Joint Statement of Switzerland and Sweden

Executive Board of UN WOMEN

ANNUAL SESSION 2015

ANNUAL REPORT ON EVALUATION

JULY 1, 2015

Mr. President

I am pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of Sweden and my own country Switzerland.

We welcome the progress made in strengthening the evaluation on a systematic basis. UN Women evaluation function is key to further demonstrate results achieved at the normative and operational levels as well as their interrelation. We believe it is very important to see the connection between the normative work and advocacy at the global level and the programmatic work in countries.

As we know evaluators need to rely on baseline set and tracking system in place to enable the evaluability of operations. We welcome and encourage efforts made to further strengthen the monitoring of programmatic work through results management system. Internal capacity building and training of partners remain an important determinant to better track progress.

We have noted the positive improvements in the key performance indicators of the evaluation function at corporate and decentralized levels. Regarding financial resources, we welcome the increase from 1.3% 2013 to 2.2% 2014. It is a positive move towards achieving the target of 3%.

Capacity strengthening for gender responsive evaluation is a vast and complex task. It requires a collective effort which relies on partnership and knowledge sharing platforms to increase access to training or evaluation tools. We welcome the leadership of the independent evaluation office in promoting various and innovative avenues to reach out further beneficiaries of capacity strengthening.
We acknowledge the key technical support that regional evaluation specialists can provide for country offices. We welcome the overall improvement in the quality of evaluation reports. We encourage Management to further seek a balanced skill mix within its decentralized architecture to enable sufficient capacity for gender responsive evaluation.

With regard to the Implementation rate of planned evaluation, we note that one quarter of planned evaluations have been cancelled or postponed. Key impediments have been identified and we encourage Management to adjust further planning according to lessons learned. We welcome adjustments made on corporate evaluations related to organizational effectiveness at country and regional levels as well as on strategic partnerships to inform the midterm review of the strategic plan.

We take note of the absence of improvement on the percentage of management response key actions being implemented and would like to invite management to increase its efforts to improve towards the target set. On decentralized evaluation we are confident that UN Women is setting the right standards and providing the necessary guidance to country offices. In this context, we would also like to highlight the importance of the upcoming meta-analysis of UN Women evaluations.

Finally, with reference to the evaluation performance indicator of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, current reporting demonstrates its relevance and the need to further raise awareness within the United Nations system entities to integrate gender equality in their evaluation. Otherwise we won't be able to track results achieved on the systemic level which would be a major failure.

Mr President,

The Corporate evaluation of the contribution of UN Women to women's economic empowerment brings important findings and recommendations with short- term and mid-term measures.

Let me highlight some issues:

On the research agenda, UN Women has certainly a key role to play in engaging multi stakeholders dialogues on gender-responsive macroeconomic policy based on existing and new research as illustrated by the progress of the world's women 2015-2016 report called “transforming economies, realizing rights”. UN Women is expected to further bring on the international agenda attention to the systemic and structural
barriers that impede women's access to economic opportunities and the realization of women's rights. Applying a rights-based approach to Women Economic Empowerment is certainly an important way that would increase the connection and coherence between operations and normative commitments.

UN Women has a recognized profile in providing assistance to countries willing to have gender responsive national development plans or poverty reduction strategies as well as gender sensitive public financing. Surely continuous knowledge sharing and additional experiences from programs are needed to advice on policy actions and public resources for gender equality. Operational activities related to Women Economic Empowerment and supported through the UN Women Trust Fund on Gender Equality should further inform overall programming. We encourage cooperation with International financial institutions, such as the World Bank and the Regional Development Banks, to find appropriate ways for scaling up.

On sectoral issues, such as access to productive and financial resources, social insurance or work conditions, we strongly encourage UN Women to continue its evidence based research and advocacy related to structural barriers and strengthen its cooperation with key partners who can bring complementary technical expertise related to financing instruments or standards. Those approaches at different levels could be compatible or adjustable and reinforce each other's in transformative economies.

We strongly support the recommendation for the establishment of a clear vision, strategic focus, and theory of change for UN Women's work on Women Economic Empowerment to ensure that a common institutional direction is communicated throughout the organization. We welcome Management response emphasizing the development of a comprehensive strategy for economic empowerment and associated flagship programs that would enable UN Women's to position itself in terms of its normative and operational approach to Women Economic Empowerment.

Thank you.