



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
19 December 2023

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women

Sixty-eighth session

New York, 11–22 March 2024

Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”

Normative aspects of the work of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

Report of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

Summary

The present report, submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [64/289](#), provides a summary of the normative aspects of the work of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) in 2023 through its substantive support for intergovernmental processes. The report also highlights the Entity’s contribution to implementing the policy guidance provided by the Commission on the Status of Women, including examples of UN-Women operational activities in various regions.

* [E/CN.6/2024/1](#).



I. Introduction

1. In 2023, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) continued to support Member States in accelerating progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including through research, policy analysis and recommendations in reports of the Secretary-General. The Entity placed a high priority on activities related to the provision of policy guidance, data, evidence and knowledge.

2. UN-Women continued to work on strengthening global norms and standards in the economic, social and political spheres, in the context of multiple and interlinked crises caused by factors such as geopolitical conflicts and violence, climate change and environmental degradation, as well as on addressing the disproportionate impacts that women and girls face as a result.

3. A central feature of the normative aspects of the Entity's work is the provision of substantive support to the Commission on the Status of Women, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Security Council, the Human Rights Council and other intergovernmental bodies. As a full member of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee since October 2022, UN-Women has also strengthened its position to ensure women and girls are prioritized at the centre of humanitarian action and accountability. With the objective of mainstreaming a gender perspective into the work and outcomes of those bodies, the Entity continued to focus on synergies between achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and progress towards sustainable development, climate action, financing for development, human rights, non-discrimination, peace and security and humanitarian action.

4. The normative aspects of the Entity's work are aligned with its strategic plan for the period 2022–2025 ([UNW/2021/6](#)) and contribute to the accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Those efforts are also in harmony with the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Our Common Agenda" ([A/75/982](#)), including in ensuring that women and girls are at the centre. UN-Women continued to do its work in a context of multiple crises, including through multi-stakeholder partnerships, and to ensure that women and girls, in particular those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, are not left behind or further marginalized.

II. Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls

A. Commission on the Status of Women

5. As the substantive secretariat of the Commission on the Status of Women, UN-Women continued to support the Commission in its role as the principal intergovernmental policymaking body that sets global standards and formulates policy recommendations to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and their human rights worldwide. The documentation prepared by UN-Women for the sixty-seventh session supported ministerial round tables, high-level interactive dialogues and expert panel discussions, including on the priority theme and the review theme.

6. The agreed conclusions on the priority theme, "Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls" (see [E/2023/27-E/CN.6/2023/14](#)) built on the report of the Secretary-General on the same topic ([E/CN.6/2023/3](#)). In the agreed conclusions, the role of technology and innovation, and education in the digital age

in accelerating gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls was reaffirmed. Recommendations for actions included the following: promoting and respecting women's and girls' right to privacy; implementing targeted measures to close the gender digital divide; increasing financing for women's civil society organizations and enterprises; creating opportunities for women and girls in science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics; promoting the full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership, as well as full employment of women in technology and innovation; adopting gender-responsive technology design, development and deployment; establishing regulations on evaluation and audit requirements for the development and use of artificial intelligence; strengthening fairness, transparency and accountability in the digital age; and enhancing data science to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

7. In his report on the review theme – “Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls” (E/CN.6/2023/4) – the Secretary-General identified trends in implementation on the basis of information received from 52 Member States, including their actions in the following areas: strengthening normative, legal and policy frameworks; implementing economic and social policies for the empowerment of all rural women and girls; and strengthening the collective voice, leadership and decision-making of all rural women and girls. UN-Women supported the Commission in its review of the progress made in the implementation of those agreed conclusions. A total of seven Member States presented information, on a voluntary basis, on the progress achieved, the lessons learned and the challenges faced, and identified best practices for accelerated implementation.

8. In preparation for the sixty-seventh session of the Commission, UN-Women collaborated with partners in the organization of regional consultations in Africa, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as of subregional consultations in Europe and Central Asia, to identify priorities and facilitate an exchange of good practices. At the global level, in October 2022, the Entity convened an expert group meeting on the priority theme, which examined the current context, identified key challenges and made specific recommendations that were focused on various issues relevant to innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

9. In its catalytic role in enhancing synergies and coherence with other functional commissions with regard to promoting gender mainstreaming, UN-Women supported the participation of the Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women in the Economic and Social Council coordination segment in February 2023, as well as the management meeting held in June and July 2023. In September 2023, the Chair participated in a thematic discussion on the implementation of the Kyoto Declaration on Advancing Crime Prevention, Criminal Justice and the Rule of Law: Towards the Achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, convened by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to promote synergies between the mandates of the two commissions.

B. Gender mainstreaming across the United Nations system

10. UN-Women prepared the annual report of the Secretary-General on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (E/2023/82), and provided technical support to the Economic and Social Council in adopting its subsequent resolution 2023/11. In 2022, the Council expanded the request to accelerate gender mainstreaming with three key new aspects, including: recognizing the endorsement by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination of the gender equality marker as a United Nations

data standard for system-wide reporting of financial data;¹ acknowledging and welcoming of the decision made by Inter-Agency Standing Committee to grant full membership to UN-Women as of October 2022; and including the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective into policies and programmes related to innovation and technological change, and education in the digital era, in alignment with the agreed conclusions of the sixty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

11. In 2022, 73 entities reported on progress against the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (System-wide Action Plan 2.0) indicator framework, with a total of 67 per cent of all ratings falling into the “meets requirements” or “exceeds requirements” categories. Among them, 48 entities (83 per cent) reported being on track to achieve their gender-related results, while 23 reported having achieved transformative results (8 more than in 2021) by addressing the root causes of gender inequalities. While those results aligned primarily with Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the work of entities also intersected with other Goals.

12. In 2022, 76 country teams undertook the United Nations country team System-wide Action Plan gender equality scorecard exercise and submitted a report, compared with 61 in 2021. Of those 76 country teams, 19 prepared a comprehensive report designed to align with the Cooperation Framework planning stage and 57 prepared an annual progress report. Across the country teams, the following three indicators registered the strongest performance: collaboration and engagement with the Government on gender equality; organizational culture supportive of gender equality; and collaboration and engagement with civil society organizations dedicated to gender equality. The indicators that showed the weakest performance were those related to requiring the advancement of measures to achieve gender parity; ensuring the allocation and tracking of financial resources; and capacity development for gender mainstreaming.

C. Multi-stakeholder partnerships

13. The Generation Equality Midpoint Moment, part of the UN-Women-convened Generation Equality initiative, was held on 17 September 2023 during the Sustainable Development Goals acceleration weekend ahead of the Sustainable Development Goals Summit. The session featured evidence and data from the 2023 accountability report,² demonstrating that the multi-stakeholder model and methodology are working by driving financial resources towards gender equality, facilitating new opportunities for collaboration and serving as an accelerator towards achieving the Goals.

14. The 2023 accountability survey indicated that 1 in 10 reported commitments have already been completed and more than 9 in 10 are on track. Collectively, commitment-makers have reported \$47 billion in financial commitments, with \$20 billion already secured and \$9.5 billion spent, along with the implementation of 849 policies, 2,306 programmes and 3,649 advocacy initiatives. Stakeholders continue to value the opportunities Generation Equality provides for collaboration, with 82 per cent of all reported commitments having resulted in new partnerships or strengthened existing ones. Aligned with UN-Women’s priority to pivot to the field, the model is being successfully localized at the country level, with concrete reported results. In 2023, 42 per cent of commitment-makers (26 per cent in 2022) responded

¹ See <https://unsceb.org/data-standards-united-nations-system-wide-reporting-financial-data>.

² See <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2023/09/generation-equality-accountability-report-2023>.

to the reporting survey, covering 69 per cent of total commitments (31 per cent in 2022), underscoring the critical importance of accountability to commitments made. Another 49 per cent of eligible signatories to the Compact on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action self-reported data on 99 per cent of their specific actions.

III. Sustainable development

A. Follow-up to and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

15. UN-Women continued its engagements with the global process for the follow-up to and review of the 2030 Agenda through its contributions to the high-level political forum on sustainable development, held under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council in July and under the auspices of the General Assembly in September. During the preparatory process, UN-Women provided technical support to Governments in the preparation of voluntary national reviews to encourage the integration of a gender perspective. UN-Women also participated in the regional forums on sustainable development, where it placed gender equality issues at the centre of discussions. The Entity also organized, supported and participated in several side events.

16. The Entity provided technical support to Member States on gender equality and the empowerment of women as a cross-cutting theme during the negotiations of the political declaration (General Assembly resolution 78/1, annex) adopted at the Sustainable Development Goals Summit. The declaration includes dedicated paragraphs on gender equality in the commitment and action sections, reaffirming language mostly from the 2030 Agenda that recognizes the importance of human rights and the contribution of gender equality to the achievement of sustainable development. It highlights that global crises have heightened and exacerbated existing gender inequality in access to essential services, such as health care, education, social protection, decent jobs and economic opportunities. The operative section includes calls for the removal of all legal, social and economic barriers and for the elimination, prevention and response to discrimination and violence against women and girls, including those with disabilities, both in person and in digital contexts. It also includes call for granting women full access to justice and effective remedies, for the full, equal and effective participation of women and girls in all decision-making processes and for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through education.

17. UN-Women contributed to the production of new data to improve global monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals from a gender perspective. In its second phase, the Women Count programme continued to support countries in collecting timely data on violence against women, time use and the gender-environment nexus, while deepening partnerships to generate more data to advance monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals from a gender perspective. Gender data have been used to inform 11 policies and programmes to spur action on gender equality, including developing a national policy to combat gender-based violence in Rwanda and assessing how the Public Service Law in Georgia can better promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the public service. Deepening catalytic partnerships with United Nations agencies and partners, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank, continued to provide countries with support to fill gender data gaps in key areas, including unpaid care and domestic work, asset ownership, poverty and women's

land ownership. Those efforts have helped to pass the symbolic 50 per cent mark in terms of gender data availability, with 51 per cent of Sustainable Development Goals gender data now available, almost twice the 26 per cent available in 2016.

18. As in previous years, the Entity contributed to the report of the Secretary-General on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals ([A/78/80-E/2023/64](#)), coordinating efforts across agencies to compile information relating to Sustainable Development Goal 5 and contributing the relevant data and statistics for indicators for which UN-Women is the lead or co-lead agency. As a result of the Entity's data-collection efforts, more data are now available to monitor Goal 5 (56 per cent, compared with 47 per cent in 2022) owing to expanded data collection efforts, including through the Women Count programme.

19. UN-Women, in collaboration with the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, released the annual report entitled "Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: the gender snapshot 2023".³ The report includes the most recent evidence on gender equality across all 17 Goals, including prevailing trends and gaps on the road to 2030. One highlight in the report is that recent setbacks, in particular among women and girls living in fragile or conflict-affected countries, and growing vulnerability brought on by human-induced climate change, are worsening the outlook of making gender equality a reality by 2030. For the first time, the report includes estimates on a costing of Goal 5. In collaboration with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, it was estimated that an amount of \$6.4 trillion per year is needed across 48 developing countries, covering nearly 70 per cent of the developing countries' population, to achieve gender equality in key areas, such as eradicating poverty and hunger and supporting more equal participation of women in society by 2030. The report also includes estimates on how fast acceleration must be to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals from a gender perspective.

20. The Entity effectively supported Member States in incorporating a gender perspective at the beginning of the substantive preparations for the Summit of the Future. As a result, the General Assembly, in its decision 77/568 entitled "A Pact for the Future", committed to take gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls into account in the relevant chapters of the Pact for the Future.

B. Economic and Social Development

21. UN-Women continued to support the General Assembly in its consideration of gender-specific agenda items and to strengthen the integration of a gender perspective into a range of resolutions. It also assisted in other processes and provided inputs to reports and policy papers covering a broad range of topics related to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

22. For the seventy-eight session of the General Assembly, UN-Women prepared several reports of the Secretary-General. The report on violence against women migrant workers ([A/78/292](#)) includes an outline of the current situation regarding violence against women migrant workers, including domestic and care workers. It also includes highlights of the activities undertaken by Member States to address that issue. The report on the improvement of the situation of women and girls in rural areas ([A/78/220](#)) contains a review of policies and initiatives undertaken by Member States and United Nations entities to enhance the livelihoods, well-being and resilience of women and girls in rural areas, in particular the poorest and most marginalized. The report includes how advancements in improving the situation of women and girls in rural areas contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

³ Available from <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/gender-snapshot/2023/>.

23. As a co-sponsor of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), UN-Women contributed to the related report of the Secretary-General (E/2023/85) and provided support to Member States on the relevant Economic and Social Council resolution 2023/30, in which the Council calls for reinvigorated efforts to protect human rights and promote gender equality in the context of HIV, expressing concern over laws, policies and practices that hinder women's and girls' access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services.

24. The entity provided policy support to Member States in the lead up to the three high-level health-related meetings on universal health coverage (General Assembly resolution 78/4), pandemic prevention, preparedness and response (resolution 78/3) and the fight against tuberculosis (resolution 78/5), which all resulted in political declarations adopted at the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly. In all three outcome documents, the contributions that women make as part of the health workforce are recognized, and the importance is acknowledged of achieving Goal 5 and prioritizing those furthest behind first, in particular women.

25. In follow-up to General Assembly resolution 75/310, entitled "Vision for Everyone: accelerating action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals", UN-Women launched a policy brief entitled "No woman left behind: Closing the gender and inclusion gap in eye health". The brief contains evidence of gender disparities in eye health, as well as several forward-looking recommendations, including actions to amplify the voices of women who are blind or have vision impairment, ensuring their meaningful participation at all decision-making levels. It also includes calls to increase resources for policies and programmes in all relevant sectors that affect women's eye health and to uphold women's and girls' rights, including by tackling multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and eliminating gendered barriers preventing women's access to eye care.

26. The Entity played a crucial role in the development of the Committee on World Food Security voluntary guidelines on gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment. The guidelines, endorsed at the fifty-first session of the Committee, in October 2023, are the first normative framework that addresses the issues, challenges, policies and strategic approaches to support Member States, development partners and other stakeholders to advance gender equality, women's and girls' rights and their empowerment and leadership, as part of efforts to eradicate hunger, food insecurity and all forms of malnutrition, towards the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security. UN-Women was invited to become an ad hoc member of the Committee's Advisory Group in 2020 and provided dedicated policy expertise, evidence and technical inputs to the Chair and the secretariat of the Committee, advocating for strong language on gender equality and women's rights throughout the guidelines and the overall work of the Committee. UN-Women will continue to support Member States, upon their request, in developing national capacities, including through policy advice and programmatic support to implement the guidelines.

27. UN-Women began preparations for the quinquennial World Survey on the Role of Women in Development, which will be presented to the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session. The Entity conducted two rounds of expert consultations involving representatives from various regions and organizations. The first consultation occurred in September 2023 in Brighton, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and was organized as an expert workshop on gender and poverty dynamics in a world of repeated shocks and protracted crises. The second consultation took place in October 2023 as a virtual expert group meeting, focusing on harnessing social protection for gender equality, resilience and transformation.

C. Climate action and environmental protection

28. At the 58th meeting of the subsidiary bodies of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in June 2023, UN-Women made a presentation on the linkages between the agreed conclusions of the sixty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women and the gender action plan of the Convention.⁴ In the presentation, the Entity called for the implementation of the gender action plan to ensure the application of nationally determined contributions, national adaptation plans and their means of implementation, and to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in future decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention.

29. In the lead-up to the twenty-eighth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, UN-Women collaborated with the presidency of the Conference and the Convention secretariat to shape the Gender Day programme and mainstream gender equality events across the two-week work programme of the Conference. The Entity prepared technical papers to advance the integration of a gender perspective in climate financing, loss and damage, the just transitions, climate security, the climate-care nexus and gender-environment data and statistics.

30. Acknowledging key gaps in data and knowledge on the gender-environment issues, UN-Women hosted, in collaboration with partners, the Global Conference on Gender and Environment Data on 28 and 29 November 2023 to underscore the urgent need to prioritize the production and use of gender-environment data. In addition, as part of the next edition of the UN-Women flagship report "Progress of the world's women: Gender equality in the age of climate crisis", to be published in 2025, UN-Women launched a discussion paper that defines conceptually what feminist climate justice is and guides policymakers on what actions need to be taken to implement it.

31. As a signatory to the Gender-Responsive Just Transitions and Climate Action Partnership of the twenty-eighth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, UN-Women will mobilize partnerships to advance gender equality through labour markets instrumental to the transition towards green and blue economies.

32. UN-Women provided technical inputs to the work of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Indicators for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, specifically in coordinating the preparation of decisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity Subsidiary Body on Science, Technology and Technical Advice concerning the gender-responsive implementation and monitoring of the Framework, during the twenty-fifth meeting of the Body, held from 16 to 20 October 2023 in Nairobi. In addition, UN-Women contributed to the development of policy solutions on the interlinkages between ecosystem services from nature and climate change, in collaboration with the Convention's women's caucus.

33. UN-Women signed a memorandum of understanding with the secretariat of the United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification, to guide the Entity's collaboration with the secretariat in intergovernmental processes and the gender-responsive implementation of programmes under the land degradation neutrality process of the Convention's Global Mechanism. UN-Women also supported preparations for the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, to be held in 2024, at the twenty-first

⁴ See decisions 3/CP.25 and 24/CP.27 of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, held from 13 to 17 November 2023 in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. The Entity, in collaboration with the secretariat, Landesa and FAO, worked towards activating the Convention's gender caucus and rolling out the road map of the Convention's Gender Action Plan to influence the integration of gender equality in draft decisions of the Conference of the Parties. UN-Women, collectively with civil society and other constituencies, identified areas to improve the gender-responsive national and global implementation of the Convention with respect to drought, land degradation and land tenure, and promoted the inclusion of gender considerations in the statements of the parties to the Convention.

34. In the area of disaster risk reduction, UN-Women continued to focus on facilitating gender-responsive disaster risk reduction systems, processes, plans, strategies and budgets, building on progress from previous years. Following successful joint advocacy efforts in 2022 at the sixty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction for a gender action plan under the Sendai Framework, UN-Women contributed to securing a gender focus at the high-level meeting on the midterm review of the Sendai Framework, held in New York in May 2023, including a reference to the development of a gender action plan supported by UN-Women, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in the political declaration of the high-level meeting. As a result, UN-Women has co-led the development of a gender action plan alongside the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and UNFPA, including co-facilitating three rounds of consultations with Member States, civil society organizations and the United Nations system, as well as being part of the core drafting group.

35. Continuing the momentum from that extensive advocacy work, UN-Women also continued to increase the gender-responsiveness of disaster risk reduction in the United Nations system. The Entity secured a sub-recommendation to ensure maximum United Nations system support to countries for the gender-responsive implementation of the Sendai Framework, by the Senior Leadership Group on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience, which brings together 50 United Nations entities that are implementing the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience and will inform the high-level priorities guiding the remaining seven years of implementation.

D. Financing for sustainable development

36. UN-Women, with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, has co-chaired the gender group of the Inter-agency Task Force on Financing for Development since 2017. In that capacity, the two entities convened an expert group meeting in 2022 on gender responsive tax systems and policies. At the meeting, analysis and recommendations provided the basis for a section on building gender responsive tax systems in the 2023 Financing for Sustainable Development Report. It was noted that tax systems had significant gender impacts, and Member States were called upon to address explicit and implicit gender bias in tax systems. In addition, UN-Women contributed to the 2023 Our Common Agenda policy brief on reforms to the international financial architecture, which calls for gender-balanced representation in governance structures of international financial institutions.

37. UN-Women has led system-wide efforts to integrate a gender perspective in the outcomes of the Economic and Social Council Financing for Development Forum since the adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. As a result, intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations for the period 2017 to

2023 have included commitments to scale up massively efforts to achieve gender equality, highlighting the need for effective gender mainstreaming. The 2023 outcome (E/FFDF/2023/3) explicitly links public domestic resources with gender equality, encouraging Member States to strengthen and implement gender-responsive planning and budgeting, including by enhancing the evaluation of the impact of public investments on gender equality.

38. Building on its strong normative and coordination efforts, at the 2023 High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development, UN-Women supported the co-facilitators to address gender equality. In her intervention, the Executive Director of UN-Women underscored the need for an inclusive, effective international tax system, noted the need to expand fiscal space to make investments for women and girls and stressed the role of progressive taxation and gender-responsive budgeting in that regard. The engagement of UN-Women at the highest level ensured that gender equality was recognized as a cross-cutting priority and that policy options on financing for gender equality were available to Member States as they initiate planning for the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, in 2025.

IV. Human rights

39. UN-Women continued to support the work of the Human Rights Council during its fifty-second, fifty-third and fifty-fourth regular sessions. The Entity provided technical support to Member States in the development of draft resolutions and in strengthening the gender dimension of thematic and country-specific resolutions. The Entity's technical inputs were reflected in at least 14 resolutions adopted by the Council during its regular sessions in 2023, including on violence against women and girls; child, early and forced marriage; birth registration; maternal mortality and morbidity; new and emerging digital technologies; Afghanistan; the Sudan; and the first-ever Council resolution on the centrality of care to the fulfilment of human rights. The Entity also monitored the overall integration of a gender perspective in the different Council resolutions, which in 2023 reached 79 per cent of a total of 109 resolutions adopted during the regular sessions. UN-Women also provided evidence-based inputs and advocated for the needs and rights of all women and girls in 50 interactive dialogues, meetings and panel discussions on thematic human rights issues and country situations. Similarly, the Entity participated, either as co-sponsor or speaker, in 21 side events in 2023, including side events on reparations for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence in Ukraine; advancing gender equality through sports; and the important role of women and girls in addressing the triple planetary crisis.

40. The Entity supported Member States' substantive engagement in the universal periodic review through the preparation of 14 tailored country background briefs on the status of gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment in States under review.

41. UN-Women, in coordination with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), supported the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in all regions, including support for States parties in reporting under the Convention and in preparing for the constructive dialogue with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its eighty-fourth, eighty-fifth and eighty-sixth sessions, held in February, May and October 2023, respectively. UN-Women also supported all United Nations country teams in the preparation of reports to the Committee, including by coordinating and leading the process of preparing the reports. The Entity supported legal reforms and new policies in accordance with the Convention and offered support in connection with the preparation of the shadow

reports of civil society organizations. UN-Women assisted the Committee in elaborating its new general recommendation on the equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems.

42. UN-Women, in consultation with persons with disabilities, provided input to inform the report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto: protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies and easy-to-understand communication as an accessibility resource and tool for persons with disabilities ([A/78/331](#)).

43. The Entity continued to provide evidence-based inputs to the work of special procedure mandate holders of the Human Rights Council, including by participating in events and working sessions, such as with the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls, where areas of joint collaboration were identified, including in addressing technology-facilitated gender-based violence and men's accountability for the prevention of violence against women. UN-Women participated in an interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants to discuss his report on expanding regularization mechanisms for migrants ([A/HRC/53/26](#)) and to highlight the importance of strengthening the gender perspective therein.

44. To address persistent legal discrimination against women, the Entity continued to work with partners to implement the multi-stakeholder strategy for accelerated action, entitled "Equality in law for women and girls by 2030", including by supporting legislative reform initiatives worldwide. The Entity continued its partnership with OHCHR and Justice Rapid Response to deploy gender experts to investigations mandated by the Human Rights Council. In 2023, UN-Women deployed 19 experts to 10 investigations to ensure that expertise in gender equality and child rights was always present on investigation teams. UN-Women continued to support the Chief Executives Board Task Force on Sexual Harassment to advance a victim-centred approach, promote behavioural change, measure data and results and enhance cooperation, including through the finalization of common guidance that supports a more coherent approach to end sexual harassment. Together with ILO and the European Union, on behalf of the Group of Friends for the Elimination of Violence against Women, UN-Women convened a series of global policy advocacy sessions, including focusing on building a world of work free from gender-based violence and sexual harassment.

V. Peace and security and humanitarian action

A. Women and peace and security

45. In 2023, as of November, the Executive Director of UN-Women had briefed the Security Council a record six times, including on Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, Somalia and the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, contributing to improved information, analysis and recommendations on gender-related issues in Council deliberations and decisions. UN-Women also continued to serve as the secretariat of the Security Council Informal Expert Group on Women, Peace and Security. However, the percentage of Security Council decisions that integrated a gender perspective dropped to 60 per cent in 2023, compared with 62 per cent in 2022 and 69 per cent in 2021.

46. UN-Women coordinated the Secretary-General's annual report on women and peace and security. In his 2023 report ([S/2023/725](#)), the Secretary-General maintained a spotlight on the negative trendlines on goals of the Secretary-General for the decade (see [S/2020/946](#)). The Secretary-General noted that military spending continued to

increase while progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 5, was in peril; no substantial progress had been made in increasing funding for women's organizations or the percentage of women in peace negotiations; and while there was greater attention to threats and violence faced by women human rights defenders, such violence remained on the rise. Through data and examples, the Secretary-General detailed good efforts by the United Nations system and other actors to reverse those trends. In his recommendations, the Secretary-General sought to encourage action by Member States ahead of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

47. UN-Women played a crucial role in the development and implementation of impact-driven national action plans on women and peace and security and supported more than 40 Member States in realizing new and existing commitments in that regard. As of September 2023, 107 countries and territories had adopted dedicated action plans, and 13 regional organizations had regional strategies or plans in place. As the secretariat of the global Women and Peace and Security Focal Points Network,⁵ the Entity facilitated learning and collaboration between the 100 member States and regional organizations of the Network, as well as United Nations focal points and civil society representatives. At its fifth capital-level meeting in June 2023, members adopted a joint communiqué⁶ aimed at promoting innovative practices to implement the women and peace and security agenda.

48. In line with Security Council resolutions 2242 (2015) and 2467 (2019), UN-Women continued to strengthen gender-responsive approaches to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism. It developed a joint gender analysis and organized a dialogue between Member States and representatives of women-led civil society organizations to amplify women's voices and contributions to the global discussion on the eight reviews of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. As a result, the eighth review resolution, adopted by the General Assembly in June 2023, preserved the significant progress on gender issues achieved in the seventh review and included an additional reference to the role of women-led civil society organizations in contributing to the Strategy's goals.

49. UN-Women, through its strong partnership with the Peacebuilding Support Office of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, continued to play a leading role in promoting gender-responsive peacebuilding, including financing, and supporting conflict prevention and peacebuilding initiatives led by women and young people. In 2022, the Peacebuilding Fund approved a record \$231 million in support for peacebuilding initiatives in 37 countries, of which 47 per cent (\$108.5 million) supported gender equality. Through its support for the implementation of the Peacebuilding Commission's gender strategy (2016) and its action plan (2021), UN-Women contributed to stronger gender analysis across the Commission's activities, including country missions. This has resulted in a rise in outcome documents promoting gender equality and greater inclusion of gender-responsive recommendations in the Commission's inputs to other intergovernmental bodies, including the Security Council. In 2022, 58 per cent of meetings of the Peacebuilding Commission were informed by briefings from women peacebuilders.

50. The Entity continued its work with the Global Focal Point for the Rule of Law, including through the creation of a working group on gender justice, co-chaired by UN-Women, UNDP and the Department of Peace Operations. The Entity also continued its partnership with UNDP to close the gender justice gap in conflict- and

⁵ See <https://wpsfocalpointsnetwork.org/>.

⁶ https://wpsfocalpointsnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Final-Joint-Communique_WPS-FPN-Washington-DC-Capital-Level-Meeting.pdf.

crisis-affected contexts, the Gender Justice Platform, supporting women's access to justice in countries including Colombia, Lebanon, Mali and South Sudan.

51. UN-Women supported the integration of the women and peace and security agenda as a cross-cutting theme in the seven priorities identified in the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping Plus⁷ implementation strategy of the 2021–2023 Action for Peacekeeping initiative.⁸ The Elsie Initiative Fund for uniformed women in peace operations, of which UN-Women serves as the secretariat, continued to support troop- and police-contributing countries in their efforts to increase the number of uniformed women deployed to United Nations peace operations. Key results from that support include high-level commitments by 14 security institutions in nine countries to undertake a detailed assessment of the barriers impeding uniformed women's participation in United Nations peace operations, and commitments to further gender equality through policy development activities within seven security institutions. Since 2015, UN-Women has delivered training to over 1,000 military women worldwide to increase uniformed women's full, equal and meaningful participation in United Nations peacekeeping in accordance with Security Council resolutions 2242 (2015) and 2538 (2020) and the uniformed gender parity strategy 2018–2028.⁹ In 2023, UN-Women, supported by the Integrated Training Service of the Department of Peace Operations, revised the training course which is now called the women's military peace operations course.

52. UN-Women continued to serve as the secretariat of the United Nations Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund,¹⁰ which provides an innovative model for direct, dedicated and flexible financing for local women's civil society organizations in fragile settings worldwide. Since its launch in 2016, the Fund has mobilized more than \$160 million and supported more than 1,060 local women's civil society organizations in conflict-affected and humanitarian settings, nearly half of which have received funding through the United Nations for the first time. The Fund has supported funding allocations in 43 countries and has proved its agility in responding to new and emerging crises. It has also responded to priorities identified at the normative level through dedicated funding windows, including to support women's participation in peace processes and more recently to support and protect women human rights defenders.

53. The Entity continued to host the secretariat of the Compact on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action and coordinated the first accountability report of the Compact launched in October 2023.¹¹ The report includes progress made by the more than 200 signatories of the Compact, including Member States, regional organizations, United Nations entities, the private sector, civil society and academia, to deliver on actions and commitments. The report shows that signatories have made commendable progress and that their reporting contributes to increased accountability, stronger coordination and evidence-guided strategies for sustainable peace.

B. Humanitarian action

54. During the humanitarian affairs segment of the Economic and Social Council, UN-Women, together with OCHA, UNICEF, Germany and the United States of America, co-hosted a side event entitled "Commitment to action: women's

⁷ See <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/action-peacekeeping>.

⁸ See www.un.org/en/A4P/.

⁹ Available from <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/uniformed-gender-parity-strategy-2018-2028-full-text>.

¹⁰ See <https://wphfund.org/>.

¹¹ Available from <https://wpscompact.org/>.

representation leading to better humanitarian outcomes”. The event featured women civil society representatives from Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Haiti, Ukraine and Yemen.

55. As a full member of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the Entity participated in Principals and Deputies Group meetings, as well as meetings of the Emergency Directors Group and the Operational Policy and Advocacy Group for the first time and was able to call the attention of Committee members to gender-specific needs and issues related to the access of women-led organizations to humanitarian decision-making and financing. UN-Women also participated in Emergency Directors Group missions to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Haiti, as well as a Principals mission to Afghanistan.

56. UN-Women, as a co-chair of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Gender Reference Group, continued its role of developing the annual gender accountability framework report, which serves as the primary tool in the global humanitarian system to monitor adherence to the Committee’s gender policy across all Committee-led humanitarian settings. The report covering 2022 indicated that, at the global level, results of most indicators largely remained at the same level as 2021. Some 80 per cent of outputs from the Principals Group, 40 per cent of annual work plans adopted by the Operational Policy and Advocacy Group task forces, 75 per cent of annual work plans adopted by the global clusters and 80 per cent of the outputs endorsed by the Deputies Group, the Operational Policy and Advocacy Group and the Emergency Directors Group demonstrated some level of attention to gender considerations and priorities. At the field level, while some areas remained at the same level as in previous years, there was improvement in results across most other indicators. Notably, there was an improvement in the number of active gender in humanitarian action/gender working groups, from 62 per cent in 2021 to 76 per cent in 2022, as well as an increase from 65 per cent to 69 per cent of the contexts where at least one local women’s organization was consulted as part of the humanitarian programme cycle over the same time period.

57. UN-Women continued to work at the country and regional levels to promote gender-integrated humanitarian coordination and to facilitate the inclusion of local women’s organizations to contribute to the planning and implementation of coordinated humanitarian response. In Colombia, UN-Women adopted a decentralized approach, focusing its efforts in three departments (Cauca, Choco and Nariño) to support nearly 40 women’s organizations operating at the grass-roots level to strengthen their engagement with local government bodies involved in crisis response. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, UN-Women supported gender working groups at the provincial level, which included the participation of 110 women’s organizations from across the country, to develop and provide inputs to inform the work of the UN-led humanitarian structures.

VI. Support for implementation of policy guidance at the national and regional levels

58. The translation of global norms, policies and standards into operational activities relating to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is central to the work of UN-Women, as part of the Entity’s triple mandate. The Entity supports Member States, upon their request, in building national capacities, including through policy advice and programmatic support. That includes support in preparations for and follow-up to the outcomes of the annual sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women. Consistent with the 2020 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (General Assembly resolution [75/233](#)), UN-Women has pledged in its

Strategic Plan for the period 2022–2025 to support efforts to accelerate implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, the 2030 Agenda and other global normative and policy frameworks for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

59. The following paragraphs provide some concrete examples of the support that UN-Women has provided Governments in the past few years and other partners in their efforts to further advance gender responsiveness of their national policies, plans or strategies and to strengthen capacities to implement their national priorities. They focus specifically on implementation of the political declaration on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the commitments to women's full and effective participation and decision-making in public life, as well as the elimination of violence made in the agreed conclusions of the sixty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, and the operationalization of gender-responsive climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and strategies, including the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction follow-up, informed by the agreed conclusions of the sixty-sixth session of the Commission.

60. With regard to the strengthening of normative, legislative and regulatory frameworks, the Gender Justice and the Law initiative,¹² a partnership of UN-Women with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, UNDP, UNFPA and national stakeholders in the Arab States to assess the status of alignment of national laws with international standards across 17 Member States, launched a new set of country reports that includes a new indicator on violence against women in politics and provides an update of the progress made in six areas of legislation. In addition, in 2023, UN-Women supported the United Republic of Tanzania in reviewing its women and gender development policy (2000). In Ethiopia, the Entity provided technical support for the development of a draft national policy on gender equality and women's empowerment and assisted the Ministry of Finance in developing the Gender Equality Strategy for the period 2021–2026. In Colombia, UN-Women offered substantive support for the development of the women's public policy for the period 2022–2030 and the implementation of the gender budget tracker. In Armenia, the Entity conducted its training on gender-responsive budgeting for members of the National Assembly. In Liberia, UN-Women supported efforts to mainstream gender across security sector institutions, including the Armed Forces of Liberia, the Bureau of Correction and Rehabilitation, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Justice, the National Disaster Management Agency and the Liberia National Fire and Rescue Service. Similarly, in Colombia, the Entity facilitated the participatory formulation process of the first national action plan on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), which includes provisions for the effective integration of the needs of women and girls in relief and recovery policies, guidelines and strategies.

61. In the area of political participation and decision-making, UN-Women, in collaboration with UNDP, supported the national electoral body of the Plurinational State of Bolivia in designing tools for monitoring candidate lists in national and local elections to guarantee gender parity. Similar efforts were also conducted in Kyrgyzstan, where the Entity supported the presidential administration in setting targets and timelines to achieve gender balance in the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government. In South Sudan, the Entity supported a series of capacity-building and leadership sessions for women leaders, gender focal points in national and subnational ministries, national commissions, security institutions, women parliamentary caucus members, the media and women-led organizations. Those efforts led to an amendment of the Political Parties Act, which now mandates

¹² Available in Arabic at <https://genderjustice.unescwa.org/main.aspx>.

35 per cent of the seats for national legislators to be filled by women. In Ethiopia, UN-Women, partnered with the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs, regional gender machineries and the Office of the President to strengthen the transformative leadership skills of 2,025 women leaders between 2021 and 2023. The Entity also supported the Central Asian Women Leaders' Caucus, established in December 2021, by chairing its sessions in the Uzbekistan Senate in 2021, the Turkmenistan Parliament in 2022 and the Kazakhstan Senate in 2023. In addition, it oversaw the implementation of the annual workplans of the Caucus. In the Niger, UN-Women supported the establishment of a network of around 1,200 women mediators involved in conflict prevention, management and mediation, as well as the promotion of a culture of peace to actively participate in decision-making mechanisms. In the Arab States, UN-Women partnered with the Arab Elections Management Body and the Arab Network for Women in Elections, introducing capacity-building sessions on ending violence against women and girls for national election management bodies and civil society organizations. The Entity also supported the development of protocols for the prevention of violence against women in elections and politics in El Salvador and Liberia and conducted prevalence surveys on violence against women in politics to encourage evidence-based reforms in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Türkiye and Kosovo.¹³

62. With regard to preventing and eliminating violence against women and girls, UN-Women also advocated for legislation banning female genital mutilation in Kenya and Liberia. UN-Women provided support to the development of a draft policy on prevention and response to gender-based violence in Ethiopia and supported the Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity of Argentina with the implementation of the comprehensive law on gender-based violence. In Colombia, the Entity supported the National Congress in developing internal guidelines to manage cases of gender-based violence and abuse within the organization. In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, UN-Women assisted the Ministry of Justice in developing protocols and helplines for victims of violence. Similarly, in Kenya, the Government established gender-based violence recovery centres as part of a generation equality forum initiative.

63. In the area of climate action and environmental protection, in Kyrgyzstan, UN-Women partnered with the World Food Programme to enhance the adaptive capacity and resilience of rural communities through the promotion of participatory gender- and nutrition-sensitive climate change adaptation measures to reduce vulnerabilities to climate change. In Honduras, UN-Women accompanied the work of the Gender Commission of the National Congress in the formulation and discussion of the Law for the Protection of Women in Situations of Natural Disasters and Emergencies. In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, UN-Women contributed to the national commitment of the Plurinational Authority of Mother Earth to include indigenous women in environment and climate change decision-making. In Albania, the Entity supported the development of a call to action manifesto on gender, youth and climate change that includes recommendations to promote gender-responsive solutions to climate change. In the United Republic of Tanzania, the Entity provided support for gender-sensitive policies and strategies for climate responsive governance, including development of a blue economy gender strategy and action plan for an inclusive blue economy in 2022 and the implementation of the Lima work programme on gender. In Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Serbia, UN-Women developed a methodology and a study on climate finance tracking and gender-responsive budgeting. At the regional level, in Latin America, the Entity concentrated efforts on promoting the rights of women environmental and human rights defenders. As a follow-up and implementation of the Escazú Agreement, the Entity launched, together with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

¹³ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

(ECLAC), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Argentina, a regional campaign entitled “Despertemos humanidad”. In addition, the Entity co-organized with ECLAC, UNEP, UNDP, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Bank, the first women’s environmental and human rights defenders’ preparatory process in September 2023 in Panama.

VII. Conclusion

64. In the context of a slowing, and in some cases reversed, rate of progress towards gender equality, coupled with multiple and interlinked crises that disproportionately affect women and girls, UN-Women continued to provide effective normative support to intergovernmental processes and bodies. The Entity continued to fill data gaps and to support evidence-informed policies, programmes and initiatives at both the regional and national levels and to contribute to the accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

65. The sixty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women presents a significant opportunity to assess progress on poverty eradication and challenges in integrating a gender perspective into the strengthening of institutions and financing. UN-Women will support the work of the Commission as it strengthens the global normative framework with ambitious commitments to achieving gender equality, the empowerment of all women and girls and the fulfilment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms in the context of intertwined global crises, while also supporting Member States in their implementation.