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## Commission on the Status of Women

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**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 provides a summary of the normative aspects of the work of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the Entity's contribution to advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women in several intergovernmental processes. It provides information on how the Entity has contributed, at headquarters and at the country level, to the implementation of the policy guidance provided by the Commission on the Status of Women.

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\* E/CN.6/2014/1.



## **I. Introduction**

1. In paragraph 67 of its resolution 64/289, the General Assembly emphasized the need for coherence, consistency and coordination between the normative and operational aspects of the work of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and requested, in subparagraph (c), the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director to submit to the Commission on the Status of Women an annual report on the normative aspects of the Entity's work. The present report provides an overview of the work carried out to implement the Entity's normative mandate in 2013 in support of the development of a comprehensive set of global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

2. UN-Women has provided substantive support to the Commission on the Status of Women, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council and also engaged with other intergovernmental processes to strengthen attention to gender equality and the empowerment of women in their outcomes. UN-Women will continue to enhance its engagement with and contributions to various intergovernmental processes as Member States work towards a post-2015 development agenda and engage in other processes, including the 20-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

3. UN-Women has followed various strategies to link its normative and operational work. It has worked with Governments, including national parliaments, gender equality ministries and other relevant ministries, in addition to civil society, to strengthen consensus on gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment. It has built strategic partnerships with stakeholders, provided substantive expertise and policy analysis, worked to strengthen the knowledge base on gender equality and women's rights and incorporated good practices and lessons learned from regional and national experiences in furthering its normative work.

4. In accordance with the Entity's coordination mandate, UN-Women is also supporting and mobilizing the organizations of the United Nations system to mainstream a gender perspective in their areas of work.

## **II. Strengthening the normative work on gender equality**

5. UN-Women continued to contribute to strengthening the global normative and policy framework for gender equality and the empowerment of women. The present section provides an overview of normative progress on gender equality and support by UN-Women to strengthen gender equality norms and standards in the Commission on the Status of Women, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council.

### **A. Commission on the Status of Women**

6. UN-Women serves as the substantive secretariat of the Commission on the Status of Women and supports all aspects of the work of the Commission in its role as the principal global policymaking body that sets global standards and formulates

specific policies to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women worldwide.

7. UN-Women provided policy advice and substantive support to Member States in preparation for the fifty-seventh session of the Commission, for which the priority theme was “Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls”. In addition, it convened several regional meetings and a global stakeholders’ forum. It also worked with civil society to enhance capacity to participate in and contribute to the session, providing catalytic funding for the establishment of four regional non-governmental committees (Asia and the Pacific, Latin America, Arab States and Africa). An unprecedented 2,888 individuals from 557 non-governmental organizations participated in the session, which represents a significant increase compared with 2012. A total of 228 written statements, including joint statements, were submitted by non-governmental organizations, which is some three times the number submitted in 2012.

8. The Commission adopted agreed conclusions on the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls, which discuss gender inequality as a structural cause of such violence and recognize the links between multiple forms of discrimination and the linkages between violence against women and girls and other issues, such as health, development and crime prevention, in addition to the need to address such violence comprehensively and holistically.

9. The agreed conclusions expand the normative framework with a focus on four areas:

(a) Strengthening the implementation of legal and policy frameworks, including access to justice for victims and survivors, ensuring accountability and due diligence of States in preventing and responding to violence against women and girls, in addition to calls for the engagement of men and boys to take responsibility for their behaviour;

(b) Addressing structural causes of violence and gender stereotypes, including through action to promote and protect the human rights of all women, including their reproductive rights;

(c) Strengthening multisectoral services, programmes and responses to violence against women and girls such as emergency contraception and safe abortion where such services are permitted by national legislation;

(d) Improving data collection and analysis to improve the evidence base and to better inform the development of laws, policies and awareness-raising.

10. The outcome document has several new and important features. There is a strong focus on prevention, making clear that a comprehensive approach is necessary to address violence against women and girls. It includes a call for special attention to safety in public spaces, through gender-sensitive infrastructure and gender-responsive public officials. Information and communications technology and social media are seen as resources for raising awareness, but also in terms of new risks, in particular cyberstalking and cyberbullying. The agreed conclusions highlight for the first time the need to tackle the phenomenon of gender-related killings, or femicide. There is consideration of the need to support and protect those who are committed to eliminating violence against women, including women human rights defenders, who face particular risks of violence. For a discussion of

UN-Women work to support the implementation of the agreed conclusions at the national and regional levels, see section IV.

11. In preparation for the fifty-eighth session of the Commission, for which the priority theme is “Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls”, UN-Women continued the good practice of beginning consultations with key stakeholders at an early stage of the preparations for the session and developed a comprehensive strategy focusing on preparing a strong substantive basis for strengthening normative standards on the priority theme. In the process, UN-Women engaged all parts of the Entity, including its country offices, which provide support to Governments in their preparations for the sessions of the Commission. UN-Women, in cooperation with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, convened an expert group meeting relating to the priority theme, which was held in Mexico City from 21 to 24 October 2013. UN-Women also engaged the United Nations system in preparatory work through the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality. Building on the experience of the previous year, UN-Women organized a stakeholders’ forum on the priority theme in New York on 4 and 5 December 2013. Participants confirmed the centrality of gender equality to accelerating the achievement of the Goals and in the continuing debate on the post-2015 development agenda. They also highlighted the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all areas.

## **B. General Assembly**

12. UN-Women has continued to support and contribute to the work of the General Assembly through research, policy analysis and recommendations in reports of the Secretary-General and by providing substantive and technical expertise to Member States. Its work has enabled Member States to strengthen commitments and further expand normative frameworks to guide action to promote gender equality and empower women and girls at the global, regional and national levels. Resolutions that have emerged from such interactions have provided stronger foundations for interventions at the country level and given strong impetus to the work of UN-Women in those areas.

13. Various high-level and special events during the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly dealt with issues critical for the achievement of gender equality and women’s empowerment. In the outcome document of the special event to follow up efforts made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, held on 25 September 2013, it was recognized that promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls was key to progress across all the Goals. Member States committed themselves to promoting gender equality and eliminating the range of barriers to the empowerment of women and girls in all societies, in addition to working towards a single framework and set of goals that should promote peace and security, democratic governance, the rule of law, gender equality and human rights for all (see resolution [68/6](#)). In her comments at the closing of the event, the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of UN-Women recognized the historic moment as the international community worked to attain the Goals, shape the post-2015 development agenda and conduct the 20-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

14. UN-Women, as a member of the Global Migration Group, supported preparations for the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, held on 3 and 4 October 2013, and provided substantive contributions to the outcome document, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 68/4. In the Declaration of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, the first of its kind, representatives of States and Governments reaffirmed the need to promote and protect effectively the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants, regardless of their migration status, especially those of women. They also recognized the need to address the special situation and vulnerability of migrant women and girls by incorporating a gender perspective into policies and by strengthening national laws, institutions and programmes to combat gender-based violence, including trafficking in persons and discrimination against them. They emphasized the need to establish appropriate measures for the protection of women migrant workers in all sectors, including those involved in domestic work.

15. The high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities: the way forward, a disability-inclusive development agenda towards 2015 and beyond concluded with an outcome document in which Heads of State and Government resolved, among other things, to strengthen national efforts aimed at addressing the rights and needs of women and children with disabilities and the realization of the internationally agreed development goals and commitments related to gender equality and to the rights of the child. They also resolved to improve disability data collection, analysis and monitoring for development policy planning, implementation and evaluation, including internationally comparable data and statistics disaggregated by sex and age (see resolution 68/3). UN-Women provided technical support to Member States in the lead-up to the meeting.

16. During the high-level segment of the sixty-eighth session, the Peacebuilding Commission held a ministerial event on women's economic empowerment for peacebuilding. The members of the Commission adopted a declaration in which they emphasized the value that women's economic empowerment added to peacebuilding efforts and affirmed the need for post-conflict recovery initiatives and programmes supported by the United Nations to promote the economic empowerment of women and their equal engagement alongside men in post-conflict economic recovery (see [PBC/7/OC/3](#)). In line with the seven-point action plan on gender-responsive peacebuilding devised by the Secretary-General, UN-Women continues to accord priority to women's equal involvement as participants and beneficiaries in post-conflict economic recovery. Activities include research and analysis to strengthen the evidence base and knowledge on women's employment-seeking patterns in conflict and post-conflict situations, the distribution of benefits from disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes and temporary employment creation. In a joint report by the United Nations Environment Programme, UN-Women, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Women and Natural Resources: Unlocking the Peacebuilding Potential*, the case is made for pursuing gender equality, women's empowerment and sustainable natural resource management together in support of peacebuilding.

17. For the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, UN-Women prepared a number of mandated reports of the Secretary-General that contributed to the

negotiation of the respective resolutions. In the report on the improvement of the situation of women in rural areas (A/68/179), a call was made for mainstreaming gender perspectives into rural, agricultural and development policies. Building on that and other recommendations made in the report, in the corresponding resolution (68/139), the Assembly addressed the concerns regarding rural women's lack of access to resources and called for mainstreaming gender considerations in the governance of natural resources and leveraging the participation of women in managing the sustainable use of natural resources.

18. The report on measures taken and progress achieved in the promotion of women and political participation (A/68/184) provides the most current update on the situation of women in political life globally. As at June 2013, women held slightly more than one fifth of all parliamentary seats (21.2 per cent). Just 17 per cent of the world's ministers were women. The most widely reported legislative reform was the adoption of temporary special measures in the form of electoral quotas, which have been adopted by more than 60 countries over the past two decades and are an effective tool for change. UN-Women provides technical support to national Governments, upon request, on good practices to increase women's political participation. In 2013, UN-Women worked in more than 30 countries to support women's political participation, including by providing technical support on legislative and constitutional reform and adoption of temporary special measures and building capacity for women in politics and gender-responsive electoral processes, including voter outreach and civic education.

19. In his report on violence against women migrant workers (A/68/178), the Secretary-General discussed how to protect migrant women's human rights and ensure their access to justice. In the corresponding resolution (68/137), the General Assembly called upon Governments to ensure that legislative provisions and judicial processes were in place for women's access to justice and to meet the needs and rights of women migrant workers.

20. The report of the Secretary-General on women in development (A/68/271) included recommendations relating to decent work, unpaid care work and social protection, which have important multiplier effects across a spectrum of development goals, including poverty reduction. Women's unpaid care work contributes to individual and household well-being, social development and economic growth, but often goes unrecognized and undervalued by policymakers. In the corresponding resolution (68/227), the General Assembly encouraged Governments to recognize unremunerated work, including domestic and care work, and to provide support through the development of infrastructure and technologies and the provision of public services.

21. In his report on measures taken and progress achieved in follow-up to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (A/68/175), the Secretary-General underlined that all intergovernmental bodies and processes had a critical role in the promotion of gender equality. He noted that, compared with previous sessions, there had been a substantial increase in the proportion of resolutions that included a gender perspective (37 per cent compared with 32 per cent at the sixty-sixth session). The findings of the report became the basis for UN-Women to increase its provision of substantive and technical support on gender equality perspectives to Member States and to provide substantive expert advice,

upon request, enabling them to expand attention to gender equality in resolutions considered by several Main Committees.

22. An important legal development was the adoption by the General Assembly, on 2 April 2013, of the Arms Trade Treaty, the first treaty to recognize the link between gender-based violence and the international arms trade. States parties are required, when assessing whether to export items covered under the scope of the Treaty, to take into account risks of the arms being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women and children. UN-Women participated in the processes leading up to the adoption of the Treaty by organizing, for example, a joint event with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, in connection with the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, held in July 2012, to raise awareness of the need for a gender perspective in the text of the Treaty. UN-Women will remain actively engaged in its follow-up.

### **C. Economic and Social Council**

23. UN-Women advocated strengthened attention to gender equality perspectives during the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council for 2013. The theme of the annual ministerial review was "Science, technology and innovation, and the potential of culture, for promoting sustainable development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals". UN-Women provided technical support to Member States during the negotiation of the ministerial declaration ([E/2013/L.18](#)). In that declaration, the ministers reiterated the need to systematically incorporate a gender perspective into policies on science, technology and innovation and encouraged the use of gender-based analysis and gender impact assessments in research and development in science, technology and innovation.

24. UN-Women prepared the report of the Secretary-General on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system ([E/2013/71](#)). The report contains an assessment of progress made in the promotion of gender equality within the United Nations system, in particular on accountability for system-wide work on gender equality and the empowerment of women at the global and country levels. The roll-out of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, under the leadership of UN-Women, has resulted in several significant and immediate shifts in how the United Nations system approaches work on gender equality and women's empowerment. At the country level, the Secretary-General noted the major role of coordination in placing gender equality at the centre of United Nations joint programming and strengthening effectiveness in the field.

25. In discharging its system-wide coordination mandate, UN-Women is present in all "Delivering as one" countries, contributing to the promotion of accountability, strategic advocacy and communications as one voice on gender equality issues within country teams. The "One United Nations" initiative leads to greater awareness of how gender issues contribute to improved and coordinated planning in various sectors to tackle gender inequality. There are 113 gender theme groups around the world, 62 of which are led or co-led by UN-Women. United Nations country teams provided support to Governments on national gender equality priorities in 2012, including ending violence against women, improving

reproductive health, combating HIV/AIDS, expanding women's political participation, advancing education, incorporating gender equality into national development and poverty reduction strategies and supporting national machineries on gender equality.

26. During the discussion of the report, speakers from the United Nations system pointed to the added value of the Action Plan as an example of what the system is able to achieve when working as one in a coordinated and coherent fashion. The Action Plan has created incentives to develop new tools and build the capacity of staff to integrate gender perspectives into all their work. In this process, the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality has played a critical role in reinforcing organizational commitment to the goal of gender equality and women's rights. UN-Women will continue to provide strong technical assistance to entities to build their capacity in meeting the requirements of the Action Plan.

27. UN-Women supported Member States during the negotiation of resolution 2013/16 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system, in which the Economic and Social Council welcomed the roll-out of the Action Plan under the leadership of UN-Women. It requested the United Nations system to continue to roll out the Action Plan and report on progress made in its implementation, including of entity-specific remedial action plans, in addition to prioritizing remedial action plans and investing in human and financial resources, to address the gaps identified through the Action Plan reporting towards meeting set standards. It also noted with appreciation the work of UN-Women for more effective and coherent gender mainstreaming across the United Nations.

28. During the humanitarian segment, UN-Women, with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Sub-Working Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action, organized a panel discussion on gender equality and resilience in humanitarian action. The event afforded an opportunity to discuss ways to translate gender policies and commitments into practical action on the ground. Speakers agreed that the gender marker should be used throughout the entire humanitarian programme cycle to strengthen monitoring and evaluation and lead to better accountability to affected people, that sex-disaggregated and age-disaggregated data should be collected and used in all humanitarian interventions and that efforts should be accelerated to ensure that women and adolescent girls participated in planning and decision-making in disaster risk management at all levels.

#### **D. Security Council**

29. At the normative level, notable advancements were made in 2013 in advancing the global agenda on women and peace and security, including a significant policy and operational focus on monitoring, prevention and prosecution of sexual violence in conflict, enhancing women's involvement in peacebuilding and taking measures towards women's economic empowerment.

30. The normative framework was further strengthened by two new resolutions adopted by the Security Council in 2013. In resolution [2106 \(2013\)](#), the Council focused on addressing impunity and further operationalizing guidance on the issue of sexual violence in conflict. It affirmed that women's political, social and economic empowerment, gender equality and the enlistment of men and boys to combat all forms of violence against women were central to long-term efforts to



prevent sexual violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations. Resolution [2122 \(2013\)](#) is the first resolution since resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) that substantially deepens the participation aspects of the women and peace and security agenda.

31. In support of the implementation of resolution [2106 \(2013\)](#) and related resolutions, UN-Women has continued to advocate enhanced attention to the full range of human rights violations, security threats and protection challenges facing women and girls during and in the aftermath of conflict. UN-Women continued the now well-recognized good practice of deploying technical gender experts to all commissions of inquiry established by the United Nations. UN-Women also strengthened its partnership with the Justice Rapid Response mechanism through the implementation of joint training courses on investigating cases of sexual and gender-based violence as international crimes. The experts trained become part of a special sexual and gender-based violence roster and are available for rapid deployment by States, the United Nations, the International Criminal Court and other international institutions. To build the capacity of uniformed peacekeepers, UN-Women and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat have continued their scenario-based training sessions using context-setting video clips and other audiovisual tools to trigger discussion on sexual violence in armed conflict. To date, high-ranking military officers in seven of the top troop-contributing countries have been trained using these modules and two multi-country regional training sessions have been held.

32. Resolution [2122 \(2013\)](#) is historic in its call for more determined action to ensure women's involvement in conflict prevention and resolution and peacebuilding. The Security Council reaffirmed that women's and girls' empowerment and gender equality were critical to efforts to maintain international peace and security and recognized that the economic empowerment of women greatly contributed to the stabilization of societies emerging from armed conflict. The Council encouraged prevention and response efforts, in particular in relation to transitional justice and the rule of law, to address the full range of violations experienced by women during conflict and the gender-differentiated impacts of those violations. It also noted the need for access to the full range of sexual and reproductive health services, including regarding pregnancies resulting from rape, without discrimination. The Council addressed its working methods in that it requested that reports and briefings to it should address the impact of conflict on women and efforts being made to increase women's participation in discussions pertinent to the prevention and resolution of conflict, the maintenance of peace and security and post-conflict peacebuilding.

33. In October 2013, the Security Council held an open debate on women, rule of law and transitional justice in conflict-affected situations. UN-Women provided substantive support to the President of the Council. The Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of UN-Women presented the annual report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security ([S/2013/525](#)), which, as in previous years, was coordinated by UN-Women through an inter-agency consultative process. In that report, the Secretary-General assessed the state of implementation of resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) in the areas of conflict prevention, women's participation in peacebuilding, protection from gender-based violence and gender-responsive relief and recovery. He put forward strategic measures to remove obstacles to implementation and respond to emerging issues. Notably, many of the elements and recommendations contained therein were reflected in resolution

2122 (2013). In all those areas, UN-Women will continue to work through the Standing Committee on Women, Peace and Security to ensure the full implementation of resolution 2122 (2013).

34. The accountability framework provided by the now seven Security Council resolutions on women and peace and security has been further operationalized in specific policy frameworks, planning and programming by Member States, regional organizations and United Nations entities. As at October 2013, national action plans had been adopted by 43 Member States and others were being finalized. Regional and subregional strategies and action plans are increasingly being put in place and initiatives are under way to drive stronger action at the local level. To assess the effectiveness of strategies and approaches and distil good practice in national-level implementation of Council commitments, UN-Women convened a global technical review meeting in November 2013 that gave rise to recommendations for consideration by Member States and other actors. In collaboration with partners, UN-Women is currently supporting the implementation of the women and peace and security commitments in more than 35 countries. Lessons learned and good practice emerging from the operational work remain a key source of information for the development of policy recommendations for the normative aspects of the work of UN-Women.

### **III. Promotion of gender equality in thematic intergovernmental and other processes**

35. UN-Women played an active and catalytic role in other intergovernmental processes, including at the regional level, and in human rights bodies that resulted in increased attention to gender perspectives and significant gains in outcomes.

#### **A. Post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals**

36. As mandated in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals was established in January 2013. It is to submit, in September 2014, a report to the Assembly with a proposal on sustainable development goals that should be coherent with and integrated into the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015. The special event to follow up efforts made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, held on 25 September 2013, established a road map towards the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda centred on poverty eradication and sustainable development.

37. Gender equality is widely seen as both a goal in itself and a means to achieve other development outcomes. Several intergovernmental outcomes have included reference to the centrality of gender equality in the post-2015 development agenda. For example, in the agreed conclusions of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women, it was strongly recommend that the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women should be considered to be a priority in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda. In its resolution 68/140 on the follow up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty third special session of the General Assembly, the Assembly called for

the goal of gender equality and women's empowerment to be considered a priority in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda and for integrating a gender perspective into the new development framework.

38. UN-Women is actively involved in the work on the post-2015 development agenda and the sustainable development goals, in collaboration with civil society organizations, the United Nations system and other partners. The United Nations system has provided technical support to the Open Working Group through the United Nations system task team on the post-2015 United Nations development agenda, of which UN-Women is a member. UN-Women has co-led and/or contributed to issues briefs prepared by the technical support team, including one on gender equality and women's empowerment.

39. As a contribution to the discussion on the post-2015 development agenda and the sustainable development goals, UN-Women developed a position paper in which it called for a transformative stand-alone goal to achieve gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment and comprehensive mainstreaming of a gender perspective in all goals through targets and indicators. UN-Women has identified three target areas for the goal: freedom from violence for women and girls, gender equality of capabilities and resources and gender equality in decision-making power in public and private institutions. A stand-alone goal would build upon and expand the scope of Millennium Development Goal 3, which itself is unlikely to be met by 2015. To be truly effective, and to make a genuine difference in the lives of women and men, girls and boys, the post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals must be universal and apply to all countries, given that gender equality is relevant in every part of the world. It must address the many interlinked challenges and tackle the structural inequalities and discrimination that hinder progress and slow development gains. A strong focus on accountability and transparency will be necessary to monitor progress and hold decision makers accountable.

40. UN-Women contributed to the thematic and country-level consultations facilitated by the United Nations Development Group. The consultation on inequalities, which was co-led by UN-Women and the United Nations Children's Fund, found that gender-based discrimination remained the single most widespread driver of inequality in the world. Participants called for the mainstreaming of gender in all relevant areas through disaggregated targets and indicators. With regard to national consultations led by United Nations country teams, UN-Women worked to ensure the full participation of women and women's organizations. It provided technical and financial support to 42 national and regional consultations held in 2013 on the post-2015 development agenda: 8 in Africa, 3 in the Arab States, 5 in Asia and the Pacific, 8 in Europe and Central Asia and 18 in Latin America and the Caribbean. UN Women has been working closely with ministries for gender equality, finance and national planning and others to bring together policymakers, practitioners, experts and civil society representatives in those consultations. The Entity also contributed substantive input to background papers and reports capturing the outcomes of various consultations.

41. Gender equality was identified among key priorities in national consultations in Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kazakhstan, Kenya, the Republic of Moldova and Tajikistan, among others. Specific proposals were made on how to address gender equality and women's empowerment. In Albania, they

included increasing high-quality education for women as a way to economic empowerment, strengthening women's role in the family and addressing domestic violence and discrimination against women and girls. In Burundi, community education on gender equality and women's rights, women's participation at all levels, elimination of violence against women and girls and women's access to productive resources were highlighted. The results of consultations in Peru specified the elimination of violence against women, women's increased political participation and gender mainstreaming as priorities.

42. UN-Women provided support to regional processes. In Africa, regional consultations were held to develop a common position on the post-2015 development agenda. The African Union appointed a high-level committee of Heads of State and Government under the leadership of the President of Liberia. Gender equality and the empowerment of women has been identified as a priority issue in the context of people-centred development. UN-Women support for the inclusion of a separate gender equality goal is reflected in the outcome of the Santo Domingo Consensus of the twelfth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, held from 15 to 18 October 2013.

## **B. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

43. Building on the gains in securing gender-responsive language in decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at past sessions, UN-Women scaled up its support to Parties, in collaboration with civil society partners and the secretariat of the Convention, to support the implementation of decision 23/CP.18, which deals with promoting gender balance and improving the participation of women in Convention negotiations and in the representation of Parties in bodies established pursuant to the Convention or the Kyoto Protocol, adopted in 2012.

44. UN-Women submitted a report at the climate change conference held in Bonn, Germany, in June 2013, in collaboration with the Mary Robinson Foundation — Climate Justice, on existing frameworks and practices that promote the increased participation of women in decision-making processes. UN-Women participated in a workshop on gender balance, gender-sensitive climate policy and capacity-building mandated by decision 23/CP.18, held during the nineteenth session of the Conference of the Parties, in Warsaw in November 2013, and presented key recommendations that informed the negotiation of the workshop conclusions. In the conclusions of the Chair adopted by the Conference of the Parties, Parties were called upon to further facilitate the ongoing implementation of decision 23/CP.18, including through enhanced capacity-building of women delegates, and to nominate both women and men delegates for funding from the trust fund for participation in the Convention process in order to promote gender balance in national delegations. United Nations organizations and multilateral, intergovernmental and other international and regional organizations were invited to complement the efforts of Parties through innovative ways to finance and further encourage the participation of women delegates in the Convention process and to strengthen the gender considerations in the thematic areas of climate adaptation, mitigation, finance, technology and capacity-building. The United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, under the leadership of UN-Women, was welcomed as an accountability framework for the United Nations

system in mainstreaming gender equality and enhancing the gender expertise of staff of United Nations entities, including the secretariat of the Convention.

45. UN-Women also helped to raise gender considerations as the Conference of the Parties discussed the elements of a climate change agreement to be adopted in 2015. In partnership with various stakeholders, UN-Women advocacy contributed to decisions that incorporated gender-specific references, including the Warsaw international mechanism for loss and damage associated with climate change impacts, in which a call was made for the collection and dissemination of gender-disaggregated data; the fifth review of the financial mechanism, in which a call was made for an assessment of the extent to which the financial mechanism was contributing to gender-sensitive approaches; and the Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change, which should integrate gender issues into its activities.

### **C. Countries in special situations**

46. UN-Women continues to be engaged in processes relating to countries in special situations, in particular small island developing States, least developed countries and landlocked developing countries, in the context of the post-2015 development agenda and preparatory work for upcoming conferences.

47. The preparations for the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, to be held in September 2014, began with a multi-stakeholder national preparatory process led by small island developing States, which fed into regional meetings in July 2013 and an interregional preparatory meeting in August 2013. UN-Women contributed to the process by calling for the outcome to further gender equality issues and highlight the contribution of women in small island developing States as active agents in addressing sustainable development priorities. UN-Women participated in the interregional preparatory meeting held in Bridgetown in August 2013. In the outcome document of the meeting, participants called for the enhancement of efforts towards ensuring gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and for a post-2015 development agenda that was people-centred and focused on eradicating poverty, engendering equality and achieving environmental sustainability (*A/C.2/68/7*, annex II, paras. 76 and 181).

48. Before that meeting, the UN-Women Multi-Country Office for the Caribbean supported the Caribbean Forum on Gender Equality and the Post-2015 Agenda, in which high-level government officials and civil society representatives participated. The Forum issued a joint statement on gender equality and the post-2015 and small island developing States agenda, in which it endorsed a stand-alone goal on gender equality in the post-2015 agenda and mainstreaming of gender equality priorities throughout both processes.

49. As a member of the Inter-Agency Consultative Group of United Nations entities, UN-Women participates in regular meetings in preparation for the 10-year Review Conference on the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, to be held in 2014. UN-Women will contribute to the preparatory processes for the Review Conference to ensure that the outcome document reflects a gender perspective and specifies action responding to the needs of women in landlocked developing countries.

## D. Human rights

50. UN-Women supported other processes that contribute to strengthening the global normative framework on gender equality and the linkages between normative frameworks and the daily realities of women. UN-Women coordinated this effort, in particular with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

51. Over a two-year process, UN-Women supported the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in the development of its general recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations, which the Committee adopted on 18 October 2013. It had supported the Committee in its day of general discussion in July 2011 and organized, through its field offices, five regional consultations, held in Addis Ababa, Amman, Bangkok, Guatemala City and Istanbul, to ensure the integration of the full range of regional experiences into the process. In addition, UN-Women supported the Committee in connection with the elaboration of other draft general recommendations, including those on women's access to justice and rural women.

52. UN-Women continued to support the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in all regions, including by providing capacity-building and training on the Convention and women's human rights for government officials, gender equality advocates and other stakeholders. UN-Women also supported States parties in their reporting to the Committee, their preparations for the dialogue with the Committee and in the implementation of the Committee's concluding observations, including the integration of the observations into national laws, policies and programmes. UN-Women promoted the ratification of the Convention in South Sudan and works towards the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention, for example in Morocco. Support was also provided for the preparation of civil society shadow reports and United Nations country team reports submitted to the Committee. For example, the country office in Afghanistan organized mock sessions for the national delegation before the dialogue with the Committee and supported two members from civil society to present the shadow report and attend the session. UN-Women shared the concluding observations with the United Nations country team in order to inform country-level programming. UN-Women also facilitated training for women living with HIV and women's organizations in the Caribbean and Asia and the Pacific on using the reporting to the Committee as a mechanism to hold Governments accountable for women's rights issues in the context of HIV.

53. UN-Women is collaborating with the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice established in 2010 by the Human Rights Council by its resolution 15/23. In connection with the Working Group's thematic priority on economic and social life, UN-Women and OHCHR organized an expert group meeting in June 2012 on good practices in realizing women's rights to land and other productive resources. In November 2013, UN-Women and OHCHR finalized a joint publication, *Realizing Women's Rights to Land and Other Productive Resources*, which resulted from the meeting and is a tool to guide and support the adoption and effective implementation of laws, policies and programmes to ensure women's access, use and control over land and other productive resources.

54. UN-Women continued its collaboration with other human rights mechanisms of the Human Rights Council, including the special rapporteurs on the independence of judges and lawyers, on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence and on extreme poverty and human rights. UN-Women supported the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, in particular through input and the organization of an expert meeting in Addis Ababa to inform its general comment on women affected by enforced disappearances. UN-Women supported regional consultations for the report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, on State responsibility for eliminating violence against women (A/HRC/23/49).

## **E. HIV and AIDS**

55. UN-Women worked for the implementation of global commitments on HIV and AIDS, including the Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS: Intensifying Our Efforts to Eliminate HIV and AIDS. UN-Women supports the integration of gender equality and women's priorities into national HIV policies, plans and budgets and facilitates the inclusion of women living with HIV and affected by HIV in policymaking and decision-making.

56. UN-Women provided technical and capacity-building support to national AIDS coordinating authorities to integrate gender equality and human rights perspectives into key policies, programmes, actions and budgets to address HIV. It supported the development of training curricula and continuing training and capacity development for staff of national AIDS coordinating authorities in Cambodia, Jamaica, Kenya and Papua New Guinea.

57. To ensure that women living with HIV and the organizations that support them participate in decision-making relating to HIV response, UN-Women supported networks of women living with HIV and caregivers, including in the monitoring of progress in implementing the gender equality commitments made in the Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS. In 2013, UN-Women supported networks of women living with HIV to articulate a common agenda (Kenya, Mozambique, Papua New Guinea and Rwanda) and/or to participate in national planning and policymaking processes, including midterm reviews of national AIDS strategies and national planning on ending mother-to-child-transmission (Kenya and Rwanda).

58. Through its programme on action to promote the legal empowerment of women in the context of HIV and AIDS, UN-Women supported 10 community-based organizations in seven sub-Saharan countries through small grants to enhance legal frameworks relating to women's property and inheritance rights, improve women's legal literacy and increase the availability and quality of legal services.

## **IV. Implementation of the policy guidance by the Commission on the Status of Women**

### **A. Agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission at its fifty-seventh session**

59. The Commission on the Status of Women provides policy guidance to Governments, entities of the United Nations system, international and regional organizations, civil society organizations, the private sector and other relevant

actors with regard to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

60. The agreed conclusions on elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls provided new guidance and reinforced continuing work on eliminating violence against women and girls by UN-Women at the regional and national levels, as described below in illustrative examples.

61. To assist Governments in the implementation of the agreed conclusions, UN-Women supported the translation of the text into national languages and held consultations with government officials and civil society organizations. UN-Women drafted six guidance notes for its field offices to provide practical guidance on the main areas covered in the text. Another guidance note was prepared by an inter-agency group and distributed to United Nations agencies at the regional and country levels.

62. UN-Women worked with the Latin American Parliament in follow-up to a resolution on the eradication of violence against women adopted in November 2012. Its advocacy efforts led to the unanimous adoption of a new resolution in October 2013, in which the importance of the agreed conclusions was recognized and the need to translate them into laws and regulations stressed.

63. Following the adoption of the agreed conclusions, several national multi-stakeholder consultative meetings were held to distribute and discuss them. In response, action plans were developed in such countries as Kenya, Nigeria and the United Republic of Tanzania, according priority to actions such as auditing existing laws with a view to reviewing and repealing discriminatory provisions, undertaking an advocacy campaign on financial stimulus packages for women to address structural causes of violence, improving services and support to survivors through one-stop service centres and intensifying awareness-raising to prevent violence against women and girls at the community level and increase male involvement in such efforts. UN-Women is supporting the development of a national programme on gender-based violence in Viet Nam and on planning multi-year follow-up actions in Nepal.

64. In the area of laws and policies, UN-Women has provided technical guidance to Governments and other stakeholders for the elaboration of national laws, action plans and policies addressing violence against women. Relevant guidance includes a handbook for legislation on violence against women, a supplement thereto on harmful practices against women and a handbook for national action plans on violence against women. To strengthen regional norms and standards, UN-Women country offices in Europe and Central Asia used the agreed conclusions to build support in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence.

65. In the area of multisectoral services and responses, UN-Women and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) developed a joint global programme on essential services for women and girls subject to violence to fill the gap between normative developments at the international level for responding to violence against women and country-level implementation. With support from the Government of Australia, the four-year programme aims to reach a global agreement on the set of essential services and responses required to respond to violence against women in the areas



of health, police and justice, support services and coordination and governance; develop standards and/or guidelines for the provision of services, especially in low-income and middle-income countries; and develop technical assistance for implementing standards and/or guidelines and capacity-building for service providers. A first global technical consultation on the health sector was held in November 2013.

66. Given that implementation gaps are often due to the lack of financial and human resources and insufficient allocation of such resources, the UN-Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific continues to support various costing studies on violence against women, using diverse approaches and methodologies, including research on a costing framework to support the Government of Bangladesh to allocate funds efficiently for the successful implementation of anti-domestic violence legislation.

67. To strengthen the evidence base on violence against women, the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific supported Partners for Prevention, a UNDP, UNFPA, UN-Women and United Nations Volunteers regional joint programme for the prevention of gender-based violence in Asia and the Pacific. Under the scope of the programme, a study, *Why Do Some Men Use Violence against Women and How Can We Prevent It?*, was launched in September 2013. The next phase of the joint programme will focus on the implementation of evidence-based interventions for prevention.

68. A Latin American model protocol for investigation of gender-related killings of women, drawn up by UN-Women and OHCHR, was adopted in August 2013. It guides the investigation and prosecution of gender-related killings of women in a comprehensive and interdisciplinary way and provides practical guidelines for the judiciary, prosecutors, police and forensic institutions so that investigations and prosecutions with regard to violent deaths of women are carried out based on international standards. The Council of Ministers of Women's Affairs of Central America highlighted its importance for government entities and national gender equality machineries in a meeting in Panama in September 2013.

69. To strengthen advocacy efforts, the campaign of the Secretary-General entitled "UNiTE to End Violence against Women" has highlighted the agreed conclusions in its monthly themes. MTV Latin America and UN-Women, jointly with UNDP, UNFPA and the United Nations Children's Fund, have launched a regional awareness-raising initiative, aimed at gaining support from young men in seven Latin American and Caribbean countries, which links positive masculine attitudes with the prevention and eradication of all forms of violence against women and girls.

70. Through its investments, the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women continues to support programmes to tackle violence against women and girls and contribute to the implementation of the agreed conclusions. For example, support from the Trust Fund allowed the successful SASA! (Start, Awareness, Support and Action) methodology, designed by its Uganda-based grantee Raising Voices, to be scaled up throughout the region. This community-focused violence and HIV prevention programme challenges power imbalances between men and women through activities supporting community members through different stages of behavioural change: from awareness, to support for survivors, to action against violence.

## **B. Review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**

71. In its resolution 2013/18, adopted in July 2013, the Economic and Social Council decided that the Commission on the Status of Women would undertake a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of its adoption. The Council called upon States to undertake comprehensive national-level reviews of the progress made and challenges encountered and encouraged the regional commissions to undertake regional reviews. UN-Women is fully engaged in those processes, advocating a future framework of development policy and action that accords priority to gender equality and women's empowerment.

72. UN-Women is playing a key role in coordinating the review and appraisal process and in mobilizing Member States, civil society, the United Nations system, the private sector and other stakeholders at all levels. It is working with the regional commissions to support regional reviews and is supporting national-level reviews. At the global level, it will undertake analytical work to provide the evidence base, draw lessons learned, identify gaps and challenges; bring together stakeholders to strengthen their commitment to the accelerated implementation of the Platform for Action; engage in communications and advocacy with the goal of raising awareness among young people; and engage the United Nations system for enhanced support for implementation.

## **V. Conclusions**

73. **Significant normative advances on gender equality and women's rights have been made in the past year in the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Commission on the Status of Women in such areas as violence against women, women's participation in peacebuilding and women's economic empowerment. UN-Women has supported Member States in developing new normative guidance and in implementing global commitments at the country and regional levels. The Entity's country presence has allowed it to feed national experiences into global policy development and to support the national implementation of commitments on gender equality and the empowerment of women.**

74. **The coming two years present a strategic opportunity when the international community is stepping up its efforts to attain the Millennium Development Goals and to shape a post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals, while also preparing a new agreement on climate change. These interlinked processes should build on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action to position gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment as an important end in itself and an essential means of achieving sustainable development in all its dimensions.**