Statement of Switzerland

Executive Board of UN WOMEN
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ITEM 3 EVALUATION
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Mr. President

I am pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom and my own country Switzerland.

We will focus on key selected lessons and recommendations of the three reports presented to us to further shape UN Women response to its mandate and in view of the midterm evaluation of its strategic plan next year.

With reference to the coordination mandate of UN Women to promote gender mainstreaming within the UN system, we commend the review of Corporate gender equality in the United Nations System. It sets the baseline of gender mainstreaming before the implementation of the United Nations System Wide Action Plan for Gender Equality and the empowerment of women. The insights and conclusions need to be shared and discussed by all UN entities.

The UN SWAP is the central tool for mainstreaming gender equality and the empowerment of women in the UN system. We are encouraged by the validation of UN SWAP performance indicators which target key gaps and challenges for gender mainstreaming. Therefore the use of UN SWAP as an evaluative framework appears to be pertinent and increase coherence among entity gender equality evaluation.

Let me stress some key conclusions which request attention from Management:

Gender equality policies need to be further grounded and contextualized within United Nations entity mandates and strategic planning documents both at the corporate and country level to increase relevance and effective implementation.
Improvements are needed to better link gender mainstreaming monitoring to the overall organizational monitoring system, in particular at the outcome level.

Program review processes should integrate Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women as criteria more systematically and compliance should be considered a key condition for approval.

To strengthen staff accountability for integrating a gender lens in their work, performance review need to integrate a gender related indicator. Gender parity at all levels should be further promoted by addressing barriers which are largely known.

A key institutional issue is the gender architecture: how efficient and effective are the working modalities to institutionalize gender mainstreaming? We believe that each entity is best placed to define its own model and could rely on UN Women guidance when needed.

It is important to further address the specific challenges for gender mainstreaming in humanitarian settings given the increased vulnerabilities of women and girls related to security, protection and discrimination.

In terms of guidance for gender mainstreaming, we would also like to raise our concerns with the risks of proliferation of new tools as a number of tools do exist and implementation should be the focus of our attention.

With reference to the meta-analysis of evaluations conducted by the Independent Evaluation Office, some learning presented would be rather expected to be already included in project design and implementation, such as national ownership, country level analysis, capacity assessment and development.

We would like to emphasize 4 key learning to take into account in current work:

1. UN Women has proven to be more relevant and effective when focusing on the scope of its programmes. 2. Joint programmes need to be developed based on current lessons learned to manage expectations in terms of time frame, management and funding structure. 3. Multi-stakeholder plate-forms for locally driven initiatives is key to sustainability. 4. Reaching the excluded requires bottom-up approaches, in particular through the use of small grant mechanisms that reach community based organizations capable of reaching stigmatized women. We encourage UN Women Trust Fund on gender equality to further look at the inclusion of “marginalized” women and girls.
Finally on the issue of funds management and disbursement approval, we would request management to strike an appropriate balance between fiduciary risks mitigation and accessible financial procedures to implementing partners.

We welcome the report of the office of internal oversight services that examines the relevance and effectiveness of UN Women in achieving its mandate by linking its normative support work with operational activities.

One main conclusion is that UN women has enhanced the visibility of, and attention to, gender equality and the empowerment of women through its normative work, in particular at the global level. It also contributed to stronger national legislation and policies.

Supporting the implementation of norms and standards at the national level is more challenging. Results vary according to impact areas of the strategic plan. A strengthened strategic direction and coherent planning based on joint consultation among headquarters, regional and country office would help address intervention needs.

As reflected by MOPAN evaluation, we strongly encourage UN Women to further link operations at the regional and country levels and related lessons learned with policy dialogue at the global level.

To implement its large mandate, clarification is needed to staff for the operationalization of the coordination mandate. Again the UN SWAP is a crucial tool. We acknowledge the key role of UN Women in including gender specific outcomes in UNDAF. Increased used of the UN system wide network and resources on the ground and multi-stakeholders dialogues would enhance collective capacity for action and pooling of resources to further implement adopted norms. This would also help to reach out additional sectoral Ministries in some countries.

Finally, let me stress that with reference to UN women financial and human resources constraints vis-à-vis its broad mandate, it requires a collective effort from all the UN system and external actors to act for gender equality and women empowerment if we want to achieve the soon adopted Agenda 2030. UN Women is accountable to take the lead but each actor has its own responsibility and role to play if we want to close the gap between commitment and action.

Thank you.