



Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

Distr.: General
7 July 2022

Original: English

Second regular session of 2022

13 and 14 September 2022

Item 2 of the provisional agenda

Structured dialogue on financing

Structured Dialogue on Financing the Results of the UN-Women Strategic Plan 2018-2021

Summary

The present report is prepared in response to UN-Women Executive Board decisions on the structured dialogue on financing, the most recent being 2021/8. It supports an ongoing dialogue on financing the results of the UN-Women Strategic Plan 2018-2021, with the overall objective that the Executive Board-endorsed integrated budgets are fully financed for comprehensive implementation of UN-Women Strategic Plan.

The report considers previous recommendations to improve the quality of structured dialogues and reflects harmonized approaches to dialogues and Funding Compact reporting among UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women, including the potential impacts of multiple complex crises on financing for development.

From 2020 to 2021 UN-Women revenue remained stable with total revenue from all sources increasing by 1 percent to \$570.47 million¹. Regular resources decreased by 0.4 percent to \$165.06 million and other resources increased by 2 percent to \$381.18 million with remaining funding received as assessed contributions and other revenue. The regular resources shortfall against the 2021 integrated budget stood at \$34.9 million, while other resources surpassed integrated budget projections for a third year in a row.

Elements of a draft decision for consideration by the Executive Board are included in section VI of this report.

¹ Financial figures reflect revenue recognition in accordance with Management Accounts Reporting per the Revenue Management Policy. Numbers in charts and tables in this report may not add up due to rounding.



I. Introduction

1. With its partners, UN-Women works to support the translation of global norms and standards into measurable changes in the lives of women and girls and enhance coherence and impact of the work of the United Nations system for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. In 2021, the final year of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021, UN-Women supported 98 countries and territories, including high-income countries, to advance gender equality, with strong performance achieved against 91 percent of Strategic Plan outcome level targets². Achievements in 2021 were made possible through committed partnerships and results-oriented investments.
2. UN-Women and its Executive Board hold structured dialogues on financing, in line with General Assembly resolution [71/243](#), to ensure maximum impact of available resources and explore ways to secure adequate, flexible, and predictable resources.
3. Executive Board decisions 2016/4, 2017/7, 2018/5, 2019/11, 2020/7 and 2021/8 recognize the importance of: (a) alignment of resources to Strategic Plan results in support of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks; (b) efforts towards improved efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and accountability; and (c) increased predictability and flexibility of regular and other resources, including through multi-year contributions.
4. In 2021, 179 partners contributed the highest recorded revenue of \$556.4 million, up slightly from \$548.6 million in 2020. Growth in total revenue between 2020 and 2021 of 1 percent follows a 7 percent increase between 2019 and 2020 and a 30 percent increase between 2018 and 2019. In 2021 regular resources declined slightly by 0.4%, while other resources grew by 2 percent.

Interagency harmonization

5. Taking note of requests by their respective Executive Boards to further improve the quality of the structured funding dialogue, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women have harmonized funding dialogue reporting and agreed on methodologies for better comparability and improved analysis of funding gaps³.
6. UN-Women deepened collaboration with UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF, carried out joint analyses and held informal dialogues with Member States on a regular basis. Several joint structured funding dialogues with the Executive Boards of the four agencies have been held since 2019. In May 2021, a [joint interagency informal briefing](#) was organized to reaffirm commitment to multilateralism, foster understanding about future funding prospects and identify challenges and opportunities related to current and future strategic plans. In May 2022, a [joint interagency informal briefing](#) was held on prioritizing development financing amidst multiple crises.

² Report of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women on progress made on the Strategic Plan 2018-2021, UNW 2022/2.

³ Funding gaps (understood as the difference between planned resources and contributions received and planned resources and actual budget expenditures) help gauge compliance with the respective IRRF/biennium integrated budget. They can also be considered as the variances between Funding Compact commitment targets and progress to date, in line with the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of UN system operational activities.

Funding compact

7. The Funding Compact ([A/74/73/Add.1](#)) between Member States and the UN development system seeks to guide funding behaviour in support of the achievement of the SDGs by 2030, with the UN playing a central role in responding to global development challenges. To secure the work of UN development system entities, the compact recognizes the need to improve funding quantity and quality. Under the compact, Member States and the UN development system share responsibility for commitments to match funding quantity and quality with UN entity requirements, accelerate results through collaboration, improve transparency, and better communicate results and make them accessible.

8. Funding compact commitments help to shape UN-Women funding dialogues with its Executive Board. In 2021, UN-Women continued to meet or exceed all 14 assessable indicator targets across the eight commitments that require entity-specific reporting, as outlined in Annex A to this report.

9. UN-Women's performance aligns with that of many other UN Sustainable Development Group entities that have made important progress on commitments to increase transparency, efficiency, and reporting of results. It should be noted however, that at a system-wide level, transformations in terms of high-quality, flexible, and predictable funding envisioned in the Funding Compact have not yet materialized⁴.

Global context 2021

10. Multiple crises in 2021, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate emergency and social unrest and conflict in various parts of the world, have derailed development progress, destabilized economies, deepened inequalities, and intensified humanitarian needs. COVID-19 alone reversed decades of progress on women's labour force participation; raised the numbers of women living in extreme poverty; and significantly increased women's and girls' vulnerability to violence⁵. Against this backdrop, funding dialogues are more important than ever, as UN development system entities and Member States navigate complex development and humanitarian challenges, competing demands and resource uncertainty.

11. Investment of regular and flexible other resources makes good development business sense in times of heightened and complex crises. These funding channels enable rapid and agile responses in changing contexts. For example, in 2021:

- UN-Women mobilized \$65.6 million to respond to COVID-19 (\$13 million from regular resources), bringing the two-year total to \$170.6 million (\$27 million from regular resources). UN-Women harnessed flexible funds to: identify, highlight, publicise and bring together global resources and action to address the shadow pandemic of gender-based violence that emerged alongside other harmful consequences of COVID-19; strengthen system-wide financing for gender equality such as the COVID-19 Multi-Partner Trust Fund; and advocate for a gender-lens in national fiscal stimulus, with critical

⁴ This is the conclusion of both the: (1) Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network analytical study *Lessons in Multilateral Effectiveness: Is this time different? UNDS Reform: Progress, challenges and opportunities*, June 2021; and (2) Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation study *The Way Forward: Fulfilling the Potential of the Funding Compact at the Country Level*, November 2021.

⁵ Report of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women on progress made on the Strategic Plan 2018-2021, UNW/2022/2.

data collected and monitored through the UN-Women—UNDP [COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker](#).

- Regular resources enabled UN-Women to develop a funding pipeline of over \$68 million to address the complex emergency in Afghanistan. Work includes influencing the Special Trust Fund for Afghanistan that brings together 17 UN agencies to apply a gender equality marker with a minimum allocation for initiatives with gender equality as a principal objective; supporting the Afghan women's movement; and documenting reversals on women's rights such as in the December 2021 Gender Alert, which was the first analysis of its kind published by the UN since the Taliban take-over.

Progress for women and girls

12. Through critical contributions from its partners, implementation of the four-year Strategic Plan 2018-2021 directly contributed to create a more enabling environment for women's empowerment and rights.

13. What this has meant in real terms for women and girls is that more than 35,500 aspiring women leaders and political candidates enhanced campaigning and other skills; 41 countries developed and implemented national action plans on gender equality and gender-responsive budgets; 44 countries, home to 1.6 billion women and girls, have a stronger legal, regulatory and policy environment on women's economic empowerment; 69 countries with 2.7 billion women and girls, have improved access to support services for survivors of violence and 22.5 million women and girls were reached in 2021 alone through grants from the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women; and there has been a 12 percentage-point increase from 2017 to 2021 in Peacebuilding Fund resources allocated to projects that advance gender equality as a principle objective and over 1.8 million crisis-affected women and girls benefitted from UN-Women humanitarian services. These are a sample of the results achieved in partnership over the last four years.

14. While we work together to transform lives, multiple complex crises threaten hard-won gains. In this context, and with a vision for UN-Women 2.0, the Entity will prioritize placing UN-Women at the heart of the UN system; pivot to the field to strengthen the two-way flow of knowledge and resources; and make UN-Women the go-to Entity for knowledge on gender-equality and women's empowerment. To implement its vision, UN-Women must strengthen its influence, engagement, partnerships, and financial stability as primary corporate priorities. Flexible and predictable funding from our resource partners through regular resources and multi-year funds are critical.

II. Financing Analysis of Implementation of the UN-Women Strategic Plan 2018-2021

Strategic Plan 2018-2021 income projections and contributions received⁶

15. To enable UN-Women to deliver its mandate, the Executive Board endorsed a voluntary contribution revenue target of \$1.85 billion in the biennium integrated budget periods 2018-2019 and 2020-2021, segmented as \$800 million, or 43 percent in regular resources and \$1.05 billion or 57 percent in other resources.

16. UN-Women receives three sources of contribution revenue: (1) assessed contributions; (2) regular resources, also known as core resources; and (3) other resources, also known as non-core resources. Other revenue is generated from investment income, exchange transactions and other sources.

17. In 2021, revenue comprised \$10.1 million in assessed resources; \$165.1 million in regular resources; \$381.2 million in other resources and \$14.1 million in other revenue. Total revenue from all sources reached a high of \$570.4 million, with an increase of 1 percent between 2020 and 2021 and 41 percent since 2018.

Table 1

UN-Women revenue, 2018-2021

(millions of United States dollars)

	2018	2019	2020	2021
Assessed resources	8.0	10.2	9.7	10.1
Regular resources	149.0	143.0	165.8	165.1
Other resources	235.3	357.5	373.2	381.2
Other revenue	12.4	16.9	15.3	14.1
Total revenue	404.7	527.4	563.9	570.4
Annual growth (percentage)		+30 percent	+7 percent	+1 percent

18. Analysis of UN-Women's financial situation over the Strategic Plan period shows a large jump in other resources at the start of the period, and a significant increase in regular resources in the middle of the period. While decreases by major funding partners were mitigated, they resulted in flatter growth in the final year. Overall, between 2018 and 2021, regular resources grew by 10.7 percent, while other resources grew by 62 percent. Proportionally, assessed resources have held steady at less than 2 percent of annual total revenue.

19. Sluggish growth between 2020 and 2021 reflected COVID-19 effects and 2021 official development assistance (ODA) with a 0.6 percent increase in real terms,

⁶ For the purposes of this report, revenue figures are based on recognition in accordance with management accounts reporting to facilitate comparison to the Integrated Budget. Revenue is recorded and reported in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules requirements for contributions' schedule of payments or milestones. This is different from revenue recognition per the Financial Statements.

excluding ODA for donated COVID-19 vaccines⁷. UN-Women appreciates that funding partners protected voluntary contributions to the Entity in the final biennium amid competing funding priorities.

20. In 2021, \$10.1 million in assessed contributions, allocated to UN-Women from the UN regular budget as approved by the General Assembly, accounted for 1.7 percent of the Entity's total revenue. UN-Women continues to receive the lowest volume of assessed contributions of all receiving entities at 0.07 percent of system-wide assessed contributions in 2020.

21. Regular resources are voluntary contributions received without restrictions. They are the highest quality and most flexible funding channel available to resource partners. Regular resources are the foundation of UN-Women's gender equality and women's empowerment work worldwide. They underpin UN-Women's operational capacity and presence at global, regional, and country levels, supporting a range of essential institutional functions⁸ and enable the leveraging of other resources. UN-Women's normative and coordination functions, particularly, largely rely on regular resources as they are generally not suited to earmarked contributions. In 2021, regular resources fell short of the \$200 million integrated budget estimate by \$34.9 million. The \$165.1 million mobilized was an increase of 16.1 million over 2018 levels, but slightly less than the \$165.8 received in 2020, which was the highest recorded by the Entity. The top five regular resources donors are Finland, Switzerland, Germany, the United States, and Sweden. UN-Women is also grateful to the Government of France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Norway and the United States for their increased contributions of regular resources in 2021, which helped to offset reductions elsewhere.

22. Other resources complement regular resources by supporting the achievement of programme results and allowing scale up of programme interventions from the foundations enabled by regular resources as well as the expansion and replication of best practices and capacity development in countries. Mobilization of \$381.2 million in other resources surpassed the integrated budget projection of \$285 million by 96.2 million, with the Government of Sweden, followed by the European Commission (including funding received for the Spotlight Initiative), the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, Finland, and Norway comprising the top five other resources contributors.

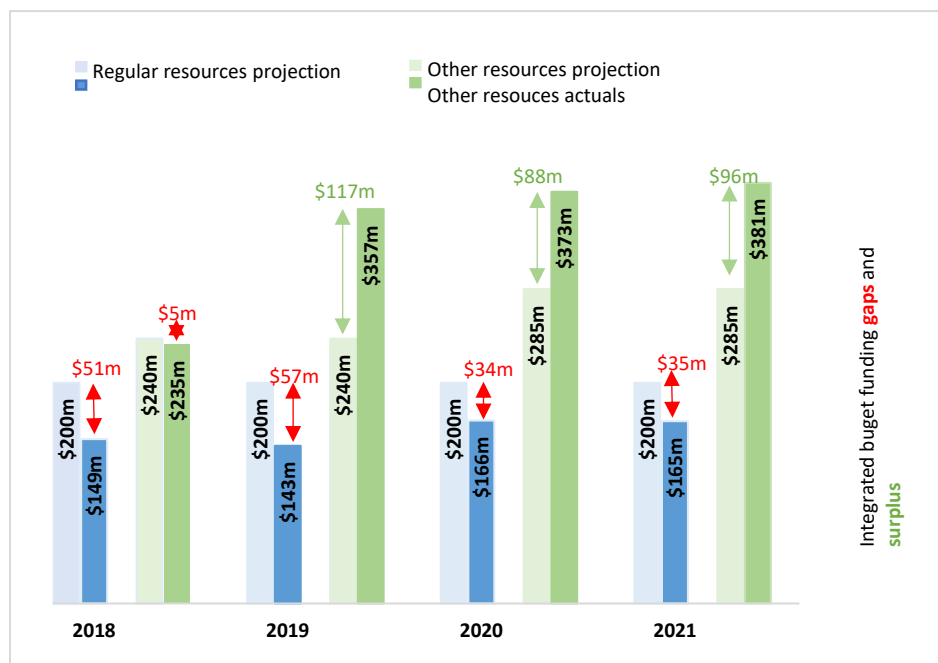
⁷ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *ODA Levels in 2021 – Preliminary data, Detailed Summary Note*, 12 April 2022. See: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/ODA-2021-summary.pdf>

⁸ Such as leadership and representation, independent assurance, strategic and programme direction setting and implementation, operations and fiduciary duties, corporate communications, resource mobilization, external relations and corporate security.

Figure I

Regular and other resource funding gaps and surplus 2018-2021

(millions of United States dollars)

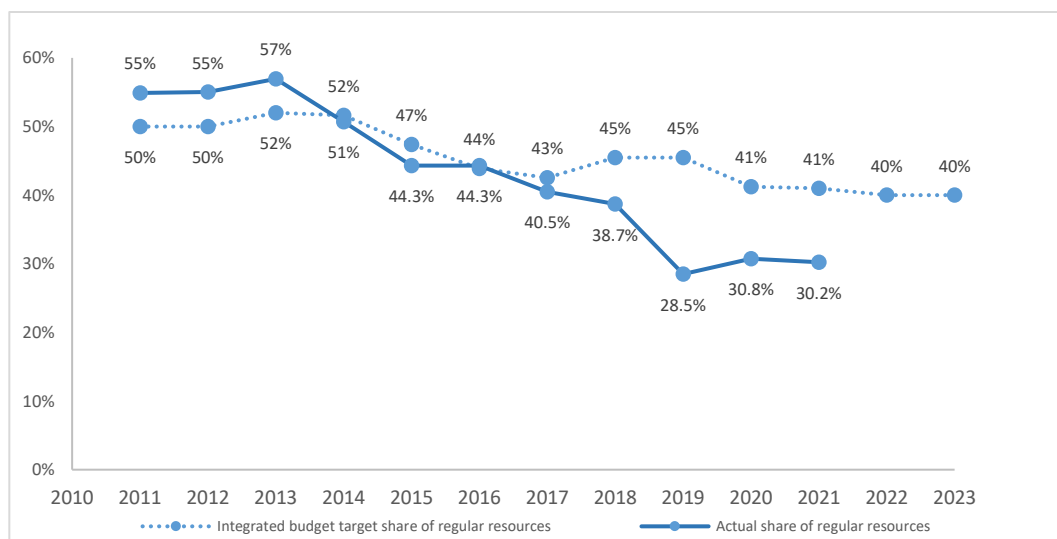


23. The 2020-2021 integrated budget target for the share of revenue received as regular resources was 41 percent with the remaining 59 percent to be received as other resources. The actual share of regular resources received in 2021 was 30.2 percent, which met the Funding Compact threshold of 30 percent and was a slight decrease from 30.8 percent in 2020, but down from the 55 percent in 2011 when UN-Women was established.

24. Projections for the 2022-2023 biennium adjusted the share of regular to other resources to a 40-60 split, which reflects UN-Women's unique mandate-driven financing requirements as well as current UN development system funding patterns that are marked by a decline in regular resources compared to overall funding and a rising share of tightly earmarked funds for specific activities.

Figure II

Target and actual regular resources revenue as a proportion of total voluntary contributions, 2011-2023



25. While the 30 percent Funding Compact threshold was met in the last biennium of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021, UN-Women considers a minimum of 40 percent of regular resources necessary for financing to be compatible with the Entity's normative support and UN system coordination mandates, which are primarily delivered through regular resources.

26. For example, in line with UN-Women's UN coordination mandate, in 2021 regular resources enabled UN-Women to: work with UNDP to launch the first United Nations System-wide Dashboard on Gender Parity, consolidating the latest available data of 38 United Nations entities on gender parity; contribute over the Strategic Plan period to increase the percentage of United Nations country teams completing the UNCT-SWAP Gender Equality Scorecard report from 7 percent in 2018 to 47 percent in 2021; and strengthen the gender lens in the second call of the Multi-Partner Trust Fund in the response to COVID-19, via the gender equality marker, resulting in allocations reaching 64 percent of total funding up from 5 percent in the first call.

27. The Strategic Plan 2022-2025 elevates UN-Women's coordination role to drive coherent and systematic UN contributions to gender equality and women's empowerment across the 2030 Agenda. If resourced accordingly, and in line with the 2020 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review, UN-Women will maximize its coordination role at all levels to drive system-wide accountability for results, support full implementation of the UN-SWAP 2.0 and UNCT-SWAP and expand application of financial tracking and allocation mechanisms combined with financial targets.

28. Imbalances in the share of regular to other resources limit UN-Women's ability to provide support for the formulation of global norms and standards; restricts flexibility to respond to crises and conflicts; increases the likelihood of piecemeal interventions; and constrains the Entity's ability to invest in research and evidence that helps inform policy, programming, and decision-making.

29. UN-Women is grateful for the continued support of its Executive Board, as the Entity works with government partners to receive a balanced share of regular resources that will enable operationalization of normative support functions, UN system coordination and operational activities.

Resource expenditure and allocation

30. Total programme expenditure reached a record high of \$431.8 million in 2021, a 26.5 percent increase from \$341.4 million in 2020 and a 51 percent increase from the \$285.7 million in expenditure in 2018.

31. Between 2018 and 2021, the largest proportion of resources contributed to Strategic Plan Outcome 5 on women, peace and security and humanitarian response, followed by Outcome 4 on ending violence against women and girls, Outcome 2 on leadership and governance, Outcome 3 on economic empowerment and Outcome 1 on global norms and standards.

Table II

Other resources and programmable regular resources growth by outcome area of expenditure, 2018-2021

(millions of United States dollars)

<i>Outcome area</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>
Global norms and standards	16.3	24.7	26.8	33.8
Leadership and governance	60.4	60.5	60.3	81.2
Economic empowerment	42.0	54.0	47.0	63.3
Ending violence against women	77.5	76.4	101.8	127.2
Peace, security and humanitarian	89.4	110.5	105.5	126.8
Total	285.7	326.1	341.4	431.8

32. In 2021, programme expenditure of other resources and programmable regular resources increased in all regions. Geographically, the highest proportion was in Africa, followed by Asia and the Pacific. Total regional programme expenditure reached a record high of \$337 million in 2021, an increase of 31 percent over 2020 and of \$258 million in 2020, an increase of 57 percent since 2018. Regional expenditure represented 78 percent of overall programme expenditure.

Figure III

Programme expenses by region, 2018-2021

(millions of United States dollars)

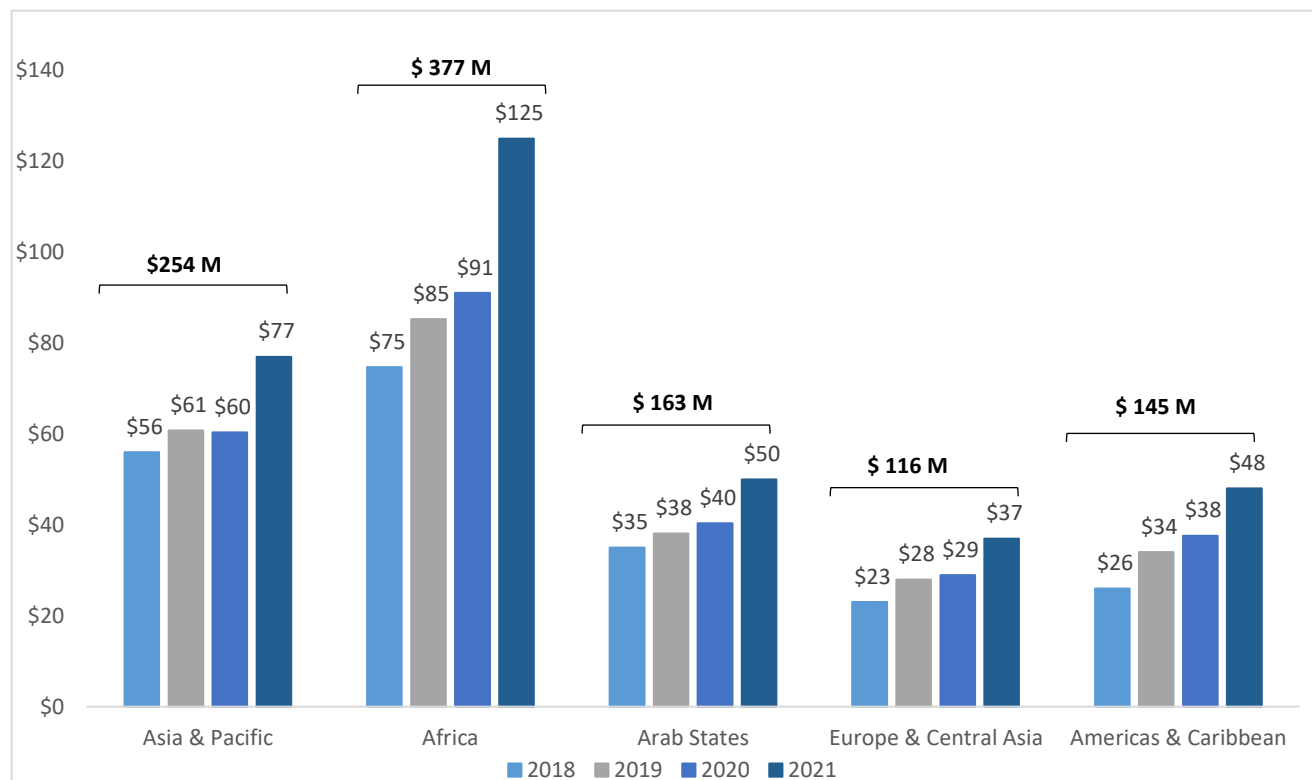


Table III

Regional distribution of programme expenses by outcome area, 2021

(millions of United States dollars)

	<i>Asia Pacific</i>	<i>East & Southern Africa</i>	<i>West & Central Africa</i>	<i>Arab States</i>	<i>Europe & Central Asia</i>	<i>Americas & Caribbean</i>
Peace, security and humanitarian	24.4	13.9	18.9	26.6	6.5	10.6
Ending violence against women	20.8	13.6	15.9	8.3	14.3	12.6
Economic empowerment	17.3	13.9	10.7	6.1	3.6	11.6
Leadership & governance	11.9	23.6	9.8	3.1	10.7	11
Global norms and standards	2.3	4.8	0.3	5.4	1.3	1.7

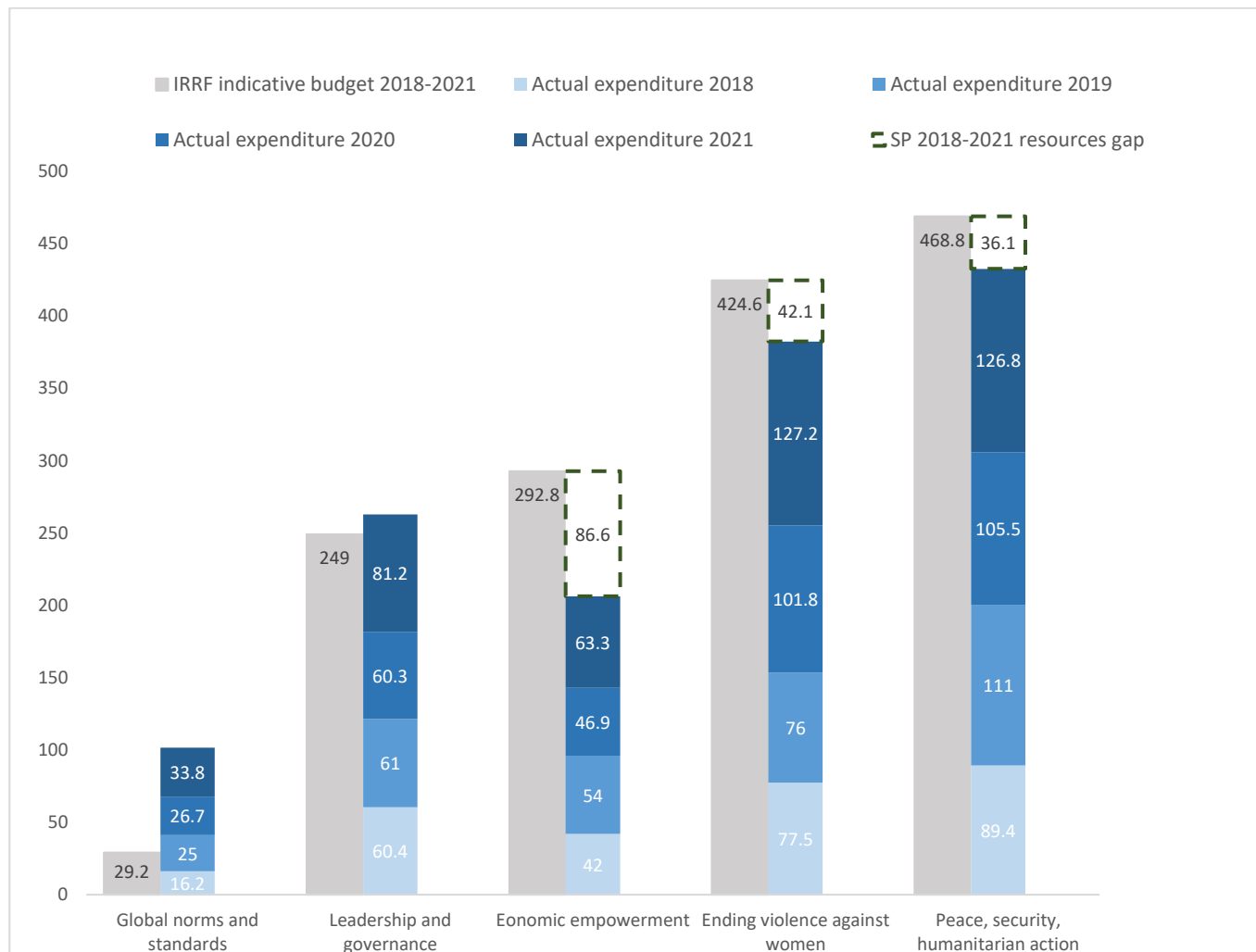
33. The integrated results and resources framework (IRRF) of the Strategic Plan estimated a resource allocation per outcome area for the four-year period of the

Strategic Plan 2018-2021. Actual expenditure by outcome area from 2018-2021 against the four-year indicative allocation is presented below, along with the resources gap at the end of the Strategic Plan period.

Figure IV

Planned allocation of resources⁹ and actual expenditure per strategic plan outcome 2018-2020

(millions of United States dollars)



34. Between 2018 and 2021 total expenditure of \$101.7 million on global norms and standards (Outcome 1) surpassed the four-year estimated expenditure of \$29.2 million due to high demand and the cross-cutting nature of this work. The Strategic Plan 2022-

⁹ The 2018-2021 IRRF is the four-year resource projection endorsed by the Executive Board in 2017. The Executive Board-endorsed biennium integrated budgets (2018-2019 and 2020-2021) are the two-year resource projections. There is variance between the IRRF and the integrated budgets due to the planning period and timing of these documents that considers account income developments and trends at different points in time.

2025 has therefore been refined, with work on global norms and standards a cross-cutting priority across all UN-Women thematic impact areas rather than a stand-alone outcome. Expenditure in support of leadership and governance (Outcome 2) also slightly surpassed projections by \$14 million.

35. Expenditure over the four-year period on peace, security, and humanitarian response (Outcome 5) and ending violence against women (Outcome 4) were largely in line with projections with expenditure levels reaching 92 percent and 90 percent respectively of planned allocations. Investment in women's economic empowerment (Outcome 3) fell below anticipated levels with \$206 million expended against planned expenditure of \$292 million. While delivery in 2020 and 2021 was impacted by COVID-19, this does not significantly account for the funding gap, which is understood to be related to donor priorities and internal capacity constraints due to limitations in regular resources for staff positions across the organization that would support resource mobilization, policy advice and programming.

36. As of 31 December 2021, the resource gap against the three underfunded outcome areas stood at \$146.8 million. Expenditure analysis highlights the most- and least-funded areas and is a useful touchpoint for UN-Women as it works with funding partners to ensure adequate investments across priority thematic areas. The IRRF of the Strategic Plan 2022-2025 reflects fine tuning in the apportioning of planned expenditures. For economic empowerment, this has been set at 16 percent of total planned expenditure in the new Strategic Plan compared to 20 percent for the 2018-2021 period. In addition, an increasing proportion of expenditures are planned for impact areas on governance and participation in public life and peace, security, and humanitarian action.

Resources for results

37. The Entity drove progress on leadership and governance, supporting governments to make institutions and laws deliver better for women and girls, and contributing to quality gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data, including for SDG reporting.

38. From 2018-2021, UN-Women supported over 760 legislative reform initiatives (232 in 2021); over 50 percent addressed discriminatory laws and 60 percent were adopted. An additional \$1 million would ensure UN Women continues to advance comparable data on these legal frameworks, tracking SDG indicator 5.1.1 over four years. UN Women, OECD and UNDP also support monitoring of SDG Indicator 5.c.1 to track countries that make public allocations to gender equality and women's empowerment. With \$3 million, UN-Women could have supported 15 more governments to develop gender-responsive financing strategies. In 2021, gender capacities of 15 national AIDS coordinating bodies were increased and 7,000 women living with HIV improved their leadership and access to decision-making spaces. With \$7 million, UN-Women could have integrated gender in national HIV responses and empowered women living with HIV in 30 countries, while an additional \$20 million would support rights-based sexual, reproductive, maternal, child and adolescent health plans aligned with global normative frameworks to ensure access to health services in 39 countries.

39. UN-Women significantly contributed to women's income security, decent work, and economic autonomy in 2021: 45 legal, regulatory and policy frameworks were adopted on the care economy, 20 on women's land rights and tenure security, 55 on decent work, 14 gender-responsive macroeconomic frameworks, and 19 laws and

policies on gender-responsive social protection systems, including cash transfers to informal, migrant and domestic workers affected by COVID-19 in 44 countries, home to 1.6 billion women and girls. Some 380,337 women now have strengthened capacities and skills to participate in the economy and 62,108 women, including rural women, have strengthened economic empowerment and resilience through programming on climate-resilient agriculture.

40. With an additional \$3 million, UN-Women could expand COVID-19 crisis and recovery support to 30 additional countries, addressing the intensification of unpaid care and domestic work, increased stress on the paid care sector, and women's economic insecurity. Five million would support investment in the care economy and leveraging macroeconomic policy levers to strengthen legal and policy frameworks for decent work in 75 countries and \$2 million could expand access to financial services, create more opportunities for entrepreneurship and gender-responsive procurement, and support gender-responsive migration policies and services. With \$10 million, UN-Women could increase technical assistance to promote gender-responsive climate and environmental policies globally and scale up climate-resilient agriculture programming to reach 200,000 more women farmers facing the interrelated challenges of COVID-19 and climate and environmental emergencies.

41. COVID-19 increased women and girls' vulnerability to violence and exacerbated economic disadvantages. In 2021, UN-Women scaled up efforts to end gender-based violence, including through innovative responses and increased flexible resourcing for civil society organizations. Joint work with the World Health Organization and others in 2021 resulted in a new methodology to produce comparable estimates of physical and sexual intimate partner violence, with global data suggesting reduced acceptance of wife-beating, to which UN-Women contributed. With its knowledge and expertise, innovative data collection methods and longstanding partnerships with civil society and women's rights organizations, UN-Women was uniquely placed to address challenges posed by ongoing crises, including climate change, environmental disasters, conflicts, and online facilitated violence. Moreover, UN-Women pursued innovations and mobilized new actors across diverse sectors to accelerate change, taking advantage of connections made through Generation Equality and its Actions Coalitions, including on gender-based violence.

42. With an additional \$10 million, UN Women would be able to address gaps in safe cities and safe public spaces programmes and respond to request of new cities in three regions to participate and provide seed support for safe rural community initiatives in two regions, strengthen synergies with other sectors (i.e., transportation, environment, infrastructure to enhance safety on and offline). With a further \$50 million, UN-Women could formulate national action plans on violence prevention and expand evidence-based programmes to prevent gender-based violence, guided by the *RESPECT Women: Preventing Violence against Women* framework, aligned with collective commitments of the 2021 Paris Generation Equality Forum. Prevention guidance could be rolled out in at least 50 additional regions/countries with high prevalence rates, with the aim of sharing critical learning from recent research findings and using this effectively to influence policy and practice. With an additional \$50 million, 25 countries with high prevalence rates could improve the quality of essential, survivor-centred health, policing and justice and social services.

43. UN-Women's peace, security, humanitarian action and disaster risk reduction work provide comprehensive support across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. In 2021, partnership with the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office

contributed to the Fund exceeding the 15 percent target for projects with gender equality as a principal objective, reaching 21.7 percent. UN-Women contributed to humanitarian and refugee coordination mechanisms in over 40 contexts, providing 562,397 crisis-affected women and girls access to humanitarian services, including through 149 women's safe spaces and empowerment hubs and developing capacities of 2,600 humanitarian actors across 21 crisis-affected countries. Regular resources funding cuts particularly impact UN-Women's ability to intervene in crisis settings. Sustained gender expertise remains a concerning gap, yet with an additional \$16 million annually, UN-Women could extend support to 30 UN-coordinated humanitarian crisis-settings. [The Women's Resilience to Disasters programme](#) increased women's voice and agency in six disaster risk reduction and resilience processes and conferences, including the COP26, mainstreaming gender in outcome documents, action plans and commitments. [The Women's Resilience to Disasters Knowledge Hub](#) launched. It is a one-stop-shop for gender-related disaster and resilience knowledge with over 1,400 resources and a community of over 400 practitioners, with 48 experts in an Experts Register. With \$15 million annually, UN-Women could deploy Women's Resilience to Disasters programme in seven additional high-risk countries.

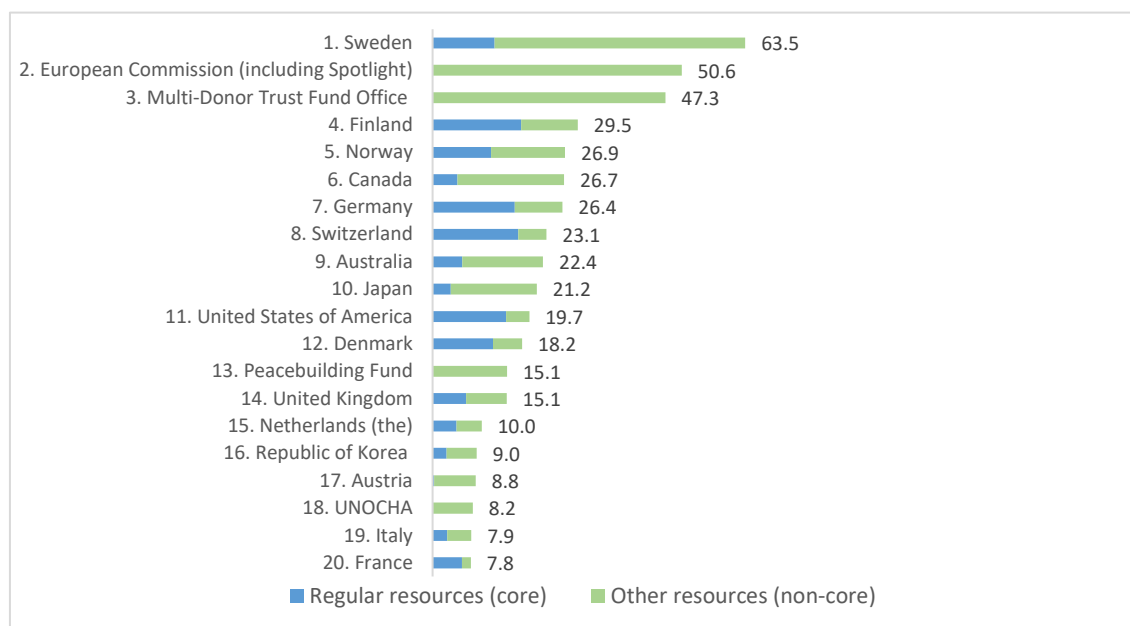
III. Lessons on Maximizing Funding Impact: The Benefits of Flexible and Predictable Funding

44. In 2021 the top 20 UN-Women resource partners contributed \$457.4 million or 84 percent of total voluntary contributions. The Government of Sweden was the single largest contributor with other resources contributions totalling \$50.9 million and regular resources contributions of \$12.6 million. Member States and the European Commission comprised 17 of the top 20 donors, demonstrating the continued criticality of government leadership and partnerships in driving gender equality and women's empowerment within the UN development system. Significant funding was also received through interagency arrangements, with the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, the Peacebuilding Fund and the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs rounding out the top 20.

Figure V

Top 20 resource partners, 2021

(millions of United States dollars)



45. In 2021, 179 partners contributed to UN-Women, a small increase from 170 in 2020 but fewer than the 214 and 199 contributors in 2019 and 2018 respectively. The decline in the number of funding partners during the 2020-2021 biennium compared to the 2018-2019 period relates to the impact of COVID-19 on the funding priorities and appetite of programme countries¹⁰ and other donors, alongside UN-Women's partnership management focus. Despite the fewer number of contributors during the last biennium period, funding levels in 2021 from committed Member States, the European Union, the private sector, UN agencies and National Committees, among others, reached a record high, demonstrating deep support for the Entity and its mandate.

46. Member States are UN-Women's most significant and dependable partnership segment, with 74 contributing regular resources¹¹ to UN-Women in 2021. In line with 2020, their investments in 2021 accounted for 98 percent of regular resources, with the remaining 2 percent, equivalent to \$2.6 million, generated by 12 National Committees¹². The number of Member States contributing regular resources to UN-Women declined over the Strategic Plan period, from a high of 102 and 106 in 2018-2019 to 83 and 74 in 2020-2021, however the volume of regular resources received increased from \$147.5 million in 2018 to \$162.5 million in 2021. UN-Women will continue to encourage programme countries to demonstrate commitment to the Entity's mandate through symbolic regular resources contributions.

¹⁰ The number of Member State contributors shifted from 103 (2018) and 112 (2019) to 90 (2020) and 80 (2021), while the number of "other donors" dropped from a high of 25 (2018) and 23 (2019) to 12 (2020) and 16 (2021).

¹¹ Including 10 Member States that provided in-kind contributions to UN-Women in 2021.

¹² This includes \$42,227 in regular resources contributed by "other" miscellaneous donors.

47. The number of partners contributing other resources varied over the Strategic Plan period, from a high of 138 in 2019 to a low of 120 in 2020, however revenue increased year-over-year, from \$235 million in 2018, \$357 million in 2019, \$373 million in 2020 to \$381 million in 2021, influenced by large contributions for the Spotlight Initiative.

48. UN-Women continued to nurture diverse other resource partnerships. In 2021, 135 donors made other resources contributions to UN-Women, including via the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women. Together, 36 Member States and the European Union/European Commission accounted for 63 percent (\$238.7 million) of other resources contributions with 99 other partners, representing a wide range of donor segments, contributing the remaining 37 percent (\$142.5 million). This includes revenue from multilateral partners¹³ that contributed \$99 million in 2021, up from \$91 million in 2020 and UN-Women National Committees that contributed \$4.9 million in 2021, up from \$3.9 million in 2020.

49. Revenue from private sector partners held stable at \$10m in both 2021 and 2020, while contributions contracted from foundations (\$11.6 million in 2021 down from \$13.6 million in 2020) and the European Commission and European Union/other donors¹⁴ (\$51 million in 2021 down from \$75 million in 2020). The reduction in funding from the European Commission between 2020 and 2021 relates planned funding availability through the Spotlight Initiative.

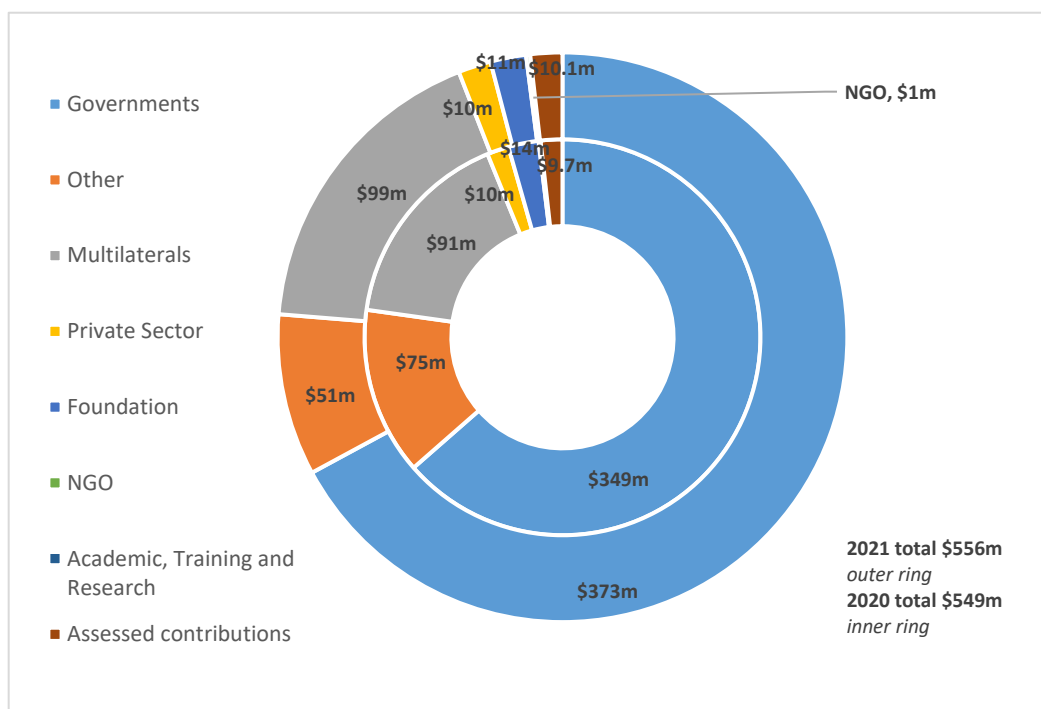
¹³ This includes International Financial Institutions, UN organizations and UN inter-agency pooled funds.

¹⁴ The UNDG Data Standards the category “Other” includes contributions from the European Commission, municipal governments and other organizations like the African Union.

Figure VI

Contributions by funding channel, 2020-2021¹⁵

(millions of United States dollars)

**Individual giving as a source of regular resources**

50. UN-Women has been developing an individual giving portfolio as a proven means of generating regular resources within the UN system, however the ability to develop this funding stream has been constrained by investment limitations that restricted donor acquisition, which is a precondition for and the main driver of individual giving returns.

Table IV

Individual giving investment and revenue¹⁶

<i>Year</i>	<i>National Committee Campaign</i>	<i>Investment</i>	<i>Year 1 revenue</i>	<i>Year 1 return on investment</i>	<i>Estimated year 3 return on investment</i>
2019	Iceland Fundraising TV show	\$200,000	\$240,822	1.2%	2.9%
2019	Sweden Digital marketing and telemarketing	\$39,000	\$26,278	0.67%	2.3%

¹⁵ In line with UNDG Data Standards, “Other” includes contributions from the European Commission and other organizations such as the African Union. “Multilateral” includes International Financial Institutions, United Nations organizations and transfers from United Nations inter-agency pooled funds.

¹⁶ Reflects conversion from local currency to USD.

2019	Netherlands Face-to-face and Telemarketing	\$30,000	\$24,687	0.82%	2.7%
2019	France Support of Gender Equality Forum	\$60,000			
2020	Netherlands Outbound Telemarketing	\$25,488	\$21,012	0.87%	2.6%
2021	Germany Facebook Messenger	\$30,000	\$6,600	0.22%	0.22%
2021	Iceland Face to Face Fundraising	\$75,000	\$77,514	1.03%	3.2%
2022	Finland Outbound Telemarketing	\$103,000	\$101,097 ¹⁷	0.99%	2.7%

51. Recently, National Committees in Australia, Finland and New Zealand have launched successful emergency appeals, raising roughly \$250,000 for Afghanistan and Committees in Germany, Finland, Japan, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States raising roughly \$2.3 million for Ukraine.

52. UN-Women appreciates Member States support to further invest in individual giving and in support the capacities of National Committee to be effective advocacy, partnership and resource mobilization agents, and urges Member States to consider investing directly in private sector fundraising and acquisition of new monthly givers.

Flexible funding in support of Strategic Plan results

53. Other resources that are more loosely earmarked and provided with greater predictability are considered higher quality and are the most efficient and effective kind of investment in a UN system empowered to respond to global development and humanitarian challenges. This is because flexible other resources can be directed where they are most needed and with greater predictability when contributions are multi-year. It allows for more efficient and effective responses by facilitating longer-term planning and sustainability, generating savings in transaction, management, and reporting costs. The benefits of flexible and predictable funding are multiplied through early payment of commitments, which is essential to good planning and management and to reduce risks associated with currency fluctuations.

54. The Swedish International Development Agency's longstanding support to UN-Women through the Strategic Partnership Framework is a best practice example of a flexible funding arrangement. Now in its third phase, the framework is built on shared priorities, good performance and responsible financial stewardship. By channelling funds directly to UN-Women's Strategic Plan, the Framework supports global- and country-level normative support, United Nations system coordination and operational work, it has been critical in strengthening UN-Women capacity in these areas. Though renegotiated due to Sweden's challenging fiscal environment, the most recent \$44.7¹⁸ agreement for the period 2022-2025 embeds flexibility, allowing UN-Women to strengthen capacities where they are most needed for both organizational growth and local context needs. It enables UN-Women to strategically plan with longer-term predictability and flexibly, investing resources in priority thematic areas and programme countries, resulting in management efficiency gains and reduced transaction costs.

¹⁷ For 2022, year 1 revenue and return on investment is an estimate.

¹⁸ The total agreement value is SEK \$440 million. The annual amount can be allocated by Sweden with flexibility a any point in time during the period.

55. UN-Women Strategic Notes are the main planning document used by UN-Women at headquarters and country-level to articulate the strategies, results, and indicative resource requirements towards implementing UN-Women's Strategic Plan 2022-2025. Strategic Notes translate and ensure that the Strategic Plan is implemented effectively across all organizational business units, aligned with UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks and national priorities. While Strategic Note funding has generally increased since 2015 with \$13.5 million in direct funding compared to \$27.4 million received in 2021¹⁹, this more loosely earmarked instrument continues to be under-used by funding partners.

56. UN-Women encourages Member States to prioritize Strategic Note funding. The Entity is currently developing a user-friendly tool that outlines the value proposition of UN-Women Strategic Notes to support donor decision making in directing other resources to priority themes and regions.

57. In 2016, UN-Women developed a series of high-impact Flagship Programme Initiatives (FPIs) to deepen efforts to achieve transformative results aligned with the SDGs. FPIs on the Prevention and Access to Essential Services to End Violence Against Women; Safe Cities; Making Every Women and Girl Count; Women's Engagement in Peace, Security and Recovery; Equal Opportunities for Women Entrepreneurs; and Women's Empowerment through Climate-Smart Agriculture generated a great degree of donor interest with roughly ten-20 donors supporting each initiative. Larger-scale contributions of \$1 million or more were received from the Governments of Australia, Belgium, Cameroon, Denmark, Spain, the United Kingdom, the United States and the European Commission, with private sector funds received from the Alwaleed Bin Talal Foundation, BNP Paribas, the Open Society Foundations, and Unilever; and \$4 million or more received from the Government of Canada, Japan, Luxembourg Sweden, and private sector funds from the Gates Foundation and NAMA Women Advancement Establishment.

58. UN-Women's 2020 corporate evaluation of the FPIs found that the flagship approach was successful in embedding an institutional shift towards consolidated and scalable programmatic approaches, but faced challenges, including in resource mobilization. The evaluation recommendations informed the evolution of the FPIs towards Signature Intervention areas that directly contribute to two or more Strategic Plan 2022-2025 systemic outcomes. Signature Interventions will provide flexible yet coherent programming frameworks and standardized approaches to guide regional and country level work in strategic areas where UN-Women is best positioned to make the highest impact at scale towards the SDGs. By directing financing support to high-level thematically driven programme areas, donor investments will support greater flexibility and efficiency in cohesively delivering the results envisioned in the Strategic Plan, and reduce piecemeal, projectized funding.

Multi-year funding agreements

59. The Funding Compact calls on Member States to increase the share of multi-year contributions to improve the predictability of revenue streams and support longer-term programme planning and implementation. Multi-year funding allows for more strategic, efficient, and effective programme planning that supports longer-term objectives backed by the required investments.

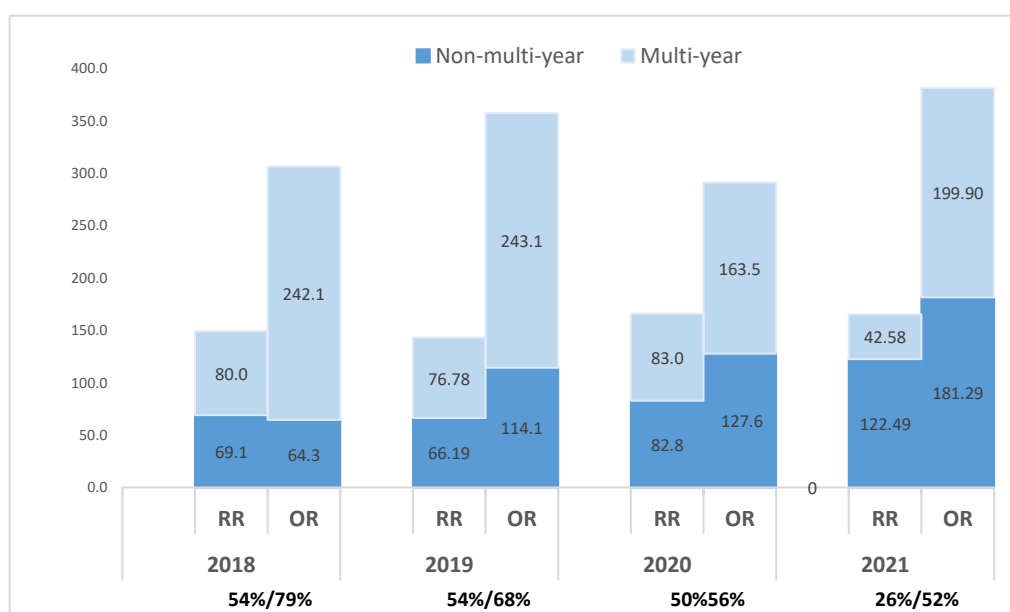
¹⁹ Extracted from DAMS, total agreement value annualized.

60. Over the Strategic Plan 2018-2021 period the annual value share of regular and other resources provided as multi-year commitments or contributions declined. In the case of regular resources, in 2018 over half (54 percent or \$80 of \$149 million) of commitments were received through multi-year arrangements; by 2021 the figure was 26 percent or \$42.6 of \$165 million. Several regular resources multi-year agreements expired in 2021 and are under negotiation.

61. Multi-year other resources agreements represented 79 percent (\$242 of \$306 million) of the volume of earmarked voluntary contributions in 2018. The share declined to 52 percent in 2021, or \$199.9 of \$381 million. The number of other resources agreements that were multi-year increased slightly in 2021 to 36 percent (93 of 255) compared to 34 percent (80 of 233) in 2020, however the combined value of the agreements was lower in 2021 (\$309 million) than in 2020 (\$373 million), highlighting the relevance of scale in funding investments.

Figure VII

Proportion of multi-year commitments/agreements by resource type, 2018-2021²⁰
(millions of United States dollars)



Scale of funding investments

62. The average regular resources commitment value has grown over the Strategic Plan period, from \$1.3 million in 2018 to a high of \$1.9 million in 2021 with the number of regular resources commitments from funding partners decreasing during

²⁰ Total commitment value for regular resources includes multi-year agreements signed with Member States, as well as pledges, and represents the total contributions received in a given year. For other resources, total value is the amount of an agreement (including pledges, framework arrangements, letters and agreements) in the year in which the agreement was signed. In cases in which an agreement is concluded for an amount in a currency other than United States dollars, the future revenue is calculated based on the United Nations operational rate of exchange of December of the calendar year in which it was concluded.

the same period from 115 to 87. This is related to the reduced number of regular resources contributors, in particular Member States, in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19 pandemic (from a high of 115 and 120 in 2018 and 2019 to 96 and 87 in 2020 and 2021).

63. The average other resources agreement value increased above the \$1 million threshold in 2021 after falling in 2020 to \$0.9 million dollars, which was first time since 2016 that it fell below \$1 million. UN-Women average agreement value trends are closely linked to the number of signed agreements annually. Given efficiency and effectiveness costs related to managing a higher number of lower value agreements, and line with the spirit of the Funding Compact, UN-Women's priority is to increase the size of agreements and volume of multi-year contributions.

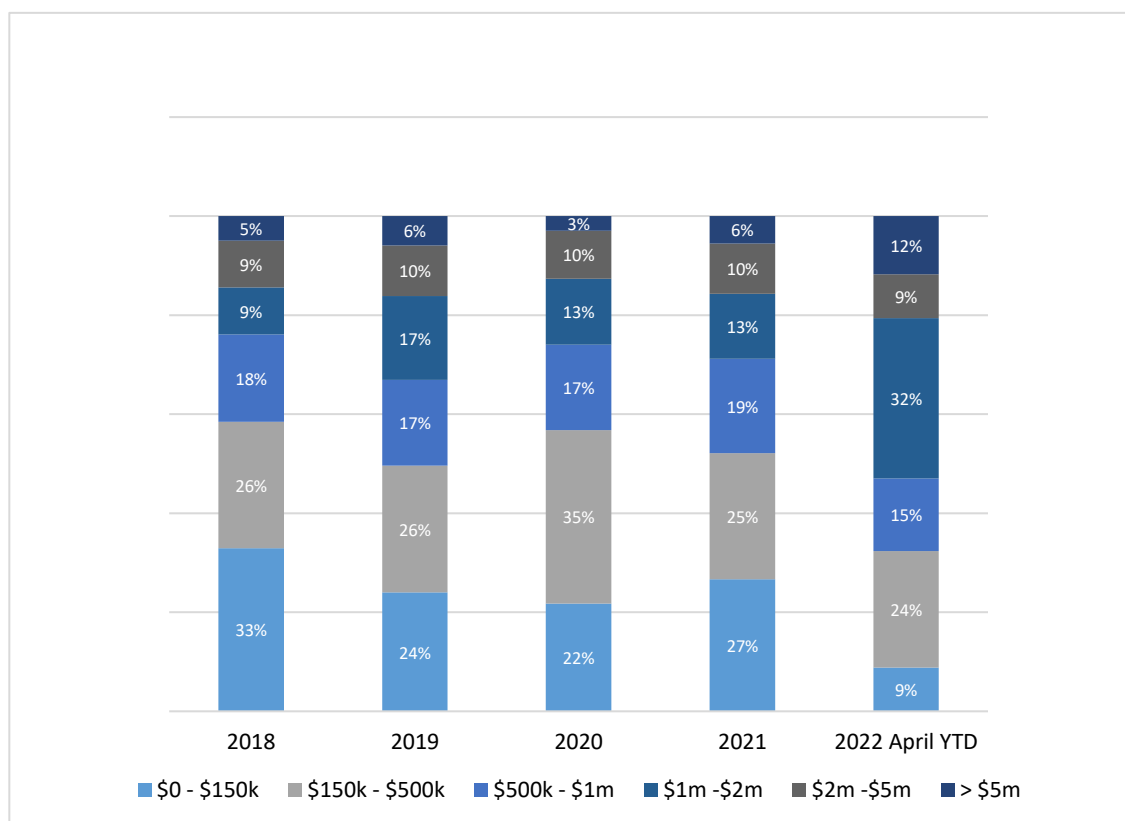
Table V

Average value of regular resources commitments and other resources agreements 2016-2019

		<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>
<i>Regular resources</i>	Total commitment value	\$149	\$143	\$166	\$165
	Number of commitments	115	119	96	87
	Average commitment value	\$1.3	\$1.2	\$1.7	\$1.9
<i>Other resources</i>	Total agreement value	\$306	\$357	\$291	\$309
	Number of agreements	250	261	319	255
	Average agreement value	\$1.23	\$1.4	\$0.9	\$1.2

64. The largest number of higher-value agreements were received in 2019 when 33 percent of all agreements were valued at \$1 million or more, with the proportion declining to 26 percent in 2020 and 29 percent in 2021. This is understood to be linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to a reprioritization of programmatic priorities and resource mobilization towards immediate, shorter-term recovery response actions. Excluding Unstereotype Alliance membership fees, lower-value agreements of up to \$150,000 declined somewhat over the Strategic Plan period from a high of 33 percent of all agreements in 2018 to 27 percent in 2021. They continue to represent a significant proportion of other resources funding to the Entity. With roughly half of lower-value agreements funded by the private sector, the MPTO or other UN agencies, these partnerships are important for shared results and influencing others. UN-Women encourages funding partners to increase the scale of programme investments to improve efficiencies in servicing agreements and managing projects given that larger scale investments provide UN-Women and funding partners with economies of scale, allowing fixed costs to be distributed over a larger programming base in support of higher-level strategic results.

Figure VIII

Proportion of other resource agreements by amount, 2018-April 2022²¹***Inter-agency pooled funding***

65. Inter-agency pooled funds²² are a higher-quality form of other resources funding. Between 2018 and 2021 inter-agency pooled funding grew by 125 percent, from \$50.4 million to \$113.5 million. In 2021 this represented a 21 percent share of total voluntary contributions and a 30 percent share of other resources voluntary contributions, surpassing the Funding Compact target of a 10 percent share of non-core resources.

Table VI

Percentage share of inter-agency pooled funding to total contribution income, 2018-2021

(millions of United States dollars)

	<i>Inter-agency funding</i>	<i>Total contributions</i>	<i>Share of inter-agency funding to total contributions</i>
2018	50.4	392.3	13%
2019	72.4	510.6	14%

²¹ Membership fees for Unstereotype Alliance are not reflected.

²² One UN Funds, Trust Funds and joint programmes.

2020	119.8	548.6	22%
2021	113.5	553.3	21%

66. Gender equality continues to be a common UN joint programming area of focus. Of 130 United Nations country teams, 113 implemented at least one joint programme focussed on SDG 5 on gender equality. In 2021, 31 percent of total programme expenditure (\$133.8 of \$431.8 million) was on joint programmes, exceeding the 25 percent target in the Strategic Plan. This was up from 26 percent in 2020 and a significant increase from 13 percent in 2018. UN-Women anticipates continued growth in inter-agency pooled funds during the new Strategic Plan period given the demand for multi-stakeholder partnerships alongside UN-Women's thought leadership and role in UN system coordination.

IV. Financing Gender Equality and the UN-Women Strategic Plan 2022-2025

UN-Women Strategic Plan 2022-2025

67. To deliver its mandate, UN-Women's 2022-2023 integrated budget estimates a required \$1.0 billion in voluntary contributions (\$200 million per year in regular resources and \$300 million per year in other resources). The biennium regular resources target reflects zero growth from the 2018-2021 four-year strategic plan regular resource projection and a zero-growth institutional budget. The other resources annual target of \$300 million reflects 5 percent growth over the 2020 and 2021 annual target of \$285 million and is considered appropriate given that other resources have surpassed the \$300 million mark since 2019 (\$357 million in 2019; \$373 million in 2020 and \$381 million in 2021).

68. The Plan prioritizes strengthened linking of normative and intergovernmental work to country-level legislative and implementation frameworks; ramped-up efforts on financing gender equality; and strengthened work to lead, coordinate make the UN accountable for gender equality, with UN-Women's Signature Initiatives driving results at scale and Action Coalition commitments integrated with the Strategic Plan.

69. Integrated budget estimates reflect a harmonized approach with UNDP, UNFPA, and UNICEF. Resource targets were identified in 2020 based on an analysis of the funding environment and trends at that time, including uncertainties related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Now in the first year of implementation of the new Plan, the complexity and magnitude of crises have grown, with protracted crises presenting challenges in many parts of the world, and the onset of the Ukraine war impacting commodity prices and financial markets, with a decline in global economic output at risk of diminishing financing for development from public and private sources.

Prioritizing financing for gender equality in difficult times

70. Global challenges are shaping resource needs and resource availability. The average humanitarian crisis now lasts over nine years, often driven by conflict, with limited progress in addressing the root causes, and the need for political solutions a

top priority²³. Integrated development solutions must be central to global responses to crisis through a humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach that coherently addresses people's vulnerability before, during and after crises. This nexus approach should be accompanied by improved coordination of and shifts in funding decisions. Yet, funding remains siloed, and trends show that countries affected by crisis often receive far less ODA than developing countries not in crisis.

71. The financing situation for gender equality within the humanitarian-development-peace nexus is bleak, with data showing that over 60 percent of aid from OECD DAC member is gender blind and less than 1 percent of all aid to fragile states significantly targeted gender equality; at the same time, gender is a significant determinant of a person's agency in and out of crisis²⁴.

72. UN-Women Strategic Plan priorities are system-wide priorities²⁵. Prioritizing adequate and flexible resources for gender equality will be pivotal to UN-Women's ability, in partnership, to implement its normative, coordination and operational mandate in development and crisis settings.

Growing financing for gender equality

73. The only way to achieve transformational results for gender equality is in partnership, ensuring that commitments are backed by sustainable financing and accountability. In this context, deepening and expanding partnerships and influencing the actions and financing of other actors are cornerstones of the Strategic Plan 2022-2025.

74. UN-Women continues to advance gender equality in major financing decision-making spaces, including:

- Engaging International Financial Institutions (IFIs) to integrate and implement a gender lens in finance and funding;
- Convening IFIs and government Ministries on gender-responsive stimulus packages;
- Signing Memoranda of Understanding with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Asian Development Bank and the Luxembourg Stock Exchange to advance gender-equality financing;
- Highlighting gender-responsive COVID-recovery policies through high-level engagement during the Financing for Development Forum; and

²³ OCHA, 2018. *World Humanitarian Data and Trend 2018*. See: https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/WHDT2018_web_final_spread.pdf

²⁴ OECD, 2018. *Aid in Support of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment*. See: <https://www.oecd.org/development/gender-development/aidinsupportofgenderequalityandwomens empowerment.htm>; and Fanning, Emma, Fullwood-Thomas, Jessica. (2019). *The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus: What does it mean for multi-mandated organizations?* See: <https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/the-humanitarian-development-peace-nexus-what-does-it-mean-for-multi-mandated-o-620820/>.

²⁵ The Secretary-General recently underscored the centrality of gender equality in the report *Our Common Agenda*, which offers a plan for global cooperation and effective multilateralism in the coming 25 years. It encourages Member States to strengthen efforts towards gender equality in UN intergovernmental process and emphasizes the need for transformative gender-equality measures on discriminatory laws; equal participation; youth and economic inclusion; and accelerating efforts to end violence.

- Launching work on innovative financing to identify new instruments, such as gender bonds that can scale-up and sustain investments needed to advance gender equality.

75. These efforts have begun to yield results. In 2021, new multi-year commitments were made via IFI loans and other modalities valued at approximately \$9 million, compared to the cumulative \$1.7 in direct funding from IFIs received between 2014-2020.

76. Through Action Coalitions, UN-Women is contributing to the Generation Equality process by supporting multi-stakeholder partnerships with government, civil society and the private sector to catalyze collective action; deliver concrete results for women and girls and drive increased public and private investment, with financing as one of the key cross-cutting issues being addressed in order to deliver tangible results. In 2022 UN-Women will prepare an online commitment dashboard as a reporting and accountability tracking mechanism.

77. UN-Women is also undertaking a financial review to support a more strategic use of and decisions around financial resources as the Entity moves towards a new enterprise resource planning system.

V. Conclusion

78. UN-Women appreciates the trust funding partners have shown through their strategic investments in 2021 that helped to maintain the financial stability of the Entity, with contributions holding steady from 2020 despite ongoing financial stressors caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

79. Moving into the first biennium of the new Strategic Plan, UN-Women seeks Executive Board support for the prioritization of financing for gender equality through balanced resourcing of UN-Women's triple mandate that considers the need for an effective ratio of regular to other resources.

VI. Elements of a Decision

80. The Executive Board may wish to:

- Take note* of the *Structured Dialogue on Financing the Results of the UN-Women Strategic Plan, 2018-2021*(UNW 2022/6);
- Urge* Member States in a position to do so to increase voluntary contributions, in particular of regular resources that are essential in enabling UN-Women to deliver its mandate;
- Call on* Member States to shift other resources contributions from tightly earmarked to more flexible funding modalities, such as via Strategic Notes, FPIs, and strategic partnership agreements, particularly through contributions that are multi-year; and
- Advocate* among Member States for the prioritization of financing for gender equality and women's empowerment and contributions to UN-Women that are made early and in a predictable manner in support of the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2022-2025.