

# TRANSFORM

## The UN Women's Regional Architecture Evaluation Issue

Why evaluate UN Women's  
Regional Architecture?

PAGE 4

How relevant, effective and  
efficient is the Regional  
Architecture of UN Women?

PAGE 6

Moving forward: 4 ways  
to adjust the UN Women  
institutional set-up for a  
more impactful organization

PAGE 20





## Dear Readers,

We are pleased to present you our ninth issue of TRANSFORM, addressing another critical topic: the evaluation of the regional architecture of UN Women. UN Women was designed with a regional architecture that aims to maximize the organization's ability to deliver on its mandate.

This evaluation brings to light important findings, conclusions and recommendations on the implementation of the regional architecture that can enhance UN Women's contribution to gender equality.

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

We hope you find this new issue of TRANSFORM engaging and the information within useful in strengthening the work of UN Women and its partners worldwide.

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## *Think Beyond. Stay Ahead.*

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## Strengthening organizational structure for delivering gender equality results

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### The Regional Architecture of UN Women: What is it?

PAGE 2



### How relevant, effective and efficient is UN Women's Regional Architecture?

PAGE 6

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#### MOVING FORWARD

### 4 ways to adjust the UN Women institutional set-up for a more impactful organization

PAGE 20

### Learning from this formative evaluation — Reflections from management

PAGE 26

### Comprehensive methodology for a broad evaluation

PAGE 28



**ON THE COVER** In the Democratic Republic of Congo, women refugees rebuild lives, with determination and hope. In the midst of all the daily challenges, women attending a dance performance have a moment to laugh together. One of the goals of the centres is to help refugee women socialize, make new friends and rebuild their social networks. "We should not give up but fight for a better life for our children!" say the women in the Lusenda refugee camp.

# *The* **Regional Architecture of UN Women: What is it?**

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**The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) was established by General Assembly Resolution 64/289 on system-wide coherence to assist Member States and the United Nations (UN) system in progressing more effectively and efficiently towards the goal of achieving gender equality and women's empowerment.**

The mandate of UN Women brought together four pre-existing entities, calling on the new entity to have universal coverage, strategic presence and ensure closer linkages between the norm setting intergovernmental work and operations at the field level. It entrusted UN Women with a leading role in normative, operational and coordination work on gender equality and women's empowerment in the UN system.

In 2012, and pursuant to the Executive Board Decision 2011/5 on the UN Women biennial institutional budget 2012-2013, UN Women presented its plans for the new regional

architecture. The overall goal of the regional architecture was to delegate authority to maximize the organization's ability to deliver on its mandate in a more effective and efficient way and bring capacity closer to the field in order to increase contribution to the achievement of results.

The regional architecture identified key elements that were necessary in order to better support Member States and to leverage the UN system. Those elements were informed by consultation with Member States, civil society partners, UN agencies and UN Women staff, in addition to an external study including lessons from other

organizations both within and outside the United Nations. The new institutional arrangement shifted decision-making and policy, programmatic and operational support to six regional offices and six multi-country offices, as well as country offices that would continue to be strengthened and report directly to regional offices. Five guiding principles were identified to strengthen effectiveness and efficiency: (a) decentralize authority to the field with the required operational support functions; (b) get the maximum impact from existing resources and synergies with other organizations; (c) best serve the coordination function of UN Women in the UN system; (d) ensure quality and accountability across all levels of the organization; and (e) ensure coherence for the role, messaging and mandate for UN Women.

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The new regional architecture consisted of: (a) the establishment of six regional offices and six multi-country offices, including the transformation of the existing sub-regional offices into either regional, multi-country or country offices; (b) the decentralization of day-to-day managerial oversight functions for UN Women country presences from Headquarters to regional offices; (c) the transfer of some technical and operational functions from Headquarters to the regional level; and (d) accompanying changes at Headquarters to support higher-level oversight and global technical and policy knowledge and support to the field.

*In its strategic plan,  
UN Women describes as  
“its highest priority the restructuring  
and upgrading of its effectiveness  
and presence on the ground, at both  
regional and national levels.”*

**UN WOMEN STRATEGIC PLAN 2011–2013**



## UN WOMEN LEADERSHIP CHARTER

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, EMBODYING AND UPHOLDING THE CORE VALUES OF THE UNITED NATIONS, AND RECOGNIZING THAT COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP IS ESSENTIAL TO REALIZING THE MISSION AND VISION OF UN WOMEN, WHOLEHEARTEDLY COMMIT OURSELVES TO THIS LEADERSHIP CHARTER.

In UN Women, a leader is a person who:

### Has Vision

- Anticipates and seizes opportunities that others may not see
- Develops, articulates and communicates vision clearly

### Empowers Others

- Respects, values and acknowledges others
- Encourages people to grow and mentors

### Has Integrity and Honesty

- Has strong moral compass
- Lives what s/he believes in
- Has resolve

### Is Courageous

- Stays true to own principles, in spite of apathy and resistance
- Takes hard decisions and stands by them
- Steps out of comfort zone

### Is Committed and Passionate

- Is the change s/he wants to see
- Drives to promote transformative change

### Is Accountable and Results-Oriented

- Favours transparency
- Defines, plans, manages, measures, and learns from results
- Is accountable to the impact we create

### Communicates

- Transfers and receives information effectively, completely and appropriately

### Demonstrates Humility

- Puts the cause before self
- Is self-aware with dignity
- Is able to change his/her own view

### Inspires Others

- Engages and energizes others toward positive change
- Leads by example

*Signed in Pollsodes, New York, on 3 September 2015.*







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## Why evaluate UN Women's Regional Architecture?

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*Are we doing the right things?*

*Are we doing things right?*

*Are we doing these things on a scale that makes a difference?*

*To get better results, we need to know what works.*

*We also need to know what doesn't work and how to fix it.*

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The corporate evaluation of UN Women's regional architecture was undertaken as part of the Corporate Evaluation Plan 2014–2017. The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the relevance, organizational effectiveness and administrative efficiency of UN Women's regional architecture.

The evaluation analysed the design, planning and implementation of the regional architecture from its launch in 2012 to the first quarter of 2016. The scope of the evaluation included field presence and divisions in Headquarters. The evaluation was based on gender and human rights

principles, and adhered to the UN Evaluation Group's norms and standards for evaluation. A specific evaluation objective on human rights and gender equality was included, and specific questions on gender responsiveness were mainstreamed across the evaluation criteria.

The evaluation was commissioned and managed by the Independent Evaluation Office of UN Women and was conducted by an external independent evaluation team between September 2015 and August 2016, with the active involvement of the UN Women Reference Group.

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