SUMMARY:

EVALUATION
OF UNDP CONTRIBUTION TO
GENDER EQUALITY AND
WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT

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The cover depicts the total number and proportion in the type of UNDP gender results assessed by the evaluation using the Gender Results Effectiveness Scale (GRES).

- Gender negative results
- Gender blind results
- Gender targeted results
- Gender responsive results
- Gender transformative results

For more detailed information on the GRES results, see Chapter 5 of the full report.

Full Report can be accessed at:

Summary: Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

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FOREWORD

Gender equality remains an unfulfilled promise that affects all humanity. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights set out the fundamental bases of universal freedoms, equality and rights in 1948. Since then nine treaties and optional protocols have been developed that cover specific human rights protections, creating a comprehensive normative human rights legal framework.

During the 1970s and 1980s, discussions in civil society, governments and United Nations agencies focused on increasing attention, developing protection mechanisms and dedicating resources to advance women’s equity and social justice. These debates on international norms and standards led to the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1979. It established a critical reference point underscoring the importance of gender equality in development, with an explicit focus on reducing discrimination against women. It was followed by the Beijing Platform of Action in 1995, which enshrined ‘gender mainstreaming’ as a central tenet of all development activity. But disappointingly, more than three decades later, gender equality remains an elusive goal.

UNDP has been in the forefront of responding to these developments since the 1970s. The first evaluation of UNDP’s efforts, in 2006, concluded that UNDP had put in place policies and strategies to mainstream gender and there were some “islands of success”. However, it found that the organization lacked a systemic approach to gender mainstreaming. Most crucially, UNDP lacked leadership as well as commitment at the highest levels and capacity at all levels.

This is the second independent evaluation of UNDP’s contribution to gender equality and women’s empowerment and it picks up the thread from 2008 and traces the implementation of UNDP’s first Gender Equality Strategy, which concluded in 2013. Overall, the evaluation concludes that there has been notable change and improvement in the UNDP approach to and implementation of policies to address gender. Gender mainstreaming is now a shared corporate priority, and UNDP has moved well beyond the “islands of success” finding of the 2006 evaluation. This evaluation also makes clear that UNDP is a learning organization that seriously absorbed and acted on the findings and recommendations of the earlier evaluation.
Notwithstanding the progress in ‘engendering’ UNDP operations and programmes, the evaluation has found significant areas that will require concerted attention in the short and medium term. Most notable was the need to improve the quality and effectiveness of gender results: the evaluation finds that UNDP succeeded only partially in meeting the objective of the Gender Equality Strategy that called for the UNDP development contribution to be ‘gender responsive’.

UNDP will therefore need to devote attention and significant resources if it is to make the attainment of deeper gender results a central objective of its next Strategic Plan and beyond. In this connection, the evaluation used two measurement instruments to assess the effectiveness and quality of development results: the Gender Results Effectiveness Scale and the Gender@Work Quadrants, in its analysis. It is hoped that these instruments will prove useful to UNDP in deepening future assessments of its contributions to gender results.

Another area that will require attention is the application of a firm corporate policy to ensure that gender analysis is a mandatory requirement in all programming. Furthermore, UNDP will need to devote much more concerted attention to defining its thought leadership and strategic contribution in the area of gender. It should also explore new frontiers for engaging in gender issues that go beyond women’s issues. Attaining gender parity at the critical middle levels of UNDP management is another area that will require vigilance. UNDP must also adopt a more active policy to address the organizational culture issues highlighted in the annual staff surveys. All of these will be crucial steps in achieving true gender equality.

UNDP is well positioned to take on these challenges. I hope the conclusions and recommendations of this evaluation provide useful pointers, particularly as the organization readies itself to undertake the midterm review of the current Strategic Plan as the first step in preparing the next one.

INDRAN A. NAIDOO
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22 WAY FORWARD
Globally, gender inequality is one of the most pervasive forms of human rights violations and affects more than half of the world’s population.

Gender equality is not just about women. Men and women have a role in maintaining and reproducing gender norms and discriminations in different communities. Gender roles and stereotypes of what it means to be masculine/feminine or a “true man or woman” often pervade social interactions, and subtle social control mechanisms can often limit the expression and full potential of people's social and emotional development. Men that do not fit the hegemonic masculine mold, are also often bullied, physically threatened and even sexually violated. Moreover, the notion that gender is binary—man and woman—restricts every person's freedom, regardless of their gender identity, to enjoy fully and equally the privileges guaranteed by international human rights norms. Cutting off the development of an individual’s full potential as a human being, whether man, woman or transgender, is also a rights violation.

The need to include men as more active agents in changing gender discrimination has been highlighted in studies dating back more than a decade. As the Executive Director of UN Women recently highlighted, “Patriarchy is bestowed on men at birth. Whether you want it or not, you have privilege as a man, and you either fight against it and reject it by becoming a feminist man, or you enjoy the privileges that come with it!.” The overwhelming majority of decision-makers and government civil servants are men in many countries around the world. Therefore addressing the issue of how to engage with men on changing their attitudes towards more gender equality is necessary for transformational change that reaches to the roots of this inequality and discrimination.

FUELLED BY GENDER STEREOTYPES, ROLES AND NORMS, AS WELL AS DISCRIMINATORY INSTITUTIONS AND LEGAL FRAMEWORKS.

1 Mlambo-Ngcuka, P., Undersecretary-General and Executive Director, UN Women, World Economic Forum session on “Ending Poverty through Parity”, January 24, 2015.
WHAT WE EVALUATED

The primary objectives of the evaluation were to:

- Assess UNDP’s contributions to gender equality and women’s empowerment (GEWE) during the period 2008–2013
- Assess the extent to which the Gender Equality Strategy functioned as an integrating dimension in implementation of the Strategic Plan during the period 2008-2013
- Provide actionable recommendations of relevance to implementation of UNDP’s new Gender Equality Strategy, which covers 2014 to 2017.

The evaluation covers two distinct but linked results areas as framed in the Gender Equality Strategy: development results and institutional results. Specifically, the evaluation assesses the extent to which the Gender Equality Strategy functioned as “an integrating dimension of UNDP’s work” in implementing the Strategic Plan. It is important to note that since the Gender Equality Strategy was framed as a source of guidance, the evaluation does not address the content of the strategy as a stand-alone document. Instead, it serves as an inquiry of the extent to which the Gender Equality Strategy played a role in guiding the institutional and development contributions UNDP made to GEWE during the implementation of the 2008–2013 Strategic Plan.

The evaluation seeks to answer THREE broad evaluation questions:

- Has UNDP contributed to gender equality and women’s empowerment development results?
- Has UNDP integrated gender equality across the institution at the programme, policy, technical and cultural levels during the period 2008–2013?
- Where have UNDP’s institutional change results been the most and least successful in improving gender equality and women’s empowerment development results?

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The evaluation began by surfacing the Theory of Change or underlying assumption of the Gender Equality Strategy. The evaluation posits that the Gender Equality Strategy was based on the assumption that setting out a range of desired ‘gender-responsive’ results that are integral to UNDP programmes would help guide country offices and other units to pay appropriate attention to women’s rights, women’s empowerment and gender equality. This in turn was expected to lead to development results that had a sound gender dimension. Accordingly, the Gender Equality Strategy laid out desired ‘institutional results’ with outputs and targets to build UNDP capacity to mainstream gender within the organization. Achieving these was seen as helping to facilitate the achievement of gendered ‘development results’ at country, regional and global levels. ‘Gender results’ were defined as outputs or outcomes that have been found to be contributing (positively or negatively) to GEWE in UNDP interventions.

The Gender Equality Strategy contains examples of gender-explicit indicators and highlights the objective of UNDP contributions to gender-responsive results. However, no common framework was developed to measure gender results as such. To enable deeper analysis of the effectiveness of gender results and the type of gender change, the evaluation team used two analytical frameworks. The first was the Gender Results Effectiveness Scale (GRES) as shown in figure 1.

**Figure 1. Gender Results Effectiveness Scale (GRES)**

1. **Gender Negative**
   - Result had a negative outcome that aggravated or reinforced existing gender inequalities and norms

2. **Gender Blind**
   - Result had no attention to gender, failed to acknowledge the different needs of men, women, girls and boys, or marginalized populations

3. **Gender Targeted**
   - Result focused on the number of equity (50/50) of women, men or marginalized populations that were targeted

4. **Gender Responsive**
   - Results addressed differential needs of men or women and address equitable distribution of benefits, resources, status, rights but did not address root causes of inequalities in their lives

5. **Gender Transformative**
   - Result contributes to changes in norms, cultural values, power structures and the roots of gender inequalities and discriminations
It captures the type and quality of gender results that UNDP achieved at an aggregate level. The scale consists of a five-point scale showing different levels of effectiveness, moving from gender negative towards transformative results. The evaluation team categorized results from the database created, consisting of ADR and country visit outcomes. The team experimented with this approach to establish meaningful aggregate-level trends of UNDP’s contributions to GEWE results. Together with the other data sources, this helped provide broad-based illustrations of UNDP’s contributions to GEWE and its role in the change process.

The second framework used by the team drew on the Gender@Work quadrants (figure 2) which categorized the type and areas of work to which UNDP contributed over the evaluation time period. The Gender@Work framework\(^3\) enables a deeper analysis of the types of changes.

A total of 288 GENDER RESULTS were extracted and analyzed from 62 country level evaluations, 13 country and 3 regional centre visits.

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that occur when trying to achieve gender awareness and transformation. It was originally developed for programming and planning purposes based on the premise that effective GEWE programming requires four types of change: individual change, formal change, systemic change and informal change. For this evaluation, each result was categorized into one of these four areas of change. In terms of interpreting the results, the assumption is that if UNDP is conducting transformative GEWE programming, a similar number and concentration of changes would be present in each quadrant.

The evaluation used mixed methods and a variety of data collection sources to validate, analyse and triangulate gender mainstreaming and GEWE results.
WHAT WE FOUND

Assessment of institutional change results in UNDP

Planning and resources

The first UNDP Gender Equality Strategy was a significant step forward with regard to planning guidance on gender mainstreaming and programming. The strategy included programmatic and institutional guidance and a results framework, both of which are essential ingredients for strong gender mainstreaming. However, it was not endorsed by the Executive Board, making it a set of voluntary guidelines that weakened its potential impact and integration. In a context where there are multiple competing priorities, staff reported that they do not prioritize an issue unless a guidance document has been endorsed by the Executive Board or it is considered a mandatory and urgent directive from the UNDP Administrator.

UNDP did not establish clear, steady financial benchmarks and mechanisms in support of core Gender Unit activities during 2008-2013. There was a promising increase in Gender Unit expenditure from $4.2 million in 2008 to an average of $6.13 million over the period 2009-2012. However, in 2013 its expenditure was reduced to $4.16 million, even less than that of 2008. In 2014, it was further reduced to $3.37 million. The unit also experienced an increase in the percentage of non-core resources in its budget, from 23 per cent in 2008 to 39 per cent in 2013. This also impacted the number of global team staff, which grew from four posts in 2006 to 23 posts in 2010, but had declined to eight posts by 2013.

In terms of the gender architecture to support gender mainstreaming, gender practice leaders consistently were at the middle management level (P-5) in each regional bureau during the period. Evidence suggests that the majority of country offices have received support from gender practice leaders and that this guidance was valued. However, at the country level the gender function remained understaffed throughout the evaluation period. Only 45 per cent of country offices in 2013 had Gender Focal Team structures in place, signalling a relatively weak response to the indicators established in the Strategic Plan. Previous evaluations and reports have pointed to a cross-unit Gender Focal Team, led by a senior gender adviser, as the optimal arrangement for promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment. The evaluation found that Gender Focal Points covered gender issues in 80 per cent of country offices. However, only 20 per cent of them worked full-time on gender issues, and these staff were at junior levels with little specialized gender training.

Gender Focal Points covered gender issues in 80% of country offices. However, only 20% worked full-time on gender

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4 It should be noted that there was an overall reduction in UNDP expenditures during this period.
Innovations to promote gender mainstreaming

The Gender Strategy Implementation Committee is a mechanism that has evolved from a pro forma exercise to a key instrument for senior managers at headquarters level to report on accountability for promoting gender equality. It has functioned mainly as a forum for sharing cross-bureau experiences. Regional Gender Strategy Implementation Committees, which were an explicit target in the strategy, have yet to become a uniform feature across all regions.

The Gender Equality Seal certification pilot is a unique initiative developed by UNDP and applied in around 30 country offices since 2010. The certification process has motivated and tapped a competitive vein among country offices volunteering to be part of the pilot process. While it is too soon to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the Seal’s impact on gender equality results, it is clear that it is motivating change and promoting gender mainstreaming as something tangible and achievable.

Since 2010 the Gender Equality Seal certification pilot has motivated change in around 30 country offices

Tracking gender investments and reporting on results

The Gender Marker which requires managers to rate projects on a four-point scale indicating their contribution to achievement of gender equality, was introduced in 2009. Making it a mandatory requirement at the budget submission stage has succeeded in heightening awareness of the need to consider gender at the initial budget allocation stage. Nevertheless, evidence suggests that the Gender Marker is not being used effectively as a planning tool and is disconnected from the workflow of the programme cycle. Furthermore, there are variations in the way the Gender Marker codes are assigned, which has compromised the accuracy of the information produced by this tool.

The results-oriented annual report (ROAR) incorporated gender considerations beginning in 2008. As a mandatory requirement, it has become an important driver of promoting reporting on gender equality. However, this corporate reporting does not systematically track the quality or type of gender results and has not explored trends or systematically explored how change happens in work on gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Gender parity and organizational culture

UNDP has been working on internal gender parity issues since 1995 and has achieved gender parity at the aggregate level. However, it lags behind in parity at the senior (D-1/D-2) and middle management (P-4/P-5) levels, which is a serious concern. While many policies have been institutionalized to promote more female candidates, this has not yielded tangible results. Furthermore, no explicit steps are being taken to address the concerns of males about the effects of these pro-female policies on their career prospects.
While UNDP has instituted policies and mandatory mechanisms to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment and sensitize staff on gender issues, its organizational culture of promoting these areas remains weak. Trends from the annual UNDP Global Staff Survey indicate consistent differences in the way female and male staff members score issues dealing with empowerment, professional growth, fairness/respect, work-life balance and conflict management. Women generally score these aspects less favourably than men.

**Accountability and oversight**

The 2009 UNDP handbook on planning, monitoring and evaluating for results does not provide adequate guidance on how to undertake gender-related evaluation and is limited to highlighting gender-targeting inputs such as the need for sex-disaggregated data. Furthermore, decentralized evaluations have not paid sufficient attention to ensuring that the gender dimensions of UNDP programmes are consistently covered in depth. In terms of audit, the practice of the Office of Audit and Investigations conforms to international standards based on risk assessment. The focus has been limited to assessing gender-parity levels in country offices and there has been no systematic practice of undertaking gender-responsive audits.

**Knowledge management and communication**

UNDP developed a set of global and regional knowledge platforms and communities of practice on gender during the evaluation period, but these have not been sustained. The use of knowledge products was also not systematically tracked or monitored. Cybermetric analysis revealed that the UNDP network of websites is highly complex and potentially difficult for users to navigate overall. Furthermore, regional and country-level interviews stressed that the lack of gender materials in languages other than English posed a problem.

**PARTNERSHIP with UN WOMEN on gender issues is central to coordination at the country level**

**United Nations system coordination and partnerships on gender**

UNDP country offices are members of United Nations country Gender Theme Groups and participate in joint gender programmes. Evidence indicates however that programming in this context is still at a nascent stage in terms of the capacity of the United Nations system to absorb a joint modality.

The relationship with UN Women at country level is central to coordination. As UN Women establishes a firmer global footprint, a maturing partnership is emerging between the two agencies based on acknowledged comparative advantages that address country-specific contexts and needs.

With 62 entities currently participating, the United Nations System-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) on gender mainstreaming represents an advance in terms of accountability and coherence. While the framework relies on self-reported data and is susceptible to overrating, the UN-SWAP still
provides a systematic means for collection of data on common performance indicators within UNDP and across the United Nations system. UNDP has been recognized by UN Women as spearheading initiatives that propel progress on gender mainstreaming and gender equality.

Assessment of the UNDP contribution to gender equality and women’s empowerment development results

Overall findings
To assess the effectiveness of gender results, the evaluation used the Gender Results Effectiveness Scale. Results from all focus areas except democratic governance were overwhelmingly gender-targeted, limited to counting the number of women and men involved. Democratic governance was the only area that consistently delivered on gender-responsive results (over 62 per cent), that addressed the differential needs and priorities of women and men.

The LACK of GENDER ANALYSIS in programme design was evident in all focus areas

To assess the types and areas of gender results, the evaluation used the Gender@Work quadrants of change. With respect to the quality of gender results, the major UNDP contribution is in the areas of greater access to resources and opportunities, changed policies, laws and institutional arrangements and strengthened consciousness and awareness-raising. A few results signal that UNDP has contributed to systemic changes in internal culture and deep structure, which are needed for transformative change. Instances of backlash were reported across all thematic areas. Backlash raises the issue of the sustainability of results.

UNDP faces many barriers to taking a strategic, longer-term approach that would stimulate transformative change. Many project and programme cycles are short-term, lasting a couple of years. UNDP tends to engage in programming that addresses practical needs for women and has not consistently leveraged the added value of its long-term presence in a country to tackle deeper structural change. Gender analysis and monitoring and evaluation of gender results have been inconsistent in tracking gender reversals. Uniform categorizing for the capture and documenting of gender-responsive and gender-transformative change have also been challenging.

The lack of gender analysis in programme design was evident in all focus areas. Dedicated funds are not regularly set aside for gender analysis at the design stage or for outcome monitoring and evaluation.

Despite efforts to institutionalize gender thinking and the perception that the organization is now ‘gender aware’, the evaluation found that there is a lack of deeper understanding of what gender means in relation to development programming. In practice, ‘doing gender’ in UNDP often comes down to a targeting perspective and women are often framed in a context of
vulnerability rather than as key actors in a transformative social and development change process.

UNDP is recognized for its ground-breaking and innovative contribution to human development through its Human Development Report and Gender Inequality Index. However, the evaluation found little evidence that UNDP has succeeded in integrating such thinking in programming at the country and regional levels. It is not recognized as a thought leader in the area of GEWE and it is more common for UNDP to be described as a facilitator, enabler and useful reference point on United Nations commitments.

**Gender results in the four focus areas of the Strategic Plan, 2008-2013**

**Poverty alleviation and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals:** In the poverty portfolio, the majority of changes occurred in terms of increased access to resources and opportunities. The targeting of women as the main beneficiaries of poverty reduction, often through microcredit and inclusive growth programmes, has generally rendered short-term results for gender equality and women’s empowerment.

In many cases, UNDP has lacked a comprehensive analysis that paid attention to gender factors and dynamics that go beyond access to resources and opportunities. Success was more readily evident in programmes that adopted a long-term perspective.

In terms of increased knowledge and skills, the UNDP Global Gender and Economic Policy Management Initiative has provided capacity development and advisory services to government planning and policy experts. Data suggests that the initiative’s approach is relevant and potentially sustainable, although further evidence is needed to assess its overall effectiveness and longer-term impacts.

With regards to policy advice, UNDP developed and is currently implementing the Millennium Development Goal Acceleration Framework (MAF) which is a global approach to help countries overcome slow and uneven progress towards the achievement of the Goals, including goals on GEWE and maternal health. To date, the MAF is present in over 50 countries, promoting gender equality in the national action plans as well as in the MAF planning processes.

UNDP programming in the area of HIV/AIDS has consistently advocated for a human development and human rights approach which strives to address deep change in cultural values and norms.

Although women were the main beneficiaries of microcredit and inclusive growth programmes, results were often short term.

It has also helped to move the HIV/AIDS paradigm away from a biomedical issue to addressing it as a broader development problem.
Democratic governance: The greatest change occurred in the outcome areas of policies, laws and arrangements, where UNDP helped to strengthen national legal and institutional frameworks to advance women's rights, placing women and men on a more even footing. Compared to other focus areas, democratic governance had the most coverage in all of the four Gender@Work categories supporting the potential for contributing to more gender-transformative results. Results in this area were more often gender-responsive.

A shift in the consciousness and awareness of rights was a common result seen across UNDP programming in this area. A significant number of changes were recorded with respect to changes in consciousness. Gender results were also prominent in the outcome area of access to resources and opportunities.

By supporting women in political caucuses, providing access to civic education and establishing safe electoral spaces, UNDP has helped to open doors for women in the political realm. However deeper shifts in attitudes and norms are needed to institutionalize both women's participation in political processes and equitable power distribution at a transformative level.

Crisis prevention and recovery: Results from the Gender@Work framework found that overall gender results in this area contributed to changes in the access to resources and opportunities, with programmes focused on gender-targeted economic recovery. Results in the areas of consciousness and policies were related to the UNDP role in raising sustainable development concerns and promoting income-generation activities that increased the productive role of women.

In terms of promoting women's access to justice, UNDP succeeded in rebuilding legal structures and setting up support for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. There were also instances of gender-blind programming with less positive results.

The UNDP strategy known as the Eight-Point Agenda effectively formed the backbone of gender programming in crisis.
prevention and recovery and contributed to the Secretary-General’s Seven-Point Action Plan on Gender-Responsive Peacebuilding.

**Energy and environment**: Overall gender results for energy and environment were limited in all Gender@Work outcome areas. The results reported were largely gender-targeted increases in access to resources and opportunities. There were no changes present in terms of internal culture and deep structure, and very few changes in relation to policies, laws and arrangements.

In 2012, UNDP adopted an environmental and social screening procedure for UNDP projects that addresses gender dimensions and fully complies with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) safeguards policy. The GEF standards seek to ensure that programmes do not cause undue harm to people or the environment. It is too early to make any conclusive assessment of whether programming has benefited from the gender dimensions of the screening procedure.

The GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) has reported good results on targeting of gender issues. According to a recent evaluation of the SGP, two thirds of the 30 country programme strategies reviewed have a relatively strong approach to addressing gender in which they elaborated the concrete steps that should be taken.

The 2013 evaluation of the Global Gender and Climate Alliance found that significant progress had been made towards delivering the intended outcomes of the Alliance. Gender is now well reflected in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change agreement texts and recognized as an official agenda item of the Conference of Parties, and is being included in the modalities for financing mechanisms. Furthermore, the foundation has been laid for delivering the intended outcomes through building capacities at regional and national levels.

In contrast, a recent study on the United Nations collaborative initiative on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+) in developing countries, by Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management, concludes that women are not key stakeholders or beneficiaries of REDD+ because of their invisibility in the forest sector.
The Gender Equality Strategy was a major step forward but compliance was voluntary which weakened its impact.

Resources for gender mainstreaming increased in 2008 but these gains were not sustained.

The Gender Strategy Implementation Committee is a key instrument in ensuring senior-level accountability.

The Gender Seal is unique and helps identify the connectors between gender mainstreaming and the technical programme portfolio.

The Gender Marker has heightened awareness about gender issues but inconsistent coding compromises its accuracy.

Men enter the organization at a higher level and thus advance more quickly. Lack of parity at the middle and senior levels is a serious concern.
Evaluations and audits have not paid enough attention to assessing the gender aspects of UNDP programming.

The use of gender knowledge products has not been systematically tracked.

Partnerships with UN system agencies have strengthened but UNDP needs to define its comparative strengths in terms of gender programming and mainstreaming.

Gender results were overwhelmingly “gender targeted”.

UNDP gender results focused on providing women with access to resources and opportunities such as microcredit.

UNDP gender results contributed to a positive shift in the areas of rights, policies and legal frameworks.

UNDP contributed to the framing of Secretary-General’s Seven-Point Action Plan for Gender-Responsive peacebuilding efforts.

UNDP’s gender results in environment focused on access to resources but have yet to inculcate deeper structural and cultural change.
OUR CONCLUSIONS

1. There has been **MARKED IMPROVEMENT** in UNDP’s approach to gender mainstreaming.

2. UNDP has yet to **PROMOTE** and **FULLY RESOURCE** gender as a main priority.

3. Moving to resilient gender-transformative change will require **LONGER LEAD TIME**.

4. **PATHWAYS** to achieving gender results are **COMPLEX** and often dependent on factors outside the control of UNDP.

5. Better **GENDER ANALYSIS** will provide a sounder basis for assessing the quality of UNDP **CONTRIBUTION** to GEWE.

6. Internal **ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE** and **UNWRITTEN RULES** affect gender equality at the workplace.

7. UNDP is not seen as a thought leader on **GENDER ISSUES**.
Conclusion 1:
There has been far-reaching change and a marked improvement in the UNDP approach to and implementation of policies to address gender mainstreaming since the last independent evaluation in 2006. UNDP has demonstrated greater awareness that gender matters to institutional and development results. It has produced a series of tools and established a number of institutional arrangements, which have helped to strengthen its contribution to GEWE.

The first UNDP Gender Equality Strategy (2008–2013) was catalytic in promoting a number of instruments, tools and processes new to the organization since the 2006 evaluation of gender mainstreaming in UNDP. The Gender Strategy Implementation Committee, which is chaired by the Associate Administrator and involves all bureau heads, demonstrates senior-level attention and accountability. However, the extent to which Gender Strategy Implementation Committee deliberations and directions trickle down to influence staff at the regional and country office levels was less clear. While the Gender Marker achieved global application, its contribution in terms of conveying valid gender-enlightened programming is uneven, since there has been variability in its use and a lack of quality assurance. The Gender certification pilot, which innovatively integrated institutional and programmatic aspects of gender mainstreaming, generated interest and deepened understanding that GEWE will succeed only when it becomes an intrinsic part of the working life of every staff member.

Conclusion 2:
While UNDP corporate messaging has highlighted the centrality of gender equality as having a multiplier effect across development results, it has yet to promote and fully resource gender as a main priority of the organization. Resource allocations dedicated to programming and staff to promote GEWE decreased substantially during the period 2008–2014.

Dedicated resources at the global programme level for gender equality received an initial injection in 2009–2010 and declined in 2013 and 2014. Throughout the evaluation period, core allocations for gender were lower than those for other focus areas. Non-core resources were also a significant part of the Gender Unit programming budget during the period 2008–2013.

While Gender Team staffing reached a high of 23 posts in the early years of the Strategic Plan period, this had shrunk to 8 posts by 2013. In 80 per cent of UNDP country offices, gender is attended to by focal points who devote only 20 per cent of their time to this work. For gender equality to be recognized as a central priority of the organization, it must be consistently upheld as a point of departure for all core operating and programmatic engagements.

Conclusion 3:
UNDP was only partially successful in meeting the objective of the Gender Equality Strategy that called for the UNDP development contribution to be gender
responsive. The majority of results to which UNDP contributed were gender targeted.

Furthermore, the finding that a small portion of results to which UNDP contributes could be described as gender transformative means that UNDP will need to make the attainment of deeper gender results a central objective of its next Strategic Plan and beyond. While the focus area of democratic governance has seen the most systematic progress in terms of contributing in a gender-responsive manner, the other three focus areas of poverty and the MDGs, crisis prevention and recovery, and energy and environment will require concerted attention. Moving to resilient gender-transformative change will require a longer lead time. UNDP will need to make a sustained commitment, ensure adequate funding and undertake periodic quality checks and assessments of gender results, if it is to stay the course.

The evaluation found that the majority of UNDP gender results were gender targeted, meaning they most often focused on counting the number of men and women who participated in or benefited from programming in the areas of poverty, crisis prevention and environment. In contrast, nearly two thirds of results in the democratic governance focus area were gender responsive, addressing the different needs of women and men and the equitable distribution of benefits, but not the deeper root causes of inequalities in their lives. Very few gender-transformative results emerged from the analysis. This is understandable given that such results, which address the roots of inequalities and power imbalances, require time.

In terms of development results, UNDP had the most systematic approach and made the biggest difference in results in the areas of democratic governance and women’s participation in political processes. Democratic governance had the most coverage in the four Gender@Work categories, which provides a promising foundation for contributing to more gender-transformative results in the future.

The other three focus areas will require concentrated support and attention to make progress on the continuum from gender-targeted to gender-transformative contributions supported by UNDP. In terms of poverty reduction, most results were gender targeted in nature, limited to mentioning the percentage of women and men who had benefited. Attention was focused on women’s economic empowerment at an individual level and in a few instances on the integration of gender considerations in the MDG processes.

Of the four focus areas, crisis prevention and recovery had the lowest number of gender results reported. Along with contributions in gender-targeted economic recovery, the integration of gender equality considerations in disaster risk management and attention to sexual and gender-based violence appear to be the most consistent areas of attention in the crisis prevention and recovery portfolio. The area of energy and environment reported the second lowest number of gender results. In community-based energy and environment
While UNDP has made progress since the 2006 evaluation and has moved beyond the “islands of success” it found, there is still much to do. GEWE are at the heart of the UNDP vision of eradicating extreme poverty and substantially reducing inequality and exclusion. However, in practice, work is often done from a targeting perspective that addresses practical needs through service delivery and access to resources, but not at the deeper level of strategic needs, which addresses structural change and the roots of discrimination and inequalities. Moving to transformational results is context specific, takes time and requires a long-term programming perspective and approaches to monitoring, assessment and learning. Care should also be taken to expand partnerships with gender-aware and women’s rights organizations at the global, regional and country levels. UNDP is well positioned to contribute given its sustained commitment to the countries where it works, as well as its political neutrality/impartiality when addressing what is often a very sensitive issue.

**Conclusion 4:**

Pathways to achieving gender results are complex and depend on a variety of institutional and contextual factors. The evaluation learned that demonstrating a direct correlation between UNDP institutional reforms and development results was challenging for a number of reasons. Data constraints posed a key problem, but the far more important factor was the complexity of gender programming. Complexity is intrinsic to such programming, which addresses issues that are deeply rooted in cultural mores, values and belief systems at both individual and societal levels, and where much of the achievement of results is dependent on factors outside the control of UNDP.

At a basic level, when gender mainstreaming was integrated into programming and addressed the differential needs, status and roles of women and men, it was more likely that the programme yielded gendered development results. When gender analysis and mainstreaming were lacking, it was more likely that gender-negative, gender-blind or gender-targeted results occurred.

Internal factors associated with gendered development results were attributable to leadership commitment, particularly at the country level, and to accountability structures, gender-enlightened staff with a rights-based mindset and dedicated Gender Unit promoting and monitoring performance. Other examples of the link between institutional and gendered development results were seen in programming that explicitly recognized and developed capacities to ensure that all stakeholders could consider themselves gender experts, which then were applied to programming and policy work.

These programmes also actively sought to engage community members and women’s groups in programme design and activities. Other programming elements included selecting gender-aware partners and strategically adapting programming based on the changing needs on the ground. An analysis of assessment of development results reports of 10 country offices with institutional results classified as gender
responsive or gender transformative, found that eight of these country offices also had gendered development results. In all of these cases, gender-responsive or gender-transformative results were found in the democratic governance focus area.

Women’s movements and civil society groups were **KEY** to promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment.

The evaluation found that some of the external factors of prime importance to gendered development results beyond the direct influence of UNDP included the socio-political context, national and donor interest and the presence of opportunities as well as backlash (which often affected the timing and trajectory of progress on results). Working in a country context where the government was open to or supportive of gender equality and women’s empowerment created an enabling environment for gendered development programming. This was considered a factor in some of the countries that were early winners of the Gold Seal in the Gender Seal certification pilot. The presence of strong women’s movements and civil society groups that advocated on behalf of gender issues was also key to gains in terms of development results that promoted GEWE.

**Conclusion 5:**

**UNDP has yet to develop a firm corporate policy making gender analysis mandatory in all programming.** The lack of gender analysis explains to some extent why so many UNDP gender results are gender targeted, gender negative or gender blind. The tools and processes to make gender equality and women’s empowerment relevant to the work of staff members in programme design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation have also not been sufficiently developed and applied. The Gender Marker and the results-oriented annual report, as well as monitoring and evaluation, require further refinements and a more consistent application if UNDP is to increase the quality of its gender interventions and reporting and the assessment of its contributions.

Programming for GEWE requires strong, context-specific analysis in order to identify possible unintended effects and understand the potential for backlash when advances are made. These analyses should be evident at the country programme level and also in individual programme and project interventions. In this connection, the Gender Marker has the potential to play a useful role at the design and appraisal stage and during monitoring, assessment and evaluation.

Although the Gender Marker is used primarily to track overall trends in gender mainstreaming in UNDP programmes, it also aims to improve UNDP reporting and accountability on gender equality through tracking of budgeting and expenditures for gender equality results. However, as currently used, it does not capture financial expenditures and allocations in a consistent and reliable manner. Aggregation of the amounts of resources dedicated to gender equality does not provide a clear enough picture of how the resources are allocated and used. If it is to fulfil the goal of tracking expenditure, improving accountability and enhancing transparency, UNDP has yet to develop clear guidelines on how to allocate Gender Marker ratings at the
project and country programme outcome levels, and ensure there is a clear, organization-wide understanding of how to apply this guidance. Better gender analysis and consistent Gender Marker practice could help to ensure that both the decentralized and independent evaluation functions, as well as audit, have a sounder basis for assessing the contribution of UNDP to GEWE.

**Conclusion 6:**

UNDP has demonstrated that the goal of gender parity is important, although results up to this point remain at a gender-targeted level. Gender parity has been successful in terms of equitable numbers of men and women occupying the lowest and highest positions in the organization. However, at the critical middle and senior levels (P-4/P-5 and D-1/D-2), parity has not been achieved. Men enter the organization at higher levels and get promoted more quickly than women. The culture and unwritten rules about who gets promoted and valued, and whose voices are heard, require deeper attention to truly achieve gender equality.

Although the Gender Parity Strategy is a step in the right direction, there is a lack of deeper analysis. Reflection that goes beyond a parity focus will be necessary if the organization is to arrive at a more complete picture of the power relationships and gender dynamics at play. The data from the annual Global Staff Surveys consistently show gaps between men’s and women’s experiences with respect to empowerment, professional growth, openness, fairness/respect, work-life balance and office management. Gender parity is generally reported at the aggregate level at both the regional and headquarters levels, which may obscure a more differentiated picture of the situation in individual country offices and units.

**Conclusion 7:**

Although UNDP has a historically close and often collaborative relationship with UN Women that has matured as UN Women has reorganized its organizational footprint globally, there is room for further clarification of partnership arrangements. UNDP has yet to define and communicate its comparative strengths on gender issues to ensure that its interventions are strategic and add value. The headquarters of both agencies could facilitate the clarification process, which ideally should also take place in the regional and country contexts.

Formally clarifying the relationship between UNDP and UN Women and specifying each agency’s comparative strengths and different entry points could help to ensure smoother working relationships at all levels of both organizations. This should help both agencies to establish working arrangements, particularly in areas where they address similar development challenges and can add significant value to each other’s initiatives. The establishment of improved working arrangements needs to acknowledge that a one-size-fits-all approach will be inadequate and that partnership is based on mutual understanding and a clear appreciation of contextual factors. Successful cases of joint initiatives could inform this process. It could also provide an opportunity for UNDP to communicate its thought leadership on and contributions to gender equality and women’s empowerment to national governments, partners and donors.
UNDP should align its resources and programming with its corporate message on the centrality of supporting gender equality and women’s empowerment as a means to ‘fast forward’ development results. Gender mainstreaming should also go beyond providing sex-disaggregated data for all results areas of the Strategic Plan. In this connection, the merits of integrating the Gender Equality Strategy as part of the next Strategic Plan (2018 onwards) should receive serious consideration.

Given that the vision of UNDP is to achieve the simultaneous eradication of poverty and significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion, the organization should systematically undertake programming that addresses all facets of gender-based discrimination. UNDP needs to make further efforts to institutionalize a more complete understanding of gender, gender equality and women’s empowerment that goes beyond targeting so it can report accurately on financial allocations and expenditures on gender. If the Gender Marker is not suited for this level of specificity, it is recommended that a new tracking and benchmark system be established. Furthermore, as specific financial benchmarks have been established in the current Gender Equality Strategy, covering 2014–2017, these should be closely monitored and reported to the Executive Board.

Moreover, UNDP should assess the merits and demerits of integrating the Strategic Plan and the Gender Equality Strategy and making key gender results mandatory. Additionally, guidance documents that promote alignment between the Strategic Plan and country programme documents should require preparation of a gender analysis for all programming developed within country programmes that set out medium-term objectives (over a 5–10 year period) along with other contextual analyses. The gender analysis prepared in the country programme context should have corresponding indicators and monitoring, assessment, and evaluation mechanisms at the programme and project levels.

Deeper attention to gender equality issues and gender mainstreaming is required, especially in the focus areas on conflict prevention and recovery and energy and environment, which saw the lowest number of gender results and the highest rates of targeting. Work in the focus areas on poverty
and the MDGs and democratic governance can deepen intentions and action towards gender-responsive and gender-transformative results. All UNDP programming and policies should be attentive to framing women as agents and active citizens. If UNDP aims to contribute to transformative change, it will need to accelerate efforts in all focus areas to more strategically target the roots of inequalities, structures of unequal power, participation and relations, and address and transform unequal norms, values and policies.

The UNDP Strategic Plan, 2014-2017 has strongly integrated gender equality across its Integrated Results and Resource Framework (IRRF). In addition to a dedicated outcome for accelerating gender equality, it has mainstreamed gender equality across all other outcomes.

The new Gender Equality Strategy, 2014-2017 is an accompaniment to the Strategic Plan and looks at how to mainstream gender in all outcomes of the plan. The strategy, which was approved by the Executive Board, has made financial and human resource commitments to ensure that gender mainstreaming is adequately resourced. This includes as a principal objective meeting the United Nations system-wide financial target of allocating 15 per cent of the organization’s resources towards gender equality by 2017. The Gender Marker is tracking UNDP investments on gender and is aligned to UN-SWAP principles and standards. The Gender Marker is now being used as an accountability tool in the Gender Strategy Implementation Committee to track progress towards the 15 per cent target. UNDP will integrate the 15 per cent financial commitment into the guidelines for trust fund allocations, work with IEO to improve their evaluation of gender outcomes and draw on the Gender Marker findings. The merits of integrating the Gender Equality Strategy into the next Strategic Plan (2018 onwards) will be considered as part of the midterm review of the current Strategic Plan, 2014-2017. Additionally, new quality assurance tools are being developed to ensure that gender analysis is integrated in all country programmes and programme documents. The text under this recommendation also suggested that UNDP strengthen its work on the crisis prevention and recovery and energy and environment focus areas. Tools and work processes will be developed to address this recommendation.
**Recommendation 2**

Given the uneven performance in the four focus areas of the Strategic Plan 2008–2013 in promoting gender development results, UNDP should ensure that future assessments pay specific attention to the progress, effectiveness and quality of gender development results in the seven outcome areas of the current Strategic Plan.

The upcoming midterm review of the Strategic Plan for 2014-2017 presents an opportunity to set in place a framework for such an assessment. The assessment can build on the limited data from the Integrated Results and Resources Framework report cards, which summarize UNDP progress and performance in 2014 and include a deeper, qualitative analysis of the UNDP contribution to gender results on the ground. Preliminary lessons of the Gender Equality Seal certification process, which has been completed in 28 country offices (and implemented on a non-certification basis in others), could also be a rich source of information.

UNDP welcomes this recommendation and will develop guidelines for integrating gender development results in thematic assessments including reviews, and will work with IEO to improve the integration of gender in all evaluations.

**ACTIONS:** Guidelines for integrating gender in reviews, assessments, decentralized and independent evaluations (drawing on existing tools including the IRRF, Gender Marker, etc.,) will be developed.
UNDP should focus on refining tools, instruments and processes developed during the period 2008–2013 and focus on further internalizing the centrality of gender equality and women’s empowerment to the achievement of all development goals among staff. Specific recommendations on these improvements and possible new areas of intervention are discussed below.

- **Gender analysis** should become mandatory in all programming and be linked with justification of the Gender Marker rating of each UNDP intervention. Revised Gender Marker guidance (2014) indicates that ideally a gender analysis should be done during the project design, before the coding, to determine the most effective strategies in a particular context and to identify results that support gender equality. In addition it should be a required first step. This would contribute to more context-specific gender assessment and minimize inaccurate Gender Marker ratings, enhancing the credibility of this tool. Furthermore, such analysis should specify the areas of change and UNDP’s role and contribution in the change process, on the spectrum from gender blind to gender transformative.

- The **Gender Marker** should track allocations in a way that provides reliable aggregated data at different stages of the project cycle. It should be subject to random external checks and be systematically assessed by internal audit exercises. The new guidance should be monitored and assessed on an annual basis to make the marker a reliable instrument for measuring progress in UNDP programming. Furthermore, if the Gender Marker is not suited for tracking expenditures with a credible level of specificity at the project and outcome levels, it is recommended that consideration be given to developing a new tracking and benchmark system. Such a system could also be more useful for resource mobilization, accountability, gender-responsive budgeting and gender-informed management decision-making.

- The **Gender Seal** requires senior management’s attention in terms of its future role as a corporate certification initiative. To facilitate this process, the Gender Seal pilot should be assessed by a team of independent advisers to guide its application as it enters a critical post-pilot phase. Such an assessment could be of value in documenting and assessing the pilot process, including aspects such as the methodology, the resources required and the sustainability of the Gender Seal country interventions (including recertification), and explore institutionalizing different options in addition to the standard gold, silver and bronze seals. The focus should be on lessons learned that should inform the choices, costs, opportunities and downsides the Gender Seal may encounter as it moves into
post-pilot implementation. The Gender Seal approach could also be extended to national ministries and partners where opportunities, interest and needs are expressed;

- Stronger attention should be placed on using the Gender Strategy Implementation Committee forum as a venue for organization-wide learning, problem-solving and sharing of instructive practices. All key organizational entities in UNDP should provide reports on progress in promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment and participate in discussions during annual ‘gender days’. The Gender Strategy Implementation Committee should play a more active role in assessing UNDP reporting to the UN-SWAP and taking stock of feedback received (from UN Women) on UNDP performance in the UN-SWAP process. This should facilitate the review of instructive practices from other organizations that may be applied in UNDP. Additionally, there is a need to revitalize the functioning of regional Gender Strategy Implementation Committees as envisaged in the Gender Equality Strategy. Consideration should be given to having a regular, mandatory agenda item in regional bureau cluster meetings.

- The Gender Strategy Implementation Committee should ensure that the Gender Parity Strategy is revised and a roll-out programme is articulated. Attention should be paid to addressing the concerns expressed in the Global Staff Surveys and the gaps between men’s and women’s positive experiences with respect to empowerment, professional growth, openness, fairness, respect, work-life balance and office management. Annual reports to the Executive Board should include more detailed information on problems and progress in achieving parity targets and actions. It may also help to rename the strategy to signal a ‘beyond parity’ approach to addressing staff culture and morale.

- UNDP should strengthen capacity development processes that focus on gender mainstreaming so they are relevant and apply to staff’s daily work and needs. Online training courses should be independently assessed to determine whether they are useful and should be continued. In addition, the mentorship programming implemented in the regional bureaux for Africa and Asia and the Pacific and the leadership programmes being made available are examples of targeted investments with coaching and benchmarks. The efficacy and impact of these recent initiatives should be carefully tracked, assessed and reported to the Gender Strategy Implementation Committee. Other initiatives for capacity-building and awareness development could include unit or country office training plans with focused gender sessions that encourage lively and open discussions and debates. They could include critical analysis of the portrayal of men and women in the media, discussion of current events and guest lecturers.

- UNDP should consider exploring new frontiers for engaging in gender issues that go beyond women’s issues, for example the ‘masculinity’
agenda. UNDP should engage more fully in working with men and other populations that suffer from gender discrimination and consider undertaking research that addresses how exclusion negatively affects progress in development.

UNDP management appreciates the recognition of past efforts, and notes that UNDP will continue to refine tools, instruments and processes with a focus on internalizing gender equality and women’s empowerment towards the achievement of development goals.

- UNDP will ensure that gender analysis is linked with the Gender Marker rating of every UNDP intervention by integrating this analysis in existing and upcoming mandatory programme/project planning, monitoring and assessment processes such as programme/project quality assurance, social and environmental screening and revision of the project document.

**ACTIONS:** Mandatory environmental and social screening procedures established for all projects above $500,000 to ensure they have gender equality as a key principal. Gender analysis is a requirement of the mandatory project quality assurance process. Quality assurance guidelines for all country programmes and global/regional programmes will address GEWE.

- UNDP will include in the revised Gender Marker guidance note provisions for random assessments and integrated into internal audit exercises.

**ACTIONS:** The Gender Marker guidance note will be revised to provide more specific guidance to improve Gender Marker accuracy. The Gender Marker rating will be included in the cover note for project documents and integrated in the quality assurance guidelines. A sample of random Gender Marker audits will be undertaken each year to improve accuracy (ensuring regional balance). Guidelines for integrating gender in reviews, assessments, evaluations and audits (drawing on existing tools including IRRF, Gender Marker, etc.) will be developed.

- Management appreciates the recognition that the Gender Equality Seal approach can be of value to national ministries. UNDP welcomes and agrees with the recommendation for independent assessments to review, document and improve upon the experiences of the Gender Equality Seal.

**ACTIONS:** Independent assessment will be undertaken of the Gender Equality Seal to review, document and improve the tool.

- UNDP appreciates the recommendation for the Gender Strategy Implementation Committee to become a venue for learning, finding solutions and sharing of practices. UNDP has expanded the membership
of the Gender Strategy Implementation Committee and for the first time in 2015, all UNDP bureaux reported gender equality progress and results, shared lessons learned and identified overall and bureau-specific recommendations to take forward.

**ACTIONS:** The Gender Strategy Implementation Committee will continue to be strengthened with all bureaux reporting. Accountability tools such as the Gender Marker, results-oriented annual report data and gender parity data will inform the Committee meetings. Their recommendations will be presented to the Executive Group and they will be reviewed for implementation by the Gender Strategy Implementation Committee. The committee will refresh the UNDP gender parity strategy with a view to achieving a more holistic approach to gender parity issues in UNDP.

- UNDP agrees on the importance of **capacity development** for gender mainstreaming and will improve existing and upcoming training tools by including gender content.

**ACTIONS:** UNDP to review and improve training tools for policy and programme staff on gender mainstreaming in programming, monitoring and reporting with greater focus on improving capacity for gender analysis, accuracy and consistency in Gender Marker ratings and gender in areas of profession.

- UNDP will consider **exploring new frontiers** for engaging in gender issues that go beyond women’s issues, for example the ‘masculinity’ agenda.

**ACTIONS:** UNDP plans to undertake research on ‘masculinities’ to better understand the linkages between masculinities and gender inequality, specifically gender-based violence.

Country offices should prepare gender plans that identify gaps and needs in technical support, capacity-building, joint action and advocacy and collective monitoring that facilitate stronger gender programming. These plans should also help to identify areas where UNDP can draw on expertise and leverage the existing capacities of other United Nations agencies active on gender issues at the country level. This process should be supported, monitored and reported upon annually by the respective regional bureaux to the Gender Strategy Implementation Committee.

Gender-capacity benchmarks have been set by the Executive Board in terms of in-country gender expertise. This is a welcome development that should promote better gender analysis, programming and results in the 40 countries that meet the criteria. However, to ensure more even attention to all countries and because country offices are expected to prepare gender plans,
it is suggested that regional bureaux take specific measures to support the preparation of these multi-year, country-specific gender plans and monitor and report on their formulation and implementation to the Gender Strategy Implementation Committee. This process will provide an opportunity for offices to assess their needs and gaps at the country level and to articulate expectations for support from the regional service centres in terms of promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Additionally, these plans may also provide an opportunity for UNDP to define its comparative strengths in terms of contributing to gender equality and women’s empowerment and to explore partnerships with United Nations agencies, in particular UNICEF, UNFPA and UN Women (see Conclusion 7 for more details with reference to UN Women).

The Gender Equality Seal certification is the primary tool for strengthening country office capacity and ensuring collective monitoring for stronger gender programming. Currently, 29 countries have undertaken the Gender Seal certification process. This will be expanded to more countries. Regional bureaux and the Gender Strategy Implementation Committee will draw upon the committee benchmarking to measure progress.

ACTIONS: The Gender Equality Seal benchmarking to be completed by all country offices in Africa and utilized as a tool for monitoring gender capacity. The next phase of the Gender Equality Seal certification initiative will be launched with approximately 30 country offices being certified.

UNDP currently does not have a measurement standard to systematically track the type, quality and effectiveness of its contribution to gender results that also captures the context of change and the degree of its contribution to that change. In order to address this issue, UNDP should codify the way it wishes to monitor, report, evaluate and audit its contributions to gender, and this framework should be used for rigorously tracking results for gender equality and women’s empowerment at the country, regional and global levels.

UNDP is currently using a number of different metrics, which may confuse rather than clarify future efforts for GEWE. Action should be taken to harmonize various assessment scales in a manner that is most meaningful for corporate programming, reporting, evaluation and audit. These elements should be embedded in iterative learning systems that go beyond linear performance frameworks, which are limited to reporting on indicators focusing on sex-disaggregated data.
More attention to the quality of gender results and the context within which changes happen is required in UNDP monitoring and assessment systems. UNDP may want to reflect on the usefulness of having quality and type measures such as the Gender Results Effectiveness Scale and Gender@Work frameworks used in this evaluation. This will help in moving beyond the tendency to focus on numbers of women and men and targeting strategies to more responsive and transformative results. The practice of gender audits should also become a more standard feature throughout the organization.

While UNDP has made significant improvements in tracking gender results at the country level through the results-oriented annual report, the system has limitations in capturing diverse and non-linear change, which is often characterized as ‘two steps forward, one step back’. UNDP should start systematically tracking the types of organizations with which it partners to provide a comprehensive picture of its partnerships at global, regional and country levels. Monitoring and assessment should include tracking of backlash and efforts to maintain past gains and identify accelerators and barriers to change. This would help to better contextualize change processes and help the organization learn from what is working under different conditions and contexts. This will help UNDP to articulate its role, most importantly at the country level, which will remain the primary unit of analysis in assessing UNDP’s short-, medium- and long-term contribution to GEWE.

**UNDP believes that it has a range of tools for measuring progress that are used for different purposes. These comply with a range of different inter-agency standards. Taken together, these give a good view of the gender mainstreaming taking place in a given business unit. However, management will take forward the recommendation to consider adopting measures such as the Gender@Work framework to move beyond a focus on numbers of women and men towards more transformative results is worth consideration.**

**ACTIONS:** UNDP will begin an internal dialogue bringing experts from the Gender@Work network to explore how the organization can move beyond a focus on numbers of women and men towards more transformative results. This will include the development of a capacity building strategy to support country offices and accelerate changes. In developing its monitoring policy, UNDP will integrate provisions for systematic tracking of the type, quality and effectiveness of its contribution to gender results. UNDP will bring the Gender@Work framework to be discussed at the Gender Steering and Implementation Committee meetings. The feasibility of the Gender@Work framework to become part of the UNDP results-based management policy and processes will be considered in the midterm review of the Strategic Plan, 2013-2017.
About the Independent Evaluation Office

At UNDP, evaluation is critical in helping countries achieve the simultaneous eradication of poverty and significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion. By generating objective evidence, evaluation helps UNDP achieve greater accountability and facilitates improved learning from past experience. The Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) promotes accountability and learning by conducting independent evaluations at the country, regional, and global levels, as well as on thematic topics of particular importance to the organization. It also promotes development of evaluation capacity at the national level, and provides critical support to the work of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).
Summary: Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

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