



Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

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Decisions adopted by the Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women at its 2017 sessions

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Decisions

2017/1

Elaboration of the UN-Women Strategic Plan, 2018–2021

The Executive Board,

1. *Takes note* with appreciation of the preparatory work done and the various informal briefings and workshops with the Executive Board on the process of elaboration of the UN-Women Strategic Plan, 2018–2021;
2. *Requests* UN-Women to continue engaging constructively with UNDP, UNFPA and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) to ensure a coherent approach of the four strategic plans (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN-Women);
3. *Also requests*, in line with General Assembly resolution [71/243](#) of 21 December 2016 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, to elaborate in its strategic plan on how it plans to engage in coherent and integrated support, as called for in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and in this regard, further requests UN-Women to work collaboratively with UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF on the development of a specific chapter in its strategic plan, outlining a common approach in contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in accordance with their respective mandates;
4. *Encourages* UN-Women to collaborate with UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF to continue to harmonize their approaches to results reporting on their strategic plans, which, inter alia, would identify their contributions to outcomes achieved collectively;
5. *Requests* UN-Women to provide all relevant documents at least 10 days prior to any informal meetings in relation to the preparation of the UN-Women Strategic Plan, 2018–2021.

14 February 2017

2017/2

Annual Report of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director on the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2014–2017

The Executive Board,

1. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director on the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2014–2017, welcomes the progress made in the implementation of the Strategic Plan, and commends UN-Women on its strong performance to date;
2. *Takes note* of the efforts undertaken by UN-Women to implement the strategic initiatives contained in the midterm review of the Strategic Plan 2014–2017;
3. *Commends* UN-Women on effectively leveraging its mandate as a composite entity in assisting Member States, upon their request, and in ensuring coherence, consistency and coordination between the normative and operational aspects of its work; and reaffirms the important role of UN-Women in leading, coordinating and promoting the accountability of the United Nations system in its work on gender equality and women’s empowerment and on gender mainstreaming across the United Nations System;

4. *Recognizes* the interagency efforts made to harmonize the report methodology and format, and requests UN-Women to continue consultations with United Nations funds and programmes for further alignment of reporting where applicable, bearing in mind UN-Women's mandate as a composite entity;

5. *Urges* UN-Women to continue to align, as appropriate, its results frameworks with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Sustainable Development Goals, and to coordinate with United Nations funds and programmes, to help measure performance in supporting gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda;

6. *Recalls* decision 2016/1 in which the Executive Board requested UN-Women to improve its programmatic focus and strengthen its programme delivery and normative-operational linkages through multi-stakeholder partnerships, in particular within the Flagship Programming Initiatives and through synergies with the Fund for Gender Equality and the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women;

7. *Takes note* with appreciation of UN-Women's efforts to work collaboratively and strengthen inter-agency cooperation and division of labour in line with the principles of the QCPR, and requests UN-Women to present its contributions in this regard in the Strategic Plan 2018–2021; further requests UN-Women to include in its annual report on the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2018–2021, information on how the individual flagship programme initiatives contribute to the five outcome areas, identify their cooperating partners and indicate the role and contribution of these partners;

8. *Recognizes* the importance of strengthening the capacity of UN-Women, including through adequate and sustainable funding, noting the ongoing funding gap in regular resources and encourages countries in a position to do so, to increase their voluntary contributions, especially to regular resources, to ensure the full and effective implementation of the Strategic Plan 2014–2017;

9. *Requests* UN-Women to take into account lessons learned from the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2014–2017, including tracking of the progress made towards the achievement of expected results, findings and recommendations of corporate and country-level evaluations and audits, in the development of the Strategic Plan 2018–2021;

10. *Emphasizes* the need for UN-Women to continue to improve transparency in the use of resources to achieve programme results and to enhance organizational effectiveness and efficiency and requests UN-Women to present in its future financial planning and reports a higher level of detail on the way regular (core) resources are attributed and used, inter alia with regard to staff costs, programming arrangements, programmatic budget lines, oversight functions, development effectiveness and the special purpose activities budget line;

11. *Recalls* decision 2013/2 in which the Executive Board requested UN-Women to recommend adjustments to the approved cost recovery rates, as required, to be presented at the 2016 annual session of the Executive Board, notes that this process has been delayed and requests UN-Women, together with UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF, to continue the consultations with Member States with regard to the cost recovery policy and to present evidence-based proposals for harmonized cost recovery policies of UNDP, UNFPA, UN-Women and UNICEF, with adjustments if required, for consideration by the respective Executive Boards no later than their annual sessions in 2018;

12. *Encourages* UN-Women contributors to adhere to the aspects of the cost recovery policy approved by the Executive Board in decision 2013/2;

13. *Recalls* that in line with UN-Women's founding resolution [A/RES/64/289*](#), the annual report on operational activities of UN-Women is to be transmitted to the Economic and Social Council for consideration during its operational activities segment.

28 June 2017

2017/3

Report on the evaluation function of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, 2016

The Executive Board,

1. *Takes note* of the Report on the evaluation function of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, 2016 and the programme of work and budget for 2017 of the Independent Evaluation Office;

2. *Welcomes* the efforts made by UN-Women and the progress achieved in systematic strengthening of the evaluation function, in leading system-wide gender-responsive evaluation efforts, and in fostering innovative partnerships for national evaluation capacity development;

3. *Emphasizes* that, in line with the UN-Women evaluation policy guiding principles, evaluations should be country-driven, impartial and independent, and that programme countries' ownership and leadership be ensured in the evaluation of all forms of assistance, and requests UN-Women, in cooperation with other United Nations system organizations, to continue its efforts to facilitate the building of national evaluation capacities, where applicable;

4. *Reiterates* its request to UN-Women contained in decision 2016/3 to enhance the coverage of evaluations, the implementation rate of planned evaluations, financial resources invested in the evaluation function and the submission of management responses to Global Accountability and Tracking of Evaluation system and use evaluation recommendations in its work;

5. *Requests* UN-Women to continue the gender-responsive evaluations of country programmes in order to improve programming at country level;

6. *Recognizes* the importance of the evaluation function of UN-Women in providing high-quality, independent and impartial evaluations, and requests UN-Women to take into account the findings of its evaluations in the development of the Strategic Plan 2018–2021;

7. *Requests* UN-Women, in particular the Independent Evaluation Office, to continue leading United Nations system-wide gender-responsive evaluation efforts and innovative partnerships for national evaluation capacity development;

8. *Requests* UN-Women to further advance collaboration and joint evaluation work with other United Nations entities, especially United Nations funds and programmes;

9. *Encourages* UN-Women, in particular the Independent Evaluation Office, to continue its efforts to strengthen the quality and process of corporate and decentralized evaluations, while respecting the independence of the Independent Evaluation Office of UN-Women, and to use the evaluations as learning and knowledge management tools to enhance future programmes;

10. *Takes note* of UN-Women's work in evaluating its performance in strategic partnership building for gender equality and the empowerment of women and

encourages UN-Women to take into account lessons learned in the development of the Strategic Plan 2018–2021.

28 June 2017

2017/4

Report on internal audit and investigation activities for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2016

The Executive Board,

1. *Takes note* of the Report on internal audit and investigation activities for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2016;

2. *Takes note* of the inclusion, as requested by Executive Board decision 2016/3, of a list of investigated cases, including information on the cases and UN-Women follow up, and requests UN-Women to continue this practice in its annual reporting on the internal audit and investigation activities;

3. *Notes* that the effectiveness of UN-Women's governance, risk management and controls function well, and the implementation rate of audit recommendations is high, while expressing its concern that there are areas which need improvement. Takes note with appreciation of the efforts made by UN-Women to address the existing problems and requests UN-Women to rectify the identified areas for improvement;

4. *Expresses* its continuing support for the internal audit and investigations functions of UN-Women;

5. *Requests* UN-Women to present options for the most appropriate model to deliver sufficiently resourced internal auditing, through outsourcing or in-house, including a comprehensive work plan and budget proposal that sets out the resources required to manage the realization of a full transition to internal audit capacity with increasing audit coverage, the resources needed to establish and sustain the management and administrative infrastructure of the function, and in addition, a determination of the level of audit assurance required, at least four weeks before the second regular session of the Executive Board in 2017;

6. *Recalls* decision 2016/3 in which the Executive Board noted several areas of recurring weakness, including the high number of audit recommendations that were corporate in nature, appreciates the efforts of UN-Women to address these; urges UN-Women to continue and intensify efforts in this regard, and provide information on the impact of measures taken;

7. *Takes note* of the Report of the Audit Advisory Committee for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2016;

8. *Encourages* UN-Women to consider the Audit Advisory Committee's recommendations.

28 June 2017

2017/5 United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, Strategic Plan 2018–2021

The Executive Board,

1. *Takes note* with appreciation of the preparatory work done and the various informal briefings and workshops with the Executive Board as well as other relevant stakeholders, on the process of elaboration of UN-Women's Strategic Plan 2018–2021 and endorses the UN-Women Strategic Plan 2018–2021;

2. *Requests* UN-Women to implement its Strategic Plan in accordance with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the outcome documents of their reviews, and applicable United Nations instruments, standards and resolutions that support, address and contribute to gender equality and the empowerment and the advancement of women, as well as with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with the agreement and consent of the host country, taking into account the different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policy space, while remaining consistent with relevant international rules and commitments;

3. *Reaffirms* that the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development and should therefore continue to be the highest priority for and underlying objective of the operational activities of the United Nations development system, including UN-Women;

4. *Calls upon* UN-Women, in implementing its Strategic Plan, to continue to play a central role in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and in supporting Member States, upon their request, in coordinating the United Nations system and in mobilizing civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders, at all levels, in support of the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda;

5. *Requests* the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director to submit to the Executive Board at its annual session in 2018, the final progress report on the implementation of the Strategic Plan, 2014–2017;

6. *Requests* the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director to submit to the Executive Board, beginning at its annual session in 2019, an annual progress report on the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2018–2021, and to provide updates at its regular sessions in 2020, 2021 and 2022;

7. *Requests* the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director to undertake a midterm review of the UN-Women Strategic Plan 2018–2021 that includes an assessment of results achieved, cost effectiveness, evaluations, and progress made in achieving the vision of the Strategic Plan, taking into account decisions by Member States on the Secretary-General's proposals responding to General Assembly resolution [71/243](#), and to present the findings in her annual report to the Executive Board in 2020;

8. *Takes note* of the Common Chapter to the Strategic Plans of UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UN-Women; requests UN-Women if changes are made to the Chapter to align it with UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA after endorsement by their respective Executive Boards and to resubmit it for endorsement by the UN-Women Executive Board; and encourages UN-Women to provide details on its

implementation in its annual reporting and, when applicable and as appropriate, at the joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP.

30 August 2017

2017/6
Integrated budget estimates for the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women for the biennium 2018–2019

The Executive Board,

1. *Takes note* of the UN-Women integrated budget estimates for 2018–2019 which covers all cost categories and funding sources (both regular and other resources) within a single, consolidated proposal, to support the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2018–2021;

2. *Approves* gross resources in the amount of \$203.8 million for the institutional budget to support organizational effectiveness and efficiency and notes that these estimates include an amount of \$31.4 million for cost recovery from other resources (earmarked voluntary contributions);

3. *Notes* with appreciation the inclusion of separate budget lines for the independent internal audit and the evaluation office;

4. *Notes* that in the event that actual cost recovery is higher than the estimates included in the budget proposal, the additional amount may be used for management activities to allow more regular resources to be used for programme activities, requests the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director to report to the Executive Board on its utilization in the context of the next budget proposal, and asks UN-Women to further strive for an overall reduction of the ratio of its management costs;

5. *Takes note* of the related Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions ([UNW/2017/9](#)) and the related response of UN-Women to the ACABQ report ([UNW/2017/CRP.11](#));

6. Bearing in mind the ACABQ recommendation contained in paragraph 20 of its report ([UNW/2017/9](#)), *acknowledges* the submission of five posts performing normative intergovernmental functions for inclusion in the United Nations Secretariat regular budget 2018–2019 and agrees that, should these posts be approved by the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly, the corresponding costs will be removed from the institutional budget 2018–2019, thus increasing resources to be used for programme activities;

7. *Recalls* the General Assembly Resolution [A/RES/64/289](#) whereby Member States agreed “that the resources required to service the normative intergovernmental processes shall be funded from the regular budget and approved by the General Assembly; the resources required to service the operational intergovernmental processes and operational activities at all levels shall be funded from voluntary contributions and approved by the Executive Board”;

8. Bearing in mind the ACABQ recommendations contained in paragraphs 13 and 17 of its report ([UNW/2017/9](#)) *requests* UN-Women to further consider its proposals to upgrade the P-5 Chief of Accounts post to a D-1 Deputy Director, Financial Management post, and the D-1 Director of Evaluation post to a D-2 Director post to provide level post for internal audit and evaluation;

9. *Requests also* UN-Women to revert to the original organizational arrangement as to the reporting line of the Human Resources Division as contained in the Integrated Budget estimates of UN-Women for the biennium 2014–2015, and to reflect this change in annex I of the Integrated Budget estimates of UN-Women for the biennium 2018–2019;

10. *Requests* UN-Women to present for information the concrete steps it will have taken under the consolidated internal audit and evaluation function to ensure appropriate audit coverage, the continued independence of evaluation and oversight, as well as measures taken to ensure effective linkages between audit and the outsourced investigation services, at least four weeks in advance of the first regular session of the Executive Board in 2018;

11. *Requests* UN-Women to provide for information a transitional risk-based audit plan; a multi-year plan for the audit function; and, an internal audit and evaluation charter for UN-Women, at least four weeks in advance of the first regular session of the Executive Board in 2018.

30 August 2017

2017/7

Structured Dialogue on Financing: Financing the UN-Women Strategic Plan 2018–2021

The Executive Board,

1. *Takes note* of the report on Structured Dialogue on Financing: Financing the UN-Women Strategic Plan 2018–2021, and encourages UN-Women to engage further in structured dialogue with Member States, with a view to tracking, assessing and following up on the level of funding it receives, including of core resources, as well as predictability, flexibility and alignment of resource provided for the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2018–2021;

2. *Recognizes* that sufficient regular resources are important to fully and effectively deliver on the implementation of UN-Women’s Strategic Plan 2018–2021; notes that regular resources enable UN-Women to plan ahead, be responsive and strategic; strengthen their oversight functions (evaluation, audit, and investigation) and accountability; contribute to strengthening UN system coherence and coordination; and leverage other resources to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment;

3. *Requests* UN-Women to continue to improve its efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability and in this regard to continue to provide information on its programme activities, within the proceedings of the Executive Board;

4. *Notes* with appreciation the large number of contributors to UN-Women, and encourages all countries in a position to do so, to increase their voluntary contributions to UN-Women, particularly its core resources, preferably paid early in the year and/or in a timely manner, and, if possible, through multi-year pledges;

5. *Encourages* countries, in a position to do so, to provide timely and flexible Other Resources (earmarked) aligned with the Strategic Plan 2018–2021;

6. *Encourages* countries, in a position to do so, to support the United Nations pooled funding mechanisms, and encourages UN-Women to benefit from them in order to reduce the number of donor specific agreements and to strengthen coherence and coordination across the United Nations System;

7. *Calls* for resources to be distributed in a timely and predictable manner, to ensure efficient planning for the full implementation of the Strategic Plan 2018–2021, in line with UN-Women’s available resources;

8. *Requests* UN-Women to provide information on the impact of donor-specific agreements on transaction costs and efficiency of UN-Women, as part of the next report of UN-Women on structured dialogue on financing.

30 August 2017

2017/8 UN-Women Executive Board field visit

The Executive Board,

1. *Encourages* UN-Women to organize an annual field visit, funded by voluntary contributions, of 5 members of the Executive Board representing each regional group, with priority given to the members of the Bureau and taking into account a rotational principle within each regional group, to a country identified in consultation with the host country and the UN-Women Bureau;

2. *Encourages* UN-Women to find the best arrangements to keep the costs of such field visits as low as possible, covering the cost of four regions, except for the Western European and Others Group, by encouraging participating Member States, in a position to do so, to cover all or part of their costs, and by proposing visits coordinated with a joint field visit of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP in the same country or neighbouring countries and by keeping the length of the visits reasonable.

30 August 2017

2017/9 UN-Women’s Management Response to the Report of the Board of Auditors

The Executive Board,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the United Nations Board of Auditors for the financial period that ended on 31 December 2016, as well as previous reports of the United Nations Board of Auditors;

2. *Notes* that in 2016 UN-Women received its sixth unqualified audit opinion from the United Nations Board of Auditors;

3. *Encourages* UN-Women to prioritize the implementation of the four main audit recommendations identified by the United Nations Board of Auditors for the year ended 31 December 2016;

4. *Also encourages* UN-Women to continue to strengthen risk management, financial management, programme and project management, assets management, human resources and payroll management and information and communications (ICT) as identified by the United Nations Board of Auditors for the year ended 31 December 2016;

5. *Further encourages* UN-Women to fully address the five outstanding recommendations from the 2014 and 2015 reports of the United Nations Board of Auditors;

6. *Requests* UN-Women to present to the Executive Board the more detailed management response to the United Nations Board of Auditors report prepared for its contribution to the “Report of the Secretary General on the Implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors on the financial statements of the United Nations funds and programmes for the financial period ended 31 December 2016”.

30 August 2017
