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Rapporteur: Mr. Noel M. Novicio (Philippines)

Addendum

Programme questions: proposed programme budget for 2025

(Item 3 (a))

Programme 14

Gender equality and the empowerment of women

1. At its 8th meeting, on 15 May 2024, the Committee considered programme 14, Gender equality and the empowerment of women, of the proposed programme plan for 2025 and programme performance in 2023 ([A/79/6 \(Sect.17\)](#)). The Committee also had before it a note by the Secretariat on the review of the proposed programme plan by sectoral, functional and regional bodies ([E/AC.51/2024/6](#)).

Discussion

2. Several delegations expressed appreciation and support for the programme and the work carried out by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women). A delegation stated its strong support for UN-Women's role as a normative and policy-setting agency and acknowledged the alignment between the mandate of UN-Women and the vision of its Foreign Secretary of prioritizing women and girls in diplomatic and development work, as was outlined in its International Women and Girls Strategy. Delegations also noted the central role played by UN-Women in contributing to the achievement of the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

3. Support was expressed for the effective broader systems change through seven systemic outcomes, the recognition of multiple and intersecting needs of members of marginalized and underrepresented groups by UN-Women, and for the prioritization by UN-Women of business transformation to drive the effective and efficient implementation of its strategic plan within the repositioned United Nations development system.



4. Support was also expressed for the work that UN-Women continues to carry out within its mandate. The delegation's view was that it was understood that when women were empowered, societies thrived, and further stated that a future could be created where gender equality was not just an aspiration, but a reality and that a world could be built where every woman and girl can thrive, contribute and lead. The delegation looked forward to further collaboration with UN-Women in the implementation of the two sub-programmes towards the achievement of the planned results for 2025.

5. Another delegation gave its support for the mandate and various programmes and initiatives of UN-Women to further promote gender equality and women empowerment. The delegation further stated that it lauds UN-Women for standing with women and girls that were facing the scourge and consequences of war and conflict. The delegation also commended UN-Women for standing with all women peace builders, negotiators and human rights defenders who continue to pursue justice for women and girls in that regard.

6. Another delegation also expressed support for the work undertaken by UN-Women to eliminate the obstacles faced by women and girls, in particular the discrimination that prevented them from participating on equal terms in political, peace, economic, social and other processes. The delegation further stated that the achievement of development will not be possible without the real participation of women in all fields; therefore, the delegation supported all efforts aimed at creating egalitarian links through which a more just and violence-free space for coexistence can be built.

7. Gratitude was expressed by a delegation for the contribution of UN-Women to women's advancement around the world and expressed support to UN-Women for playing a bigger role in the global governance of women's agenda. Another delegation encouraged the ongoing efforts towards achieving gender parity at all levels throughout the organization.

8. Recognition was given by another delegation to UN-Women for the work in raising global awareness of the need to mainstream gender equality in national policies and driving the acceleration of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goal5 in particular.

9. A delegation complemented UN-Women on the efforts to eliminate the obstacles preventing women and girls all over the world from achieving full participation under equal conditions and reiterated its commitment to gender equality and to the empowerment of women, and the incorporation of a gender perspective in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The delegation further mentioned that it had undertaken the commitment to eradicate violence, discrimination against women and girls through a process of sustainable policies.

10. Recognition was given by another delegation the programmatic plan and objectives of UN-Women, which the delegation stated were generally in line with the mandates conferred by intergovernmentally agreed documents aiming at the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as the realization of Sustainable Development Goal 5, and the implementation of a cross-cutting approach to gender perspective in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

11. The delegation highlighted several positive aspects which included capacity-building initiatives, gender equality for staff at the United Nations system, the launching of the United Nations gender quota portal, and the fact that goals were exceeded in at least three results.

12. In reference to result 1, subprogramme 2 of the 2023 programme plan, which showed the result of dealing with the implementation of national plans on women and peace and security of Member States, there was a goal of 93 national plans being adopted, however, the delegation stated that it did not see this goal anymore in the 2025 programme plan and they asked for further clarification as to why that information was not in the current document.

13. Another delegation stated that the Sustainable Development Goal 5 spoke about gender equality and women empowerment. While the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action reemphasized the rights of women and girls as inalienable, indivisible and integral parts of human rights. The delegation requested further clarification as to what feedback UN-Women had received from such difficult societies in the implementation of gender equality and women empowerment policies.

14. The delegation also asked what the prospects were and what could be done differently from what was done before to ensure success to a greater extent globally in the implementation of women empowerment and gender equality. The delegation further recommended that, in measuring the achievements of gender equality, it was important to place challenging environments in a particular category, and a separate strategy was to be initiated towards advocating and implementing gender equality and women and girls empowerment policy if the gap was to be bridged.

15. A delegation welcomed the focus on youth, women and girls with disabilities and strengthening norms and standards on gender equality. Another delegation expressed its support for the efforts of UN-Women to promote gender-responsive disability inclusion work with persons with disabilities. The same delegation stated that it was committed to advocating for gender equality and the human rights of all women and girls, acknowledging their diverse backgrounds. The delegation expressed particular concern for women and girls facing multiple forms of discrimination, including those with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex women, women from marginalized racial, ethnic and religious backgrounds, low-income women workers, and Indigenous women.

16. Another delegation placed emphasis on diversity and reiterated previous comments regarding lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex persons. The delegation stated that diversity was a broad, all-encompassing principle and was committed to the equality and professional development of all staff members without any form of discrimination, including on the grounds of sex, nationality, age, race, disabilities, sexual orientation or gender identity. The delegation further stated that UN-Women, in line with its mandates, was responsible for supporting the achievement of gender equality, and the empowerment of all women and girls as actors and beneficiaries of sustainable development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security. The delegation asked for further clarification on how UN-Women interpreted “all women and girls” in the context of diversity and clarification as to how this interpretation might be implemented.

17. A delegation recognized the efforts deployed by all agencies of the United Nations system that made it possible to launch the gender perspective across the different programmes. The delegation stated that it valued the fact that the programme strategy, the promotion of accountability of the United Nations system in relation to gender equality, was present and that the cross-cutting nature of the gender perspective, including capacity creation and improving women’s conditions across the system, included key factors, such as disability and youth.

18. The delegation further went on to state that its country presented its feminist foreign policy which sought to ensure a cross-cutting gender perspective, across all forums in which they participated.

19. The delegation expressed its sympathy to the challenging operational context facing UN-Women. The delegation further stated that with financial constraints impacting voluntary contributions, and a concerning rolling back of hard-fought norms and standards on gender equality, UN-Women must carefully consider how to best adapt to deliver results in a complex environment. In this context, the delegation stated that it would encourage the focus of UN-Women progress on their normative and convening roles. The delegation further stated that the operational work, in its view, should be focused on building capacity of local women-led organizations rather than delivering services and become another implementer in an already crowded context.

20. Another delegation expressed the view that there was a need to bring gender equity and equality to the foreground, which had become even more urgent with current global crises, conflicts and other widespread challenges. The status of human rights, the rule of law and democracy would be determined by the situation of women and girls around the world.

21. The delegation reiterated its commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women and stated that it would continue to work collaboratively with UN-Women and Member States to advance international cooperation to ensure women and girls benefits from UN-Women policy delivery and further stated that it strongly supported the creation of the entity in 2011.

22. Another delegation stated that conflict prevention and the maintenance of international peace and security could not be achieved without the broad participation of women. In a world fraught with instability and insecurity, the continued support for women's empowerment was essential for women to be better equipped to navigate the changing world and bring to bear their wisdom and potential on securing peace and development.

23. A delegation highlighted that UN-Women played a crucial role in coordination and provided expertise on the United Nations work on gender equality and women's empowerment. The delegation further commended the work done by UN-Women, and particularly welcomed the lessons learned and planned changes of subprogramme 1 on the expansion of the use of available data resources. The delegation stated that this was very important for assessing global progress on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

24. Another delegation stated that women's empowerment would lead to economic growth, improved health, education outcomes and stronger communities, and that dismantling barriers that hinder women's progress, such as gender-based violence, unequal pay and limited access to education and health care, was critical.

25. The delegation expressed the view that by promoting gender equality, it can unlock the full potential of women and contribute to a more just and prosperous world. The delegation further stated that gender equality and the empowerment of women was not just a matter of fairness, but it was a fundamental human right that was enshrined in its Constitution, and it was about creating a world where all individuals, regardless of their gender, have equal opportunities, rights and access to resources. In this regard, with reference to table 17.5 of subprogramme 2, the delegation gave its appreciation for the collaboration that they had with UN-Women towards the implementation of the constitutional provision that required that no more than two thirds of the members of an elected or appointed body could be of the same gender.

26. Another delegation stated that the UN-Women programme was aligned with its country's priorities, and that they saw a significant amount of added value in the mandate of UN-Women in the normative, operational and coordination areas. The delegation stated that this was also true of the strategic plan of UN-Women, in particular in gender equality being promoted in a holistic manner throughout the

entire United Nations system. The delegation further stated that when it came to the plan for 2025, it was very interested in seeing to what extent the accelerators of gender equality will be effective and operational in 2025.

27. The delegation noted that despite some progress made, it was worth noting that the world was failing to achieve gender equality. The delegation further stated that it agreed with UN-Women that there were still some traditional societies in which women and girls remained seen as lesser human beings, and this had created barriers that made it difficult, if not impossible, for women and girls to develop and advance, and succeed in their endeavours.

28. Support was also expressed for the programme's focus on the four thematic areas: promoting governance and participation in public life; women's economic empowerment; ending violence against women and girls; and women and peace and security, humanitarian action and disaster risk reduction.

29. The delegation also supported UN-Women in effecting broader systems change through seven systemic outcomes: strengthened global normative frameworks and gender-responsive laws, policies and institutions; financing for gender equality; positive social norms; equitable access to services, goods and resources; women's voices, leadership and agency; production, analysis and use of gender statistics, sex-disaggregated data and knowledge; and United Nations system coordination.

30. A delegation placed particular importance on the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in decision-making processes, including for women in situations of vulnerability, such as women in conflict, post-conflict situations and humanitarian settings. The delegation stated that they look forward to the review of the planned results for 2025 on women's participation in political life. From that perspective, they would also welcome the synergy and exchange of expertise between UN-Women and relevant treaty bodies, as well as other human rights mechanisms.

31. Emphasis was placed on highlighting the valuable work of UN-Women and encouraged UN-Women to continue its efforts regarding climate change, since its consequences disproportionately impact women and girls, making them a particularly vulnerable group in the face of this global crisis.

32. A delegation stated that they had highlighted the need to implement collective actions that were precise and effective in the area of gender, to dismantle the structural barriers that they faced and moved towards societies that were fairer, more peaceful and more inclusive. The delegation further stated that it was a natural ally of UN-Women which contributed to advancing the gender agenda and achieved significant progress nationally.

33. The delegation mentioned that it had presented a national development strategy for 2050 with three pillars, one of which was the transformation of gender relations. The delegation added that it was the first country in the world to ratify the International Labour Organization Convention No. 189 (2011) on Domestic Workers. The women and peace and security agenda was supported by the delegation which had made all efforts to increase the participation of women in peace missions; the delegation highlighted its historic contribution of 1600 women to peace missions, including even before the passing of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) that urged Member States to increase the role of women in United Nations operations on the ground.

34. A delegation remarked that it had attached great importance to the women's agenda and had lifted over 44 million rural women out of extreme poverty and accounted for over 40 per cent of their total employment, 45.8 per cent of workers employed in science and technology and about a third of those in new business formats, such as digital trade, e-commerce and live streaming. The delegation stated

that those figures were placed in a context of billions of people; young women actively assisted countries with policy formulation and international cooperation on empowering women, eradicating women's poverty and achieving gender equality.

35. A delegation communicated that they would call upon UN-Women to respect the existing division of labour between the organizations of the United Nations system and to carry out its activities in strict accordance with the mandate entrusted to it. It was emphasized that there was a need for further adjustment to the UN-Women programme, in particular paragraphs 17.15 and 17.16 and table 17.7, which are related to climate change. The delegation stated that they proceeded from the premise that any activities of UN-Women within countries, including interaction with civil society, should be carried out only at the request of the relevant interested State.

36. A delegation raised a question with reference to paragraph 17.39, figure 17.III, where reference was made to a number of legislative frameworks, and the delegation inquired as to whether the number of legislative frameworks here referred to a number of States. If that was the case, it was recalled that it would mean that there was only 70 out of a total of 193 States, which would mean relatively few had undertaken efforts to ensure the participation of women in political life, and that this represented very little progress, and actually demonstrated how big the task was, and that perhaps UN-Women should raise its ambitions in the objectives and in the expected outcomes, taking into account the budgetary limitations and the slow advance of certain legislative processes.

37. A different delegation expressed that it was difficult to agree with the statement about the decisive role of UN-Women in the consideration of gender issues by countries in their electoral legislation (para. 17.38). The delegation also stated that, in practice, fundamental decisions on the development and content of such documents fell within the competence of the relevant governments, and efforts by UN-Women was limited to advisory assistance. In this context, the benchmarks stated in figure 17.III, which, was not adopted at the intergovernmental level, looked very strange. The delegation informed that it would submit written proposals regarding its comments on the text of programme 14.

Conclusions and recommendations

38. **The Committee recommended that the plenary or the relevant Main Committee or Main Committees of the General Assembly, in line with Assembly resolution 78/244, consider the programme plan for programme 14, Gender equality and the empowerment of women, of the proposed programme budget for 2025 under the agenda item entitled "Programme planning" at the seventy-ninth session of the Assembly.**