achieve greater efficiencies.

The most reported system in terms of highest efficiency was financial management. The MOPAN Evaluation (2014) found financial accountability to be strong.[244] Seven offices specifically mentioned the DMA and Finance Section in particular at HQ when asked about positive support from HQ, and they noted the division was extremely efficient in responding to requests from the field.

UN Women also increased their certified financial statements for donors from 300 in 2012 to 600 in 2015. ROs and COs have significantly increased their financial management capability.[245] In 2013, the UN Board of Auditors issued 17 recommendations for the year-end of 2012, 16 of which were implemented within that year. In 2013 out of 12 recommendations, 9 were implemented and 3 were on track for completion. In 2014 out of 12 recommendations, 4 were implemented and 8 were on track for completion. Additionally, UN Women has received clean external audit reports since 2011.[246]

Human Resources Section have made many achievements in efficiency. The completion of the human resources business process mapping exercise and the introduction of a streamlined recruitment and selection process resulted in significant reduction in the average time-to-select.[247] In addition, in February 2016, the division rolled out the new Fast Track Document for humanitarian situations to reflect the need for flexibility in conflict zones. The rollout of this document shows UN Women progress in entering areas where it previously did not have a presence and adapting to those situations by creating flexible guidance for these unique settings.

Delayed donor reporting has been recognized as an issue, largely due to the long inefficient process of getting approval from ROs and HQ for the narrative report and the limited authority given to regional and country levels. Twenty of 29 offices interviewed in the portfolio review mentioned donor reporting as an impediment to efficient processes. In HQ case studies, staff also complained about the poor quality of the reports coming in—part of the reason for the lengthy approval process. There were also seven countries in 2014 and 2015 with overdue donor reports, and eight countries reporting more than $100,000 in partner advances greater than six months in 2015.[248]

There is an ongoing review of the current process, and changes are being made to make it more efficient and clear. In February 2016, HQ rolled out DAMS, which captures reporting commitments of offices and sends alerts when donor reports are due. This preventative alert system will provide dashboards to management in order to track reports that are overdue and stay on top of offices and HQ in order to ensure efficient donor reporting.[249]

Finding 29: There are still limitations to efficiency in procurement and human resources, which remain too burdensome and challenging for the organization.

The relevance of the POM, which is based on UNDP rules and regulations and has been slightly adjusted, needs to continue to be revised to fit the appropriateness of UN Women needs, especially for CSOs. Gaps in the POM and the need for revision have been reported in previous audits and the most recent Human Resources Annual Report.[250] Many in the field complained about the procurement process

---

244 MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women." UN Women. p. 15.
245 Certified financial statements or certified financial donor reports as of 31 December 2015
246 UN Women. "UN Women 2016-2017 – Integrated Budget". p. 11.
247 February 2016. "Annual Report 2015: Human Resources". p. 6.

248 COAT 2014, COAT 2015
249 January 2016. Donor Reporting Memo, announcement sent on behalf of DMA, the Strategic Partnerships Division, the Programme Division, and the Policy Division.
250 February 2016. "Annual Report 2015: Human Resources". p. 35.

and sometimes looked for ways to work around the current system. [251] In one country, the CO used the Programme Cooperation Agreement mechanism instead of procurement to engage organizations, because it was reported to be twice as fast, and in an MCO, procurement was favoured because it experienced the Programme Cooperation Agreement as more complicated. In another case, UN Women staff had to spend a lot of time developing the capacity of local organizations to comply with POM rules. Finally, another office reported having informal consultations with staff who were knowledgeable in spite of those staff having rotated off the committee because they were no longer eligible having passed their maximum allowable years of service.

As UN Women is a small organization and as the regional architecture continues to be refined, staff and COs reported that not all delegation of authority in procurement and human resources has been rolled out with the same amount of effectiveness. For example, the reliance on an external service provider, UNDP, for recruitment was mentioned in case studies, portfolio reviews, and previous evaluations and reports as a challenge to efficiency.[252] This is an issue that is known to UN Women and UNDP, and it is currently being looked into. UNDP recently conducted a survey of all service contractors to assess its services and improve upon inefficiencies, but the evaluation team was unable to locate this report.

Although the Human Resources Department is working extremely hard to improve efficiency of the systems, it faces two important challenges: (1) limited capacity in terms of staff and systems; and (2) a systemic issue in workforce composition. The human resources team (14 people total) serves a global workforce of 2,047 people. The current industry standard ratio is 1.1 human resources staff to every 100 employees, assuming an established human resources function with efficient and integrated information technology systems. At UN Women, the ratio is 0.6

human resources staff to 100 employees, and system modernization is ongoing.[253] Regarding systems, the Human Resources Department had no way of providing the evaluation team with the most current information on staffing levels anywhere in the organization, and the systems development underway were designed to address many different inefficiencies.

In terms of workforce composition, an important challenge is the staff versus non-staff ratio. In the 2015 Human Resources Report, it was reported that 58 per cent of the workforce is currently non-staff.[254] Overreliance on non-staff, who are on short-term contracts, has the potential to limit capacity to deliver efficiently and effectively, and hamper sustainability of projects and presence in countries. The staff in place also noted that there are limited opportunities for capacity development within their jobs. The number one request for all staff over the portfolio review was increased staff capacity, as well as increased capacity building of the existing staff.[255] The recruitment of non-staff is decentralized to the field with little HQ oversight, and audits in years 2013, 2014 and 2015 have commented on improper use of non-staff contract modalities.[256]

There were no major issues raised about information technology as was confirmed by the information technology survey conducted in 2015.[257] The only complaint in association with information technology was the financial management software, Atlas, which many at HQ and the field felt to be burdensome and inappropriate for any of the functions it serves—finance, budgeting and human resources management—which is different than the larger projects taken on by UNDP.

Given the number of processes and systems under review and re-engineering, any efficiency findings about financial, human resources and information technology systems will be obsolete within a few months.

---

251 Portfolio review interviews: 10 offices (2 MCOs, 3 COs, 5 programme presence offices)

252 MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women." UN Women. p. 15.

253 February 2016. "Annual Report 2015: Human Resources". p. 11.

254 Ibid., p. 6.

255 Portfolio review interviews: 29/29 offices interviewed

256 February 2016. "Annual Report 2015: Human Resources". p. 14.

257 September 2015. "IT Satisfaction ScoreCard, prepared for UN Women".

EVALUATION QUESTION 11. To what extent do the existing funding sources offer sustained support for the current staffing structure and planned results of the regional architecture?

As has been stated previously, UN Women's regional architecture was never fully resourced after approval by the Executive Board in 2012, and it continues to put a heavy emphasis on fundraising in order to ensure the organization has funds that can support the current structure of the regional architecture.[258]

Finding 30: UN Women has improved its resource mobilization targets since its rollout in 2012, but a strategy and more staff are needed for this activity.

UN Women achieved and slightly exceeded its target contributions for both regular resources and other resources for the first time in 2014. This represents significant growth relative to 2013. Since 2014, UN Women has continued to increase targets for regular and other resources and has set more ambitious targets for 2016-2017 (see **Exhibit 22**).[259]

However, offices reported needing a strategy for and more help in resource mobilization from ROs and HQ. Currently, most ROs and COs have no staff designated to focus on resource mobilization. Colombia staff warned that their successful resource mobilization was enabled by the broader resources available in Colombia because of the peace process. In the Liberia case study, while the regional architecture has led to increased visibility and credibility vis-à-vis the Government of Liberia, there have been more mixed results in terms of resource mobilization, which the CO felt should not be its sole responsibility.

Twenty-six new donors contributed to UN Women for the first time in 2015 and 44 donors contributed multi-year pledges. In addition, total funding from new and the existing private sector partnership increased from $5.6 million in 2013 to $6.6 million in 2015.[260,261]

258 Executive Board of UN Women. "Structured Dialogue on Financing: Report on Financing the UN Women Strategic Plan, Including its FPIs". UNW/2016/CRP.1. p. 4; IB estimates for UN Women biennium 2014-2015

259 UN Women. September 2015. "Draft Decision 2015/6 on Integrated Budget for the Biennium 2016-2017". p. 8.
260 Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. "Progress made on the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women Strategic Plan, 2014-2017, Including Operational Activities in 2014", p. 30.
261 UN Women. September 2015. "Draft Decision 2015/6 on Integrated Budget for the Biennium 2016-2017". p. 9.

EXHIBIT 22:
Regular or other resources[261]

Legend: Regular Resources, Other Resources. Values (Millions $): 2013 Actual — 157, 116; 2014 Actual — 164, 159; 2015 Actual — 136, 171; 2016 Planned — 180, 230.

Finding 31: The current funding structure and the lack of a comprehensive resource mobilization strategy that also includes different regional perspectives limit UN Women offices in fulfilling the UN Women mandate.

In the most recent IB for 2016, UN Women proposed an IB with projected voluntary contributions of $880 million ($380 million in regular resources and $500 million in other resources) for 2016-2017 and an appropriation of $196.4 million (gross)—a large increase from the $690 million set for 2014-2015, but still below the $500 million promised in the rollout of the regional architecture.[262]

The realities and the impact of the lack of funding have been documented in previous evaluations, including UN Women's inability to completely fulfil its integrated mandate.[263,264,265]

ROs and HQ. In portfolio interviews, MCOs and COs reported the need for greater assistance from ROs and HQ in resource mobilization. The survey also had 96 respondents (49 per cent of respondents) reporting a need for better resource mobilization strategy. HQ has recognized this and the FPIs are a step in the right direction, providing a framework for resource mobilization.[266] However, these initiatives have not yet been integrated into a broader strategy. Most ROs or COs currently have no staff designated to focus on resource mobilization. Current targets set for "non-core to be mobilized" in annual work planning do not have evidence of being backed by a business analysis for enhancing financial stability and sustainability. UNICEF's approach to funding trends is presented below.[267,268,269,270]

UNICEF RESPONSE TO FUNDING TRENDS

Like UN Women, UNICEF bases its overall approach on the centrality of COs. According to the UNICEF general mandate, defined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Country Director holds authority and accountability for country programming. COs are relevant to the extent that they can respond to local needs and issues. UNICEF supports a wide degree of latitude in how Regional Directors interpret and implement corporate policies according to regional variation and need, with that goes accountability.

Two new trends in the donor landscape are challenging this approach. First, donors are increasingly funding global initiatives that, inevitably, are managed at HQ. This reduces UNICEF flexibility to be responsive to local needs and requests because priorities are increasingly decided at the global level. This is challenging their current practices and leading to some rethinking. In addition, with growing scarcity of funds, donors are increasing their expectations regarding value-for-money and results. This implies that core resources are increasingly scarce. In addition, this demand increases the need for centralized and common reporting

---

Given UN Women's current funding reality, offices reported needing a clearer resource mobilization strategy at every level of the regional architecture, as well as more help in resource mobilization from

262 Ibid., p. 8.

263 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9. p. 8.

264 MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women". UN Women. p. 3.

265 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 27.

266 Portfolio review interviews: 5/5 MCOs, 2/12 COs

267 UNICEF. "Convention on the Rights of the Child". Accessible at: www.unicef.org/crc/

268 UNICEF. Executive Board Document. 2012. "Private Fundraising: 2012 Workplan and Proposed Budget". Accessible at: http://www.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/2012-ABL1_PFP-ODS-English.pdf

269 UNICEF. Executive Board Document. 2009. "UNICEF Strategic Framework for Partnerships and Collaborative Relationships". Accessible at: http://www.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/N0928210.pdf

270 UNICEF. Executive Board Document. 2008. "Global Strategy for Collaborative Relationships and Partnerships: A Preliminary Concept Note". Accessible at: http://www.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/E-ICEF-2008-12-Global_strategy-Concept_note.pdf

(including the creation of a Field Results Group) so that UNICEF achievements can be aggregated in ways that allow reporting across the agency.

UNICEF is creative in its fundraising efforts—30 per cent of its funds come from private sources. While some may argue that its mandate makes it easier for the agency to fundraise in comparison to other UN agencies, it also maintains a large fundraising staff (200 in Geneva) and also supports efforts to make sure that every staff member thinks of him or herself as a fundraiser. They develop creative programmes such as "change for good" with global airlines, and national programmes, such as a partnership with a national retailer that invites patrons to round their purchase up to the nearest dollar, sending these extra funds to the UNICEF office that started the programme (and helping it become financially independent of HQ). Key lessons to learn from UNICEF include: thinking outside the box in terms of revenue streams and fundraising approaches, and having a dedicated revenue generation team that can play a central role.

The change in funding profiles also means that middle-income countries are having a much harder time raising funds than lower income countries. As a consequence, UNICEF staff needs to spend more time supporting middle-income countries. Middle-income countries are also in search of international networking with other middle-income countries to learn and benefit from these networks.

Both of these trends have reduced the agency of Country Directors with potential implications for the model as a whole. UN Women works within the same context. In fact, ROAP reported that in that region, given the preponderance of middle- and upper-middle-income countries, funding is scarce at the country level but available for regional programmes. It might be helpful to UN Women to explore creative approaches to fundraising, such as UNICEF's, which follow the changing landscape closely.

EVALUATION QUESTION 12. To what extent does the regional architecture support or reinforce management and administrative systems to promote gender-sensitive approaches in day-to-day operations of regional architecture?

Finding 32: Although UN Women is ahead of other UN agencies in promoting gender-sensitive approaches to management and administrative systems, the current bureaucratic structure contains gaps in ability to support gender-sensitive management.

UN Women has a significantly higher percentage of women, 74 per cent in international professional staff positions, compared to other UN agencies including UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA, which range from 43 to 50 per cent. In addition, UN Women has a higher percentage of women leaders—80 per cent in senior leadership positions—compared to the same agencies, which range from 37 to 47 per cent.[271]

Although there is recognition that managers are successful in applying gender knowledge at a range of ROs, MCOs and COs, there are mixed overall perceptions by many staff that the regional architecture does not promote gender-sensitive management in HQ. In the global survey of UN Women staff, 61 per cent reported that they are treated equally regardless of the full range of individual characteristics, while 20 per cent reported they are not treated equally.[272] While staff interviews at HQ were characterized with the same passion as those in the field, the level of stress expressed was significantly higher at HQ. Field staff reported that their colleagues listened to and supported them, and they felt they mattered. However, they were stressed with the workload, which at peak

---

271 February 2016. "Annual Report 2015: Human Resources".
272 UN Women. "UN Women Global Staff Survey". p. 111.

times drove them to exhaustion. HQ staff interviewed reported valuing the organization but presented a different set of concerns. The following issues were reported by two or more staff each: overwork driven by crisis management and an unreasonable workload, isolation from HQ divisions other than their own, a heightened awareness of perceived priorities of senior management as guiding their own priorities, frustration with decision-making in HQ, and the perception that their own point of view was unimportant to senior management. These sentiments were not solicited directly but were offered by staff in response to questions related to what staff valued and what they wanted to change within the regional architecture.

The shift from UNIFEM to UN Women, in combination with the implementation of the regional architecture and subsequent delegation of authority, has changed the scope of work for UN Women staff in the field. UN Women staff need more operations and management skills rather than substantive programmatic skills that most activists had in UNIFEM. HQ DMA has been rolling out trainings in this area. Over the past two years, DMA reported that it conducted seven regional trainings on operations and programming in HQ, Panama, Senegal, Tanzania and Turkey.[273] However, in portfolio review interviews, staff complained of a lack of operations training that is needed to be strong managers and fulfil the UN Women mandate. Currently, many of the staff are in operations in ROs and COs with less staff dedicated to substantive programmatic work. Even substantive programmatic staff have reported undertaking project management and operations due to the limited capacity of their office and their need to be all staff at once. This shift in staff focus and personnel with limited capacity building has the potential to shift away from gender-sensitive approaches to management and day-to-day operations.[274]

---

273 Reported by DMA
274 Case study and portfolio review interviews

4. REFLECTIONS

A **Polarity Management**[275] frame was used to reconcile and reframe problems and opportunities, increasing the likelihood of arriving at solutions that support both near- and long-term organizational success. In Polarity Management, both poles are important and need to be balanced in the organization, moving away from a "problem and solution" frame. UN Women has important assets and a complex mandate that make Polarity Management critical to its success (see **Exhibit 23**).

The Polarity Management frame is intended to convey that, although there are tensions in an organization that are framed as "problems," they are in fact not problems, but sets of opposites that constitute essential elements that need to be managed for a healthy organization. The left and right poles in **Exhibit 23** are both good things to have in an organization—for example, it is important to have compliance with rules and flexibility to respond; emphasis on resource mobilization and larger programmes and ability to address the needs of small CSOs that represent the most vulnerable women; emphasizing each mandate and attaining an appropriate balance of attention across mandates; offering strong HQ direction and supporting autonomy through the delegation of authority; and finally, having staff with strong advocacy skills who inspire change and staff with strong operational skills who manage operations well and inspire confidence in the organization. UN Women currently has a good balance in Polarity Management within the regional architecture, and it will be important to maintain that balance as it continues to refine its structure and create the future of the organization.

---

275 Johnson, B. 2014. "Polarity Management: Identifying and Managing Unsolvable Problems". Amherst, MA: HRD Press Inc.

Polarities in UN Women that need to be balanced

	LEFT POLE	POSSIBLE DIRECTION	RIGHT POLE
Compliance *and* responsiveness to CSOs	UN Women needs to adhere to accepted POM rules in procurement.	UN Women might invest in a partnership modality that allows it to channel more flexible grants to most vulnerable CSOs, possibly through larger CSOs, to develop their capacity and bring vulnerable women to the table, which is highly valued by donors.	UN Women's mandate to reach the most vulnerable women requires flexible rules and small grants, which are expensive for UN Women to manage.
Resource mobilisation *and* responsiveness to the most vulnerable women CSOs	UN Women needs to engage in effective resource mobilisation to survive and flourish, e.g., targeting large funding for Flagship Programmes.	UN Women may consider limiting the type of partnerships it engages in, and using only tiered partnerships delegating its smaller, most vulnerable CSO partners to larger CSOs.	UN Women's mandate to reach the most vulnerable women requires flexible rules and small grants, which are expensive for UN Women to manage.
Implementing the mandate *and* limited resources	UN Women is committed to implementing the integrated mandate.	UN Women might interpret the integrated mandate as one that should be implemented globally, but does not need to be implemented evenly in every country, thus allowing flexibility to focus on different aspects of the mandate in different countries.	UN Women's mandate to reach the most vulnerable women requires flexible rules and small grants, which are expensive for UN Women to manage.
Control *and* autonomy	HQ must provide direction and oversight, and set priorities.	The delegation of authority is an excellent way to balance these two poles, and only needs clearer and well-communicated corporate priorities.	Countries need flexibility to respond to national priorities and needs.
Women's advocates *and* strong managers	Advocates inspire the organization.	UN Women needs both to be successful, and the organization gains strength in their integration.	Managers create a strong, efficient foundation.

5. PROMISING PRACTICES

In the course of the evaluation, the team identified several promising practices of UN Women.

Practice 1: UN Women has used its higher profile to increase the influence of women's CSOs, including facilitating their participation in decision-making for programmes and policies.

The evaluation found evidence that UN Women has used its delegation of authority for active promotion of GEWE in all platforms—and especially for bringing CSOs to the decision-making table. UN Women donors and government respondents readily named UN Women's relationships with CSOs and ability to bring them to the table as an important asset they valued. The evaluation of strategic partnerships will undoubtedly have more to say about this practice, because it seems to be one that is very powerful in creating sustainable sources of GEWE promotion globally and at all levels. UN Women leadership and modelling of this type of CSO empowerment are critical for increased effectiveness and sustainability.

Practice 2: The evaluation found many instances of strong integration of operational and advocacy skills by offices to maximize effectiveness in promotion of GEWE.

Case studies showed consistent cohesion between operational and advocacy experts around the UN Women mandate and the common vision of promoting GEWE. In this evaluation, UN partners interviewed spoke about joint programmes as a desirable strategy, because they respected UN Women both as a partner with gender and gender advocacy expertise, as well as in increasing operational capacity to manage programmes. Examples of such partners are: UNDP, UNFPA and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Similarly, there was evidence that UN Women is becoming a respected partner for donors and international development financial institutions. In some cases, these donors and financial institutions noted an initial scepticism about UN Women capacity to be a strong partner, but with the rollout of the regional architecture, they have seen evidence of increasing operational and policy strength. Examples of partners with increasing confidence in UN Women are: USAID and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Practice 3: UN Women staff has repeatedly exhibited an entrepreneurial and collaborative spirit, and strong orientation to internal and external customer service.

When the temptation might have been to use operational obstacles as an excuse for not delivering, the evaluation found evidence that UN Women staff exhibited determination, and was indefatigably tenacious in overcoming operational challenges and inefficiencies to get results. Examples include: obtaining and verifying data for this evaluation; tackling the challenge of resource mobilization by reaching out to new partners, including the private sector and new donors; and rapid emersion and learning to tackle new opportunities to promote GEWE, such as in migration policy, engendering peace, gender budgeting, engendering humanitarian response, and others.

Enabling factors for this entrepreneurship seemed to be the inspirational mandate that makes staff want to go above and beyond to serve, strong informal relationships, a customer service spirit in several HQ and RO units, and participatory and inclusive decision-making work practices in ROs and COs that invite people to support each other to get the work done.

Practice 4: UN Women demonstrated elements of strong leadership consistent with the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership® as described in the Kouzes and Posner model.[276]

Elements of strong leadership throughout the regional architecture and HQ were noted, especially through the case studies. These elements are presented in

---

276 Kouzes J. M. and B.Z. Posner. 2011. "The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership:cThe Leadership Challenge". San Francisco, CA.

Exhibit 24 as promising practices enabled by the delegation of authority at all levels of the organization.

Elements of UN Women's promising leadership practices

Leadership practice	Description from the Exemplary Leadership® Model	UN Women leadership practices
Model the way	Leaders establish principles concerning the way people (constituents, peers, colleagues, and customers alike) should be treated and the way goals should be pursued. They create standards of excellence and then set an example for others to follow. Because the prospect of complex change can overwhelm people and stifle action, they set interim goals so that people can achieve small wins as they work toward larger objectives. They unravel bureaucracy when it impedes action; they put up signposts when people are unsure of where to go or how to get there; and they create opportunities for victory.	In case studies, UN Women staff confidently shared their understanding of UN Women values and the triple mandate of UN Women. Both in case studies and the HQ site visit, staff reported that when bureaucracy seemed daunting, they had been able to find a different way forward. The evaluation team experienced that first hand in the support it received by UN Women staff to get validated data for the analysis. Evidence of "signposts" for outside stakeholders was closely tied with the UN Women advocacy campaigns. For inside stakeholders, there was evidence of signposts shared intra-office, but such clear communication was less evident for the regional architecture as a whole. In the Liberia CO, staff reported that its "activist leadership set the example for the rest of the staff."
Inspire a shared vision	Leaders passionately believe that they can make a difference. They envision the future, creating an ideal and unique image of what the organization can become. Leaders enlist others in their dreams. They breathe life into their visions and get people to see exciting possibilities for the future.	More than half of those interviewed in the evaluation reported finding inspiration in the UN Women mandate as the element they valued the most about their work. At the country level, in several case studies and portfolio review countries, the facilitation of CSOs to become a more unified and visible movement was highly valued. This is an example of the ability of UN Women to inspire a shared vision. (This CSO unification happened less at the regional level where CSOs expressed need for more collaboration with UN Women ROs, which seemed to be more an issue of capacity.) Joint programmes are another example of inspiring a shared vision with UN partners.
Challenge the process	Leaders search for opportunities to change the status quo. They look for innovative ways to improve the organization. In doing so, they experiment and take risks. And because leaders know that risk taking involves mistakes and failures, they accept the inevitable disappointments as learning opportunities.	Initiatives such as the territorial strategy in Colombia, establishing an observer/informer of parliament, engaging in humanitarian action in Nepal through ROAP, and pursuing significant fundraising based on the FPIs globally are examples of calculated risk taking that challenges the status quo. The use of evaluation and data as a foundation for advocacy has been a successful strategy to create a shared vision (it was praised by partners in the government, UN family and CSOs). A notable example of this approach was the gender budgeting and the practical focus it brought to GEWE. UN Women staff at all levels expressed confidence that they can create change leveraging their role as "the United Nations."

Leadership practice	Description from the Exemplary Leadership® Model	UN Women leadership practices
Enable others to act	Leaders foster collaboration and build spirited teams. They actively involve others. Leaders understand that mutual respect is what sustains extraordinary efforts; they strive to create an atmosphere of trust and human dignity. They strengthen others, making each person feel capable and powerful.	In Colombia, sharing data from parliament about current policy positions with partners is one strategy that has enabled external partners to contribute to the GEWE agenda. CSOs reported feeling empowered by being more visible and influential as a result of their collaboration with UN Women. UN Women successfully included CSOs in discussions with the Government of Colombia, in the peace talks, and also to lobby national and territorial government. In Liberia, the CO used a process they called "socializing of the Flagship Programmes," in which it facilitated consensus with local partners (including UNCT members), Government of Liberia agencies, development partners and CSOs, to develop a unified strategy that is reflected in its Revised Strategic Note. Internally, ROs have developed significant capacity and rapidly provide operational support to MCOs, COs and programme presence offices in their regions.
Encourage the heart	Accomplishing extraordinary things in organizations is hard work. To keep hope and determination alive, leaders recognize contributions that individuals make. In every winning team, the members need to share in the rewards of their efforts so leaders celebrate accomplishments. They make people feel like heroes.	In the field, UN Women staff have felt valued by their office leaders. In Colombia, Liberia, Morocco MCO and ROAP, staff reported that office leaders shared appreciation for successes. Internal practices of collaborative management in field offices have been a way that UN Women has supported individual initiatives at the country level.

A mid-level staff member in a CO summarized the UN Women leadership stance as follows:

"Our [UN Women's] value comes from the mandate, and our contribution as a Country Office to know the topic, to push our agenda. We are aware that we do not lead; we support the leadership of the state and civil society. To be aware of that place helps us to be able to manage frustrations even though we cannot reach everything we may want to. We work seriously with partners who do the right thing."

7. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the evaluation, the following 10 main conclusions emerged.

Conclusion 1: UN Women's overall ability to respond to stakeholder needs has significantly increased at all levels (global, regional and country), with some limitations by different office types.

Based on Findings: 1 and 3

With its significant increased presence from 59 offices in 2011 to 96 offices in 2015,[277] including regional and sub-regional presence, UN Women has positioned itself in many of the right platforms and fora to enable it to listen and respond to its external stakeholders. There is clear documentation from previous external assessments that the regional architecture has increased UN Women relevance with key external stakeholders.[278,279,280,281,282,283,284] Various assessments found that UN Women has been successful at adapting to country-level needs, relevant to external stakeholders, and strong in all areas of relationship management, including supporting national priorities, adjusting procedures and using country systems. These findings from past evaluations and reviews were confirmed in this evaluation's case studies, portfolio review and survey.

UN Women works within the regional architecture to ensure the universality of its mandate through the promotion of GEWE in global and regional agreements in diverse issue areas and by HQ and ROs providing support to all, including non-presence countries. On a global level, UN Women universality is seen in its normative work through the Commission on the Status of Women that has been key in providing governments and other partners with the necessary frameworks to promote GEWE in their own countries and organizations. On a regional level, UN Women normative work in regional platforms such as ASEAN, has enabled Member States to enact policies and programmes that support GEWE in their countries. The role of ROs to respond to non-presence countries has increased UN Women universality and ability to support SDGs in as many countries as possible throughout the world.

While UN Women has made significant progress in promoting universality, it experiences limitations by office type. At the country level, COs responded best to all stakeholders, while MCOs and programme presence offices were more limited in their capacity. MCOs were challenged by the additional responsibility to support satellite programme presence offices, because they are assigned the similar staffing as COs but have to support multiple countries instead of one. Also, because this was not an explicit criterion in the designation of countries across the typology, in some instances, UN Women may not have been considering systematically the presence and capacity of UN partners in countries in order to complement its own capacity in an effort to maximize delivering on the universality of its mandate.

Programme presence offices, originally designed in the regional architecture to implement programmes only, have two constraints: (1) limited access to key stakeholder platforms because they are not recognized as actors of equal standing as other UN agencies; and (2) limited capacity to respond—on average, their workforce is one fourth of the workforce of COs and the budgets they manage are six times smaller than CO

277 UN Women. 2016. "Annual Report of the Executive Director—Annex VI: Regional, Multi-country and Country Offices as of May 2016". UNW/2016/6.

278 UN Women. January 2015. "Report on Implementation of UN Women's Regional Architecture, Nov 2012- Nov 2014".

279 UN Women. 2014. "UN Women Annual Report 2014-2015".

280 UN Women. April 2016. "Mid-term Review of the Strategic Plan 2014-2016".

281 MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women."

282 UN Women. December 2013. "Multilateral Aid Review: Update UN Women Summary Assessment".

283 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)".

284 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9.
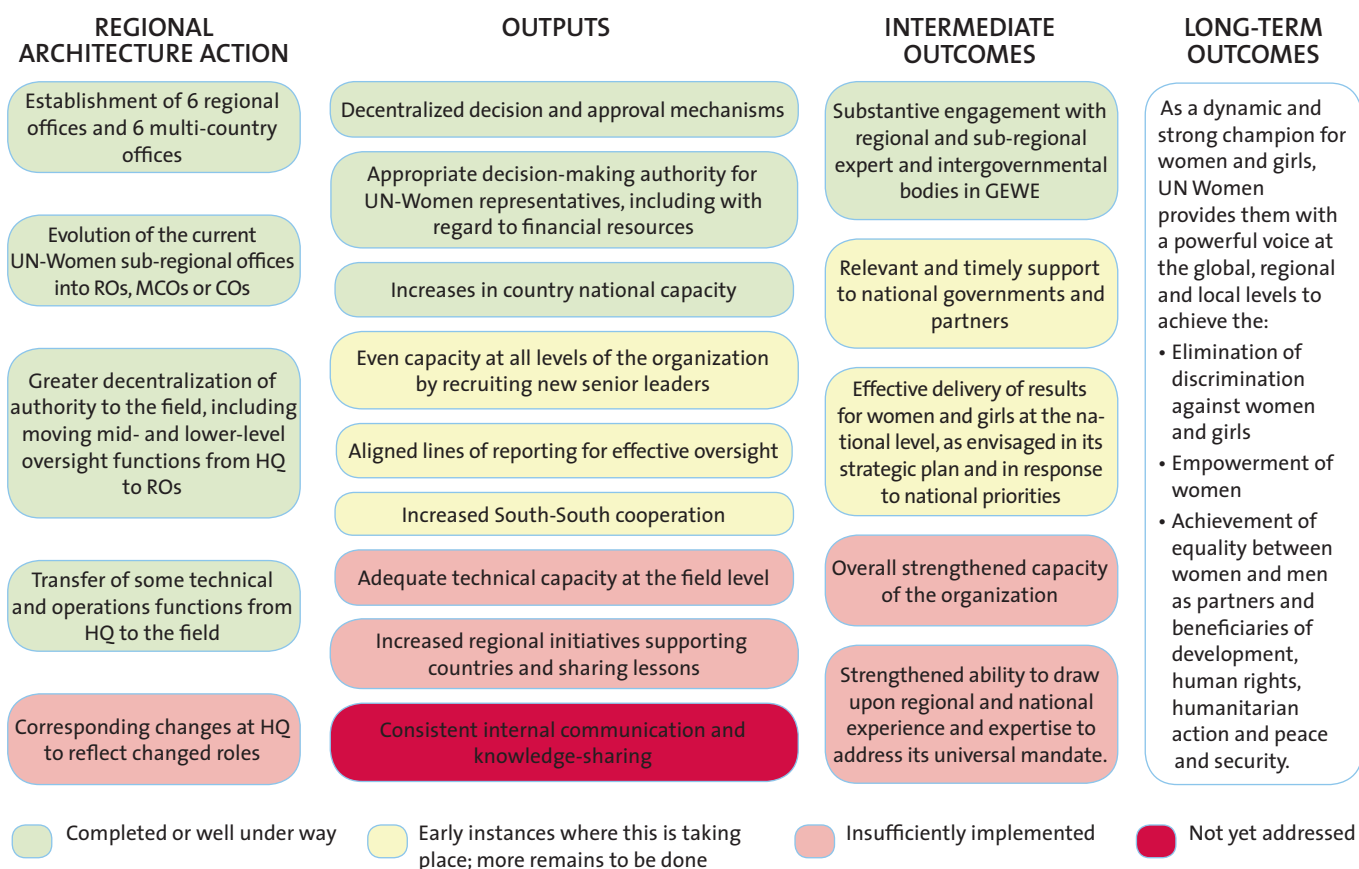
budgets. Meanwhile, UN Women capacity to respond to stakeholders in non-programme presence countries is limited, and they are best served by global and regional agreements incorporating GEWE.

Conclusion 2: The regional architecture has been rolled out rapidly and in accordance with the Executive Board Papers'[285] guidance and expectations with two exceptions: HQ structure has not been adequately adjusted to support regions and countries, and the prescribed robust knowledge management and internal communication functions have not been adequately developed.

Based on Findings: 4, 8, 18 and 20

UN Women has succeeded in rolling out the regional architecture overall in accordance to the Executive Board Papers, especially around the establishment of the different types of offices, approving the delegation of authority, transferring some operations functions to ROs, and increasing capacity at regional and country levels**. Exhibit 25** presents the theory of change of the regional architecture underlying the Executive Board Papers and using the language from the Executive Board Papers.

Regional architecture theory of change embedded in Executive Board Papers

REGIONAL ARCHITECTURE ACTION	OUTPUTS	INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES	LONG-TERM OUTCOMES
Establishment of 6 regional offices and 6 multi-country offices	Decentralized decision and approval mechanisms	Substantive engagement with regional and sub-regional expert and intergovernmental bodies in GEWE	As a dynamic and strong champion for women and girls, UN Women provides them with a powerful voice at the global, regional and local levels to achieve the:
Evolution of the current UN-Women sub-regional offices into ROs, MCOs or COs	Appropriate decision-making authority for UN-Women representatives, including with regard to financial resources	Relevant and timely support to national governments and partners	• Elimination of discrimination against women and girls
Greater decentralization of authority to the field, including moving mid- and lower-level oversight functions from HQ to ROs	Increases in country national capacity	Effective delivery of results for women and girls at the national level, as envisaged in its strategic plan and in response to national priorities	• Empowerment of women
	Even capacity at all levels of the organization by recruiting new senior leaders		• Achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security.
	Aligned lines of reporting for effective oversight		
Transfer of some technical and operations functions from HQ to the field	Increased South-South cooperation	Overall strengthened capacity of the organization	
	Adequate technical capacity at the field level		
	Increased regional initiatives supporting countries and sharing lessons	Strengthened ability to draw upon regional and national experience and expertise to address its universal mandate.	
Corresponding changes at HQ to reflect changed roles	Consistent internal communication and knowledge-sharing		

Completed or well under way ◼ Early instances where this is taking place; more remains to be done ◼ Insufficiently implemented ◼ Not yet addressed

---

285 Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. 2012. "Regional Architecture: Administrative, Budgetary and Financial Implications and Implementation Plan". UNW/2012/10.

Given the speed of regional architecture rollout, it is not surprising that there are aspects that still require completion, including making adjustments in HQ to support the regional architecture, and establishing robust knowledge management and internal communication functions. At this time, the field reports to the Programme Division, while there are weak structural and reporting linkages (not even a dotted line) between the field and other parts of HQ—specifically the Policy Division in Pillar A, Pillar B and DMA (except for Regional Security Specialists based in ROs who have a direct reporting line, both technical and supervisory, to the HQ Security Team)[286]; in fact, only *ad hoc* linkages were reported between HQ, the Policy Division and DMA. The existing weak linkages in HQ and the gap in knowledge management and communication create inefficiencies and duplication of effort, which constrain the organization's ability to provide clear direction and priorities, as well as support effective delivery on the mandate.

Conclusion 3: The regional architecture has increased UN Women's overall ability to implement the integrated mandate in the field (normative, coordination and operational) with some limitations by programme presence countries.

Based on Findings: 5, 10 and 11

This evaluation found ample evidence in the field of UN Women delivering on all aspects of the mandate, and that UN Women's delivery created synergy between the three aspects of the mandate.

This finding[287,288,289,290,291,292,293,294] is aligned to similar ones from previous external assessments and evaluations.[295]

The evidence showed that the global and regional levels appropriately fulfil the normative and coordination mandates. The regional level is also delivering on the operational aspect for regional funds and supporting countries to deliver on their own programmes. There is evidence that MCOs and COs deliver on all aspects of the mandate, with COs being the most effective overall because they have the highest capacity. Programme presence offices experienced challenges to deliver on the normative and coordination aspects of the mandate, because they have limited access to relevant governmental and UN platforms and more limited staffing. Programme presence countries seemed best organized to manage programmes and were less able to fulfil the normative and coordination roles, because they are not recognized as actors of equal standing as other UN agencies.

Furthermore, this evaluation found that the challenges reported related to integration of the mandate were mostly because of capacity limitations to implement all the existing workplans completely and at a high level of quality. Document review,

---

286 Following data collection, a direct reporting line, from the Chief of Accounts and Finance staff at HQ and the field was added and implemented in new job descriptions.

287 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9.
288 UN Women. December 2013. "Multilateral Aid Review: Update UN Women Summary Assessment".
289 UN Women. December 2014. "An Empowered Future: Corporate Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to Women's Economic Empowerment".
290 UN Women. September 2015. "Multi-Country Portfolio Evaluation of Kazakhstan Multi-Country Office for Strategic Note 2014-2015".
291 MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women". UN Women.
292 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)".
293 UN Women. April 2016. "Mid-term Review of the Strategic Plan 2014-2017".
294 UN Women. 2014. "UN Women Annual Report 2014-2015, Data Companion".
295 UN Women. January 2015. "Report on Implementation of UN Women's Regional Architecture, Nov 2012- Nov 2014".

portfolio review and the case studies showed that UN Women staff at regional and country levels were well aware of and inspired by the synergies between the three aspects of the mandate, and strategically integrated all three aspects of the mandate into their workplans—leveraging access to and influence on key stakeholders, as well as access to funds to promote GEWE. In other words, this evaluation found little resistance anywhere in the organization against any aspect of the integrated mandate, and there was widespread pride and recognition of the power of leveraging all three aspects of the mandate.

The issues with integration were, in fact, uncertainties on whether or not UN Women is allocating its resources at each level in an optimal way to promote GEWE, and whether or not it has enough capacity to achieve all of its goals and enough access and gravitas to be successful. This is an issue that relates more to capacity, corporate strategy, direction and priorities, and not to mandate integration. There was evidence in the Normative and Coordination Evaluations,[296] as well as the portfolio review and case studies, that HQ is not providing enough guidance on how to prioritize each mandate and how to develop a coherent strategy with realistic boundaries at the country level to fit the budget and local capacity. This difficulty in setting priorities for the organization is linked to challenges in HQ discussed more in conclusions 2 and 6, and to weaknesses in knowledge management discussed more in conclusion 4.

Conclusion 4: UN Women has some systems and information for monitoring the performance of the regional architecture and is in the process of developing additional systems and refining the existing ones. At the time of the evaluation, gaps remained in information availability due to flaws in systems and processes for monitoring and reporting.

Based on Findings: 6, 7, 8, 9 and 25

UN Women has recently established several systems to monitor the performance of the regional architecture and is rapidly refining those systems and developing additional ones to enable more effective monitoring and reporting. This emphasis on monitoring and reporting was also recognized by MOPAN.[297] UN Women continues to focus on results-based management and roll out new systems to improve the monitoring of effectiveness, four of which[298] were rolled out during the course of this evaluation.

At the time of this evaluation, UN Women gathered information through planning and reporting processes in strategic plans, annual workplans and annual reports, which are incorporated into the COAT, a tool used by the organization that offers a snapshot in time of performance against indicators such as delivery rates, resource mobilization targets and donor reporting statistics, among others. Another example of a useful monitoring process is the consistent annual issuance of certified financial statements, which provides useful financial information and is used as an accountability tool with donors.

Capacity to understand the regional architecture's functioning through the data collected is currently limited and inefficient, and capacity building for monitoring was offered sporadically and just-in-time at the time of rollout. Previous evaluations[299,300,301] have noted limitations in the UN Women monitoring and reporting system, citing a lack of baseline data and identification of results and performance indicators, which result in presenting an incomplete picture of

296 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)"; United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9.

297 MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women". UN Women. p. 12

298 New reporting and monitoring processes rolled out: DAMS, RMS, Corporate Dashboard and Humanitarian Response Workflow

299 UN Women. December 2013. "Multilateral Aid Review: Update UN Women Summary Assessment".

300 MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women". UN Women. p. ix.

301 UN Women. December 2014. "An Empowered Future: Corporate Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to Women's Economic Empowerment". p. 41, p. 51.

UN Women's expected contributions to the outcomes identified in the results framework. According to the portfolio review interviews and the case studies, the focus on delivery over impact-level data in the RMS was another limitation to effective monitoring and reporting. The quantitative analysis also demonstrated the limitations of UN Women data to provide useful and comparable information on effectiveness (results) and efficiency.

Finally, as knowledge management has not been prioritized by the organization, there are challenges in the "ownership" of data quality and knowledge sharing responsibilities in the organization, which makes it more difficult to lead and expedite knowledge sharing and use from the existing and new data, even with improved systems. Challenges in knowledge management were identified in several reviews[302],[303],[304] and also confirmed through the case studies, portfolio review and the survey.

Current re-engineering process initiatives at UN Women have a strong monitoring and reporting component, including improvements through Programme Division initiatives in the RMS, donor reporting, human resources and fast-tracking processes to enable quick response in humanitarian crisis situations. The new peer review process for strategic planning is generally received well by countries but (not surprisingly given the fact that it is new) still needs refinement to reduce inefficiencies and streamline the process.

Senior management has a compelling vision for how the integrated monitoring systems will work, but this vision is not yet fully shared and understood throughout the organization. Nonetheless and in spite of feeling challenged by the speed of change, all levels of the regional architecture are working hard to support

the rollout of new systems and comply with evolving requirements.

Conclusion 5: The regional architecture has increased UN Women's overall ability to focus and capacity to apply rigorous gender analysis and human rights approaches in programme design, monitoring and implementation at regional and country levels, while at the same time, it has created a need to redefine UN Women pathways to reach and support the most vulnerable women.

Based on Findings: 12, 13, 14 and 15

UN Women's regional architecture has increased the inclusion of rigorous gender and human rights approaches in programme design—for example, through the FPIs and through UN Women's growing role in engendering the peace process in some countries. Stakeholders recognize UN Women's ability to reach and bring civil society to the table as an important comparative advantage that makes UN Women a valued partner in important deliberations on policies and programmes. This is supported by evidence in several reviews,[305],[306] as well as the case studies and portfolio review.

With the regional architecture, UN Women interaction with external partners has been strengthened. However, there was a shift in business model from UNIFEM, which used to mainly deliver small grants to CSOs, to UN Women, which aims to balance the attention and resources between government and civil society. The regional architecture has also created opportunities to increase participation of vulnerable women's voices at higher levels of the system. The UN Women approach to engage civil society does not clearly address the shift in attention and resources that has taken place, and has not fully defined UN Women's new roles enabled by the regional architecture, including how to prioritize reaching the most vulnerable women as a larger and more formal organization. The WEE Evaluation also found weaknesses in UN Women's ability to support the inclusion and

302 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9. p. 18.

303 MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women". UN Women. p. 25.

304 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 54.

305 Ibid., p. 61, p. 69.

306 UN Women. September 2015. "Multi-Country Portfolio Evaluation of Kazakhstan Multi-Country Office for Strategic Note 2014-2015". p. 42.

participation of rural and marginalized groups. At present, the existing UN Women procedures for engaging partners and vendors (the Project Cooperation Agreement and procurement procedures in the POM) are not appropriate and create challenges for reaching the most vulnerable women's groups. Yet, even as UN Women is becoming more formalized, trust funds situated at HQ enable UN Women to identify and collaborate with emerging CSOs, helping UN Women partnerships not to become hierarchical and closed, but instead to create pathways for inclusion of new partners and voices, especially those of the most marginalized women.

Several reviews[307,308, 309] present evidence on capacity limits to influence others in gender analysis. Part of the limitations relate to the shortage of UN Women staff to provide this support—for example, shortage of adequate numbers of policy advisors at regional levels to cover every impact area. Additionally, while the HQ Policy Division supports a range of countries, the staff with policy expertise at HQ is not always easily accessible to all countries who need their support and does not have the capacity to support all substantive programmatic needs of the field, especially given the high demands they receive from others in HQ.

Conclusion 6: Overall, the different levels in the regional architecture support each other well, with some limitations.

Based on Findings: 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25

The field appreciates UN Women HQ support in administration and backstopping; RO support in operations is valued by countries; MCO support is valued by satellite programme presence offices; and ROs and HQ appreciate the field's responsiveness. Specific

positive feedback was received about the Programme Division, which is the field's main backstopping team; the useful and timely advice of the Finance Section; the easy access and communication of the Human Resources Division; and the support by the Policy Division in certain thematic areas. As evidenced in this evaluation's efforts to obtain valid and up-to-date data, there is responsiveness, flexibility and strong informal working relationships between different levels of the regional architecture in UN Women.

There are a few limitations that create inefficiencies in the organization. HQ structure is not aligned to provide adequate and much needed thematic support to ROs. This finding was also supported with evidence in several reviews.[310,311] Furthermore, there is no dotted line between policy advisors, coordination staff, and DMA staff in HQ, and counterpart staff in ROs (except for Regional Security Specialists based in ROs who have a direct reporting line, both technical and supervisory, to the HQ Security Team)[312]. This results in weak communities of practice, knowledge management and knowledge sharing, and also makes HQ responsiveness uneven—especially given the many intra-HQ demands from offices with greater proximity and seniority than field colleagues.

Furthermore, the more even distribution of capacity to the field mandated by the Executive Board Papers has not been completely implemented: 42 per cent of UN Women senior leaders are in HQ; ROs do not have adequate numbers of policy advisors to fulfil the requirements at the regional level and respond to country needs; and there are also challenges in RO capacity in financial management, human resources and procurement (also shown in recent Audit findings).[313] Additionally, ROs have some challenges to

307 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9. p. 14.

308 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 73

309 UN Women. April 2016. "Mid-term Review of the Strategic Plan 2014-2017".

310 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 66.

311 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9. p. 17.

312 Following data collection, a direct reporting line, from the Chief of Accounts and Finance staff at HQ and the field was added and implemented in new job descriptions.

313 UN Board of Auditors. 2016 Report.

link their regional programmes to country priorities. ROs are encouraged to mobilize funds at the regional level for both regional and country-level activities, taking into account that regional projects should be implemented by COs. However, this has presented a limitation from the RO perspective because funders of regional initiatives require accountability and reporting at the regional level and are not comfortable working with COs as their counterpart.

Regional and COs were best positioned to use the delegation of authority to increase their efficiency, making faster decisions tailored to their contexts. Their ability for faster approvals has increased donor confidence and supported UN Women fundraising goals at regional and country levels. This greater independence and capacity of ROs and COs has also enabled them to express more clearly what they need from other levels. There are, however, significant differences between COs in terms of delivery, resource mobilization, staffing, budgets and budget-to-staff ratios. There are few patterns in these variations, with changing contexts and special circumstances providing important insights. This means that the ability of COs to fundraise and to expend the resources they have budgeted delivering services is influenced by many contextual factors, and such variation means that the office typology in the regional architecture should not be too rigid.

While several recent initiatives aim to strengthen linkages and the responsiveness of HQ to the field, corporate strategies are not fully communicated throughout the regional architecture challenging UN Women in setting priorities. Given the rapid pace of quality improvement of UN Women processes driven by HQ, there is also unclear understanding of the sequencing and benefits of changes being rolled out. Visibility and understanding of the regional architecture—the role of different levels, updates on changes, and understanding of linkages and expectations— vary by level.

Conclusion 7: In the absence of clear criteria for different types of offices, a process for transitioning from one type of office to another and flexibility to make such transition

possible, UN Women is constrained in its ability to maximize its effectiveness for a given level of funding.

Based on Finding: 26

Based on feedback on the portfolio review, case studies and survey, staff is unsure about the plans and process for any given country designation according to the regional architecture typology. In fact, some staff thought that the purpose of programme presence countries was to graduate, while unsure about who would make that decision; others thought the regional architecture was complete and would not change. Document review, including recent internal documents, revealed that there are no written or shared criteria considered in designating the type of presence UN Women ought to have in different countries, nor was there an agreed process of transitioning countries to a different type of presence. Thus, this is not an internal communication issue, but an area where the organization does not have a policy at present.

There is a trade-off between the number of countries where UN Women can be present and the quality and capacity of presence in any given country in terms of the organization's ability to deliver on the mandate. Senior management is currently in the process of trying to clarify a corporate policy on this issue.

Conclusion 8: UN Women has made progress in some administrative and management systems in terms of efficiency, yet there still remain significant inefficiencies in several systems, which UN Women is in the process of studying and improving at a rapid pace.

Based on Findings: 28 and 29

UN Women has been successful in addressing several independent audit findings, as reported by the UN Board of Auditors in 2016 and an external auditor in 2011.[314] One of the greatest strengths for UN Women efficiency is in its financial management capacity as previously reported by the MOPAN Assessment (2014) and confirmed during this evaluation by all office types.

---

314 UN Women. "UN Women 2016-2017 – Integrated Budget". p. 11.

In areas with challenges, this evaluation found evidence that UN Women is now engaged in numerous initiatives to re-engineer and improve systems efficiency, particularly human resources and donor reporting. Evidence of improvements in human resources efficiency were found in several initiatives outlined in the 2015 Human Resources Annual Report and in the rollout of a new Fast Track process to increase efficiency and flexibility in humanitarian situations. DAMS, which was rolled out in February of 2016, is the corporate database for all signed donor agreements, including terms and conditions. The design remedies inefficiencies by tracking overdue donor reports and sending reminders to offices of report deadlines. Therefore, many inefficiencies identified by this evaluation are the subject of internal improvement efforts and likely to be rectified in the coming months.

The issues that continue to be a challenge without a clear solution are procurement and staffing capacity. Procurement challenges were reported in the most recent audit of the UN Board of Auditors[315] and the 2015 Human Resources Annual Report[316] and confirmed by all country level types. The most recent recommendation by the UN Board of Auditors added that UN Women must ensure that the appropriate staff resources are available and automation tool is developed so as to expedite the financial closures of projects. However, implementation of this recommendation is still unclear.[317] In addition, limited staffing capacity both at HQ (human resources' staffing ratio is 0.6 human resources staff to 100 employees), and the staff versus non-staff ratio continues to challenge the organization's efficiency.

In spite of these limitations, UN Women staff is engaged, entrepreneurial and works hard to create alternative options to deliver, even when that means duplication of effort and significant workloads and stress. The pace of recent, current and planned changes is extremely fast, allowing minimal time for capacity building and adjustments, which has resulted in additional stress in the organization, even as staff work hard to keep up and comply with new requirements.

Conclusion 9: UN Women has been challenged from a regional architecture design based on budget availability assumptions, which had not materialized at the time of the evaluation.

Based on Findings: 30 and 31

Although the regional architecture was rolled out with almost half of the funding originally promised, UN Women continues to work tirelessly to improve and grow the organization's funding stream. An analysis of financial statements[318] and UN Women reports[319] shows that core funding decreased from $163.7 million in 2014 to $136.1 million in 2015. At the same time, non-core resources continued to grow, reaching $170.9 million, a 7 per cent increase over 2014. Private sector contributions reached $11.8 million in 2015, a 31 per cent increase on the previous year, bolstered by the first-ever Business and Philanthropy Leaders' Forum in 2015. The organization continues to diversify funding resources as the most recent midterm review of the Strategic Plan reported—26 donors contributed to UN Women for the first time in 2015, 44 contributed multi-year pledges. Evidence of increased funding was reported in audited financial statements for 2014 for both regular and other resources, with decrease in regular resources reported for 2015.

However, UN Women still falls short of the originally envisioned $500 million budget to which its design is based. The organization is making efforts to adapt to this reality, but it has not yet adjusted its expectations of what each level of the regional architecture and the organization as a whole can deliver at the current level of funding. As reported in previous evaluations, including the Normative and Coordination

315 UN Board of Auditors. 2015. "United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Financial Report and Audited Financial Statements". 2015 A/71/5/Add.12.
316 February 2016. "Annual Report 2015: Human Resources".
317 UN Board of Auditors. June 2016.

318 UN Women. "UN Women Financial Statements 2013-2015".
319 Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. 2015. "Progress Made on the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women Strategic Plan, 2014-2017, Including the Midterm Review of the Strategic Plan". UNW/2016/6.

Evaluations[320],[321] and MOPAN,[322] the lack of funding has constrained UN Women ability to completely fulfil its integrated mandate in the way it was originally envisioned. The funding shortfall, coupled with the HQ structural challenges, has weakened HQ to serve the field efficiently and has resulted in overly ambitious expectations and weak coordinated action on many fronts.

Even though there is a formal mobilization strategy, it is still unclear and lacks cohesion from the field's perspective. Evidence from a staff survey, portfolio review and case studies reported a need for greater support in strategic resource mobilization from ROs and HQ. Although FPIs are starting to address this problem, their purpose and relevance were still reportedly unclear to many in the field.

Conclusion 10: UN Women has important strengths in the mix of its staff competencies and culture in the field that, if managed and maintained, help position UN Women well to implement its integrated mandate and deliver on the 2030 Agenda.

Based on Finding: 32

A key asset for UN Women is staff's strong commitment to the mandate and a culture of collaboration in the field for all office types (RO, CO, MCO and programme presence). Challenges in the field include the staff/non-staff inequities and the high level of stress under which staff operate due to unclear organizational priorities. The overall UN system's bureaucratic hierarchy is still felt within UN Women, especially at HQ. Ultimately, the combination of staff with substantive programmatic (feminist) backgrounds and operations staff with strengths in programme

management place the organization in a unique position to implement a transformative mandate in line with the global 2030 Agenda.

---

320 UN Women. February 2016. "Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to United Nations System Coordination on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)". p. 27.

321 United Nations. February 2015. "Evaluation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". 55th Session, E/AC.51/2015/9. p. 8.

322 MOPAN. December 2014. "Synthesis Report: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women". UN Women. p. 3.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations to UN Women are based on the evaluation framework, the analysis that informed findings and conclusions, and discussions held with the UN Women Internal Evaluation Reference Group. They will be validated by the Internal Reference Group as part of the review of this evaluation report.

Recommendation 1: UN Women should build greater flexibility into the regional architecture and deploy its types of presence strategically, while defining a clear process and criteria to be considered in making decisions about typology of presence.

The delegation of authority has provided the flexibility to UN Women to adapt its approach and programme at the country level, and the regional architecture should include more flexibility in shaping the presence of UN Women in each country. There is significant variation between countries—one size does not fit all. UN Women also has a finite number of resources that it needs to deploy for maximum coverage and impact toward GEWE.

A strategic and cost-effective regional architecture. UN Women should adjust its expectations of what each type of presence can achieve in a country and organize its regional architecture to best leverage its assets. UN Women should think about how its regional architecture enables it to deliver on its integrated mandate as a whole, rather than in each country. Different types of presence have differing abilities to deliver depending on capacity (workforce and budget), delegation of authority and official recognition by the host government. In this more diverse and flexible typology, countries may benefit from UN Women in a number of ways, including:

- A strong presence in the country advocating for reforms and leading the UN family and other partners in promoting GEWE

- A more limited presence in a country leveraging programmes (including joint programmes) to influence and encourage UN partners and other strategic partners to promote GEWE

- No physical presence and supporting a country through policy assistance from an RO that shapes country legislation and policies

Considerations for type of presence. The type of presence in a country may depend on availability of co-financing by the country, the openness of the government to partner on the gender agenda, the existing opportunities for influencing the legislative framework (such as if the country is in the process of reform or peacebuilding), the existing opportunities and need to reach and prioritize women's needs (especially the most vulnerable women), and the existing capacity of other UN agencies to implement parts of the gender agenda (economies of scale).

A clear process for deciding on type of presence. To make flexibility work, it will be important to have a clear process and transparent considerations for making decisions for each country presence, including making changes over time. We recommend embedding this process in the existing UN Women strategic planning process that currently involves the development of the Strategic Note. ROs and HQ should share the responsibility for reviewing, confirming or changing decisions for type of presence or non-presence in each country through well-defined steps. UN Women must have the flexibility to make decisions to invest its limited resources in a regional architecture that maximizes its impact.

In this way, UN Women would fulfil the universality of its mandate maximizing for the whole world, rather than stretching to achieve the exact same things in every country.

Recommendation 2: UN Women should strengthen HQ integration within the regional architecture framework, as mandated in the Executive Board Papers.

UN Women HQ serves a dual role (as do ROs) of promoting GEWE in global platforms and supporting the field. We recommend developing a better orientation of HQ toward serving the field as its "back office." HQ should conduct a full functional review of its divisions and prioritize its functions strategically to serve the field, matching its allocations of resources accordingly.

Orientation to the field. HQ divisions other than programmes need to be better structurally linked with the field and work more coherently—building on FPIs and Integrated Annual Work Planning. Allocations of funds across HQ functions should be made with a clear consideration of field needs, possibly even with input from the field about what they appreciate the most from HQ services and what they need additionally. This field orientation cannot come on top of the existing push and incentives to serve internal requests at HQ level, because it will only add to the overwork and stress. It needs to be accompanied by defining more limited boundaries of what UN Women will and will not do in HQ platforms. Otherwise, staff will continue to be pulled in two different directions.

Harmonize priorities and allocation of resources through functional analysis of HQ. UN Women senior management is clearly passionate about the world of UN Women and its mandate, and this commitment to GEWE needs to drive the functional analysis. As a small organization, UN Women needs to choose strategically where and how it will be present at HQ and where it will not be present (possibly relying on strategic partners) and maximize how it will be organized to best serve the field. In the chain of impact for GEWE, UN Women HQ has a critical role to play in supporting its regional architecture, and it needs better and stronger boundaries to create the space and incentives for HQ staff to orient themselves to serving the field. UN Women currently does many things that are important and add value, and it will be difficult to choose. However, by not making the difficult choice to be strategically selective, staff gets stretched and less time remains for responding to field requests.

Therefore, we recommend senior management work together to make adjustments to HQ to support the regional architecture in the best possible way.

Implement an internal communication strategy. UN Women has already recognized the need for better internal communication. We recommend HQ develop an internal communication strategy for the whole organization that will communicate plans for changes, the rationale and message of why these changes are important and how they benefit the organization, and provide a progress report on how the organization is doing, what it is learning and what is coming next. Especially at this time of rapid, ongoing changes in the regional architecture, UN Women needs to communicate new developments and updates, as well as continue to share the motivation and goals of those changes. This communication will create greater visibility within UN Women and encourage every division and office to feel part of a great whole, understand what is happening or about to happen, and become inspired in the way these changes are positioning UN Women to promote GEWE in the best way.

Recommendation 3: UN Women should make specific adjustments to each level in the regional architecture, adapting to more realistic expectations corresponding to each level's capacity.

Stakeholders should try to ensure that promises of budget are maintained to match coherence between mandate and institutional set up. However, if this is not taking place at the magnitude requested, UN Women should consider making some specific adjustments to different levels of the regional architecture with an aim to create more realistic expectations of what different office types can achieve.

ROs. To respond to country needs, ROs require increased capacity in substantive programmatic areas. We recommend adding policy advisor specialists to ROs and allowing for more P2, P3 and national staff, with language capacity relevant to the region in the required competencies. We further recommend a rotation policy between HQ and ROs, especially to include policy advisors, because it will greatly contribute to making UN Women a learning organization and also

to strengthen linkages between levels in the regional architecture. In addition, we echo the recommendation of the recent UN Board of Auditors to ensure that the appropriate staff resources are available and an automation tool is developed so as to expedite the financial closures of projects.[323] Finally, UN Women should revisit the guidance on the role of ROs in fundraising, especially in regions where funds are available for regional and sub-regional programmes, with a review of the role of ROs tailored to each region, coordination between HQ and countries on managing donor outreach, and clarification of the path through which countries will be substantively involved and benefit from regional programmes.

MCOs. We recommend that UN Women adjust its expectation of MCOs, taking into account the significant differences in the contexts of the six existing MCOs and the generally lower capacity of MCOs to deliver fully on the UN Women mandate.

• Fiji and the Caribbean MCOs should be retained as they are because the MCO structure allows the most efficient coverage of all small island countries.

• India and South Africa MCOs, with a large home countries, should either receive a great deal more capacity or be transitioned to COs given the size and complexity of their host country, but still remain engaged both with programme presence and COs of neighbouring countries with sub-regional affinity. The advantage of a transition to COs is that they will no longer have to support programme presence countries operationally but will still remain in relationships based on cultural and geographical affinity, thus enabling sub-regional coordination.

• Morocco and Kazakhstan MCOs, with smaller home countries, should be transitioned to COs. Satellite programme presence countries should be considered to transition to COs or remain programme presence countries. All satellite programme presence countries should be moved to the corresponding RO, the transitioned offices should still remain in

relationships based on cultural and geographical affinity, thus enabling sub-regional coordination.

COs. COs should continue to operate and, where possible, should receive a higher delegation of authority depending on capacity. COs with high budgets should receive additional support in operational management in order to increase efficiency and compliance with administrative and financial standards.

Programme presence offices. Programme presence countries should focus on managing programmes and fundraising, with delivery on the normative and coordination mandates as secondary. They do not have the formal standing, access to platforms, or capacity to deliver on the normative and coordination mandates, except through the programmes they manage.

Recommendation 4: UN Women should develop and strengthen knowledge sharing and learning communities.

Active and robust learning communities will contribute to stronger programme design, increased creativity and greater success with fundraising. The regional architecture and the delegation of authority have enabled UN Women to get involved in substantive programmatic areas and reform activities in many countries, leading partnerships, and creating greater involvement of women's groups in policy platforms. To support this work in the front lines and to learn from the work in countries, UN Women needs to develop knowledge sharing and knowledge management systems and processes.

Placement of knowledge management. We recommend that the functional analysis in Recommendation 2 include this important priority and the tasks that enable it. The natural place for knowledge management in substantive programmatic areas seems to be the Policy Division because of its thematic expertise and DMA for administrative support. However, determining the placement of knowledge management should happen only after a functional analysis to inventory and map capacity and priorities for different parts of HQ.

---

323 UN Board of Auditors. June 2016.

Prioritizing and shaping knowledge management. HQ and RO staff have already been undertaking knowledge management and knowledge sharing activities, many of which are appreciated by their colleagues in countries and are reported to be very useful. We recommend increasing the profile of knowledge management and providing guidance on good practices in knowledge management so that learning communities in thematic areas and operations include some useful features, as resources permit. For example, data repositories (probably on Sharepoint) should be organized in similar or parallel ways so that staff is easily oriented to new areas; each community would benefit from consistent communications, possibly through an informal newsletter; staff mapped to a learning community should easily know who is in the group and where to address questions; and every learning community should encourage presentation and discussion featuring country knowledge and expertise. The overall knowledge management strategy of UN Women should also include appropriate connections to the existing knowledge platforms and networks of partners. Finally, continued dual investment in knowledge management systems, relationships and collaboration, as well as incentives and recognition will enable UN Women to build strong learning communities.

Mastery and innovation take place throughout the organization and, when shared, will inspire UN Women colleagues to higher levels of effectiveness and efficiency. In this evaluation, for example, practices worth sharing included: Colombia's territorial strategy; systems to support operations developed by ROAP that were shared with other ROs; the integration of GEWE in new development topics, such engendering the Migration Policy of ASEAN by ROAP; and the sub-regional strategy managed by the Morocco MCO. By sharing in appropriate settings, UN Women staff initiatives can benefit others, and that emulation is its own reward for those who figured out a solution to a shared challenge. Such a practice of peer learning is an energizing, non-hierarchical way to enable UN Women to be a learning organization.

9

ANNEXES: VOLUME 2-3

VOLUME 2

A.   Evaluation Terms of Reference
B.   List of Consulted Stakeholders
C.   Documents Consulted
D.   Evaluation Team Profile

VOLUME 3

A.   Evaluation Matrix
B.   Data Collection Tools
C.   Case Country Criteria
D.   Evaluation Question Criteria
E.   Survey Data
F.   Survey output
G.   Outcomes and outputs: impact area analysis
H.   Portfolio analysis: qualitative findings

UN WOMEN IS THE UN ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN. A GLOBAL CHAMPION FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS, UN WOMEN WAS ESTABLISHED TO ACCELERATE 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 implement these standards. It stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on five priority areas: increasing women's leadership and participation; ending violence against women; engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes; enhancing women's economic empowerment; and making gender equality central to national development planning and budgeting. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.