

OUTCOME XM-DAC-41146-ESA_D_1.1

Regional actors in ESA have strengthened policies, programmes and practices on gender equality which challenge gender stereotypes and promote positive social norms

UN Women East and Southern Africa Regional Office made slight progress toward the Outcome in 2023, with three regional and sub-regional bodies adopting new policies or programmes on gender equality which challenge gender stereotypes and promote positive social norms or initiating steps toward the development of new policies and frameworks. The African Union adopted a Regional Action Plan on Ending Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) and initiated the development of a Convention to Eliminate VAWG, the Intergovernmental Authority for the Horn of Africa adopted a revised Gender Policy, the South African Development Community (SADC) approved Indicators for its GBV Scorecard as a tracking tool for SADC Member States to report on progress against the SADC Strategy and Framework of Action for Addressing Gender Based Violence (2018-2030). Member States contributed to these developments by hosting continental platforms in support of gender equality, such as the Regional Meeting of Financing for Gender Equality, hosted by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, with support from UN Women and the International Monetary Fund, or the African Union Third Conference on Positive Masculinities, hosted by the Presidency of the Republic of South Africa. Additionally, South Sudan and Botswana ratified the Maputo Protocol in 2023, following targeted advocacy by civil society organizations under the Solidarity for African Women's Rights (SOAWR) Coalition hosted by Equality Now. UN Women contributed to these developments by providing technical assistance in the review and inputs to the African Union Regional Action Plan on Ending Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) which was adopted by the Specialized Technical Committee in November 2023, supported the drafting and development processes related to the IGAD Gender Policy, as well as financially contributing to convening gender ministers from the Horn of Africa for its launch in December 2023. Through the Spotlight Initiative Africa Regional Programme, UN Women provided financial assistance to Equality Now for undertaking advocacy missions under the Solidarity for African Women's Rights (SOAWR) Coalition to countries which had not yet ratified the Maputo Protocol. Regarding the AU Regional Action Plan on Ending Violence against Women and Girls, UN Women was invited by UNDP to contribute inputs to the Plan's draft, as UNDP led the support to the African Union for developing the Plan under the Regional Spotlight Initiative. UN Women was also invited to provide inputs to the UN Horn of Africa Strategy for Hate Speech that was developed by the United Nations Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa (OSESG-HoA) in consultation with other UN agencies and partners. In the realm of advancing women, peace, and security, an apparent correlation exists between entrenched patriarchal gender roles and societal norms, impeding the realization of inclusive and sustainable pathways for peace. In response to this challenge, IGAD (Intergovernmental Authority on Development) adopted a Regional Action Plan (RAP) on Women, Peace, and Security i in 2023. The RAP strategically positions women at the forefront of the region's complex peace and security landscape. This framework not only amplifies women's voices at the regional level but also aligns with the Leave No One Behind principle, actively addressing persistent cultural and social norms that systematically marginalize women from participating in peace and security efforts. In tandem with the RAP, IGAD adopted its Gender Policy (2023-2030) ii underscoring its commitment to fostering gender equality in the region. UN Women played a pivotal role in the development of the Regional Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 and the Gender Strategy. This involvement included providing both technical expertise and financial support to IGAD throughout the drafting, finalization, and launch processes. The significant contributions of UN Women and

partners were acknowledged by the IGAD Executive Secretary iii during the Ministerial Meeting for the adoption of IGAD's Regional Gender Policy and Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security. Notably, the impact of UN Women's involvement is discernible in the incorporation of their inputs into both frameworks, marking a collaborative effort toward achieving tangible outcomes in advancing gender equality and promoting peace and security. Additionally, UN Women has actively advanced the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda by providing ongoing policy support and enhancing the institutional capacity of the International Peace Support Centre. Through a comprehensive review and adoption of the Gender Strategy, UN Women has played a key role in fostering a more conducive environment for the implementation of the WPS agenda within peace support operations in the region. This strategic collaboration has resulted in tangible improvements, strengthening the integration of gender perspectives and principles into the operational framework of peace support efforts. The engagement in the abovementioned areas reinforces the existing Theory of Change under Outcome 1.1, where the ESARO provides capacity strengthening, access to evidence, improved coordination and engagement of gender equality partners, including non-traditional actors in support of the outcome results. More attention to substantive engagement with additional regional actors identified by ESARO will be a focus area for the 2024- 2025 workplan period. The progress and measures advanced in 2023 offer the potential to bring about transformative changes in the lives of women and girls in East and Southern Africa to be safe, be represented in leadership roles, have their voices heard and have the power and access to opportunities to influence decisions affecting all aspects of their lives. Continued focus on accountability to commitments made will be essential to ensure these developments are realized.

OUTCOME XM-DAC-41146-ESA_D_1.2

Regional women's movements, networks and organizations use their voice, leadership and agency to hold duty-bearers accountable for their commitments to gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

UN Women ESARO made strong progress on the outcome in 2023. UN Women's initiatives in region have focused on empowering regional women's movements, networks, and organizations to actively engage in holding duty-bearers accountable for their commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. UN Women played a pivotal role in promoting women's economic empowerment through various activities. This included providing technical support at the GIMAC Youth Advocacy Training and partnering with iamtheCODE Foundation for a coding camp in South Africa. These initiatives equipped young women with digital literacy skills and fostered innovation for gender equality. In addition, UN Women ESARO engaged in capacity-building workshops, national-level meetings, and developed advocacy briefs related to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Collaborative efforts with organizations like Organization of Women in Trade (OWIT) focused on building capacity of private sector entities, women's organizations, and businesses to drive gender equality in trade. In response to the conflict in Sudan, UN Women facilitated advocacy platforms, and technical support groups to Sudanese women. The Kampala Feminist Declaration emerged as a key outcome, consolidating Sudanese women's priorities for peace. These efforts extended to regional and international platforms, including the AU Peace and Security Council and a side event in New York at the margins of the Open Debates. The platforms focused attention to women's participation in the peace processes identified ongoing challenges and provided practical actions and recommendations for the AU, IGAD and other key actors to enhance women's participation and leadership within Africa, with experiences and contributions of women from Sudan. UN Women actively contributed to regional coordination efforts, exemplified by its involvement in the Africa pre-CSW68 consultations. These consultations aimed at accelerating gender equality and women's empowerment by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions. The resulting Common Position Document prioritized social and political measures, gender-sensitive financial processes, and investments in women's rights institutions. Recommendations emphasized the need for unified leadership, and strategic participation in events to amplify Africa's voice at the global level. Through strategic

collaboration with the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI), UN Women has significantly enhanced its role as a thought leader in ending violence against women (EVAW). This was achieved through the development of the Africa Shared Research Agenda for ending gender-based violence (ASRA). Leveraging the influential positions of both UN Women and SVRI as key actors in Africa regarding EVAW, the ASRA capitalized on SVRI's leadership in EVAW-related research priority-setting and UN Women's convening and coordination roles across the region.

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Regional bodies in ESA hold Member States accountable for implementation of GEWE commitments

In 2023, ESARO made some progress towards this outcome area. With the technical support of UN Women regional bodies developed tools and strategies to hold member states accountable for gender equality commitments. Through UN Women support, under the women, peace and security portfolio four Regional Entities were supported including IGAD, EAC, IPSTC and ICGLR. Under each of these partnerships these regional bodies held dialogues with member states and developed strategies to reach gender equality commitments. UN Women RO continues to support the domestication of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security in the region, through the development and implementation of National Action Plan. In 2023, 2 WPS frameworks were finalized. Namely, Zimbabwe National Action Plan (2023-2027); IGAD Regional Action Plan on WPS (2023-2030). UN Women ESARO's support was also provided to the African Union to convene member states on their commitments under the CEDAW Convention and to prepare a common position for CSW68. The Africa pre-CSW68 consultations, convened jointly by UN Women Regional Office for East and Southern Africa, UN Women WCARO, UN Women Liaison Office, AU-WGYD, UNECA and UNDP Service Centre for Africa, was held in preparation for the 68th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW68) on the priority theme: Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective. The main objective of the Africa pre-CSW68 consultations was for the AU Member States, following national consultations, to contribute substantively to the negotiations towards the CSW68 Agreed Conclusions. The consultations consisted of two segments, the Experts Meeting which was attended by technical experts from Ministries in charge of Gender and Women's Affairs, Civil Society Organizations, Youth Representatives, Regional Economic Communities and UN Agencies, while the Ministerial Meeting was attended by 24 Member States. The outcome of the consultations was the Common Africa Position Document (CAPD), which highlights Africa's CSW68 key messages, priorities and recommendations in line with the Session's priority theme.

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Gender statistics, sex-disaggregated data and knowledge products are produced and used to inform policy making, advocacy and accountability for delivering results on gender equality and empowerment of women and girls in ESA region

Women Count provided technical and financial support to Instituto Nacional de Mozambique for the publication of 11 provincial reports on the situation of women and men. These reports will be made available on the INE website, as per this example in quarter 1 of 2024. These publications contain the main source of administrative data with the best regularity available in the country (annual) and first edition at provincial level that helps monitoring Government's efforts in promoting equality in Mozambique. The completion of these publications was driven by the workshop, supported by UN Women, which took place from 04th to 08th December 2023, in Ponta de Ouro. In Rwanda the Rwanda CO received financial support from the ESARO to work with the Rwanda National Institute of Statistics (NISR) to produce and publish 17 reports based

on Census data. One of these reports was the monograph on gender. All of these reports can be accessed at the link below: <https://statistics.gov.rw/datasource/fifth-population-and-housing-census-2022>

OUTCOME XM-DAC-41146-ESA_D_2.3

The UN system in ESA region is coordinated, and coherently and systematically contributes to progress on gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

With support from the RO, the UN System was strengthened in its capacity to implement the UN accountability tools for gender mainstreaming. The technical support provided to UNCTs, RCOs and GTGs also increased system wide coordination and results on GEWE in the ESA region. The support contributed to leveling up the quality of gender mainstreaming in UNCTs by increasing the number of UN staff with knowledge and skills to contribute to the implementation of the UNCT-SWAP Gender Equality Scorecard and UNCT Gender Equality Marker. The regional thematic UN interagency mechanisms were strengthened, through technical guidance and capacity building, to integrate gender and human rights dimensions in their respective priority areas. To this end, RO provided technical support in the training UN technical level staff from the six (6) countries developing new Cooperation Framework (Djibouti, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Mali, Namibia and Sierra Leone) on the integration of the human rights-based approach (HRBA)/LNOB/GEWE Guiding Principles in the design of UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) cycle. Twenty-one (21) UNCTs were trained on the use of the UNCT-SWAP Gender Equality Scorecard and the Gender Equality Marker, further strengthening the capacities of UNCTs to implement the UN accountability tools for gender mainstreaming. The training elicited further requests to UN Women for country-tailored technical support and guidance in supporting the operationalization of Gender Theme Groups in Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, and the annual and comprehensive UNCT-SWAP Scorecard reporting for Comoros, Mozambique, Kenya, Eritrea, Mauritius/Seychelles and Djibouti. With the strengthened technical capacity, Eritrea submitted their first ever UNCT-SWAP Gender Equality Scorecard report. 7 countries submitted the comprehensive UNCT-SWAP Gender Equality Scorecard (UNCT-SWAP) in the past 4 years and met or exceeded at least 60% of the UNCT-SWAP standards; Botswana (CR 2021) Malawi (CR 2021) Uganda (CR 2020) Zambia (CR 2021) Rwanda (CR 2019) Zimbabwe (CR 2022) Tanzania (CR 2022) The revised GTG standards and procedures were rolled out during a capacity strengthening session targeting gender focal points of UNCTs from the entire continent including members of the Regional Gender Thematic Groups. The training was attended by 80 participants who included 32 from ESAR (16 countries). Agencies which participated included UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF, PAM, FAO, OHCHR, UNHCR, UNW and RCOs/GTGs with particular representation of NRAs countries. The participant's knowledge on the new standards was enhanced leading to a revamping of GTGs across the UNCTs. The Regional Office continued to lead/co-lead or participate as members of the following interagency mechanisms: Regional Gender Working Group (1) Regional Collaborative Platform (RDs level) (1) UNDCO Peer Support Group (1) OIBC (1) GIHA: R-GIHA, Africa WG on DRR (2) WEE: care platform for 2024-2025 (1) WPS: UN prevention strategy platform for the Horn of Africa and Great Lakes (2) Gender Stats: Africa programme on gender stats, inter-agency gender stats COP (2) RO, through the UNDCOs Peer Support Group supported the reviewing of three Cooperation Frameworks to support integration of gender mainstreaming during the review process (Angola, Malawi and Mauritius/Seychelles). Following the technical review process, the CFs have integrated gender dimensions at outcome level. On the humanitarian front, the RO, through provision of technical support and capacity building, strengthened WLOs engagement and influence in humanitarian action. 24 WLOs were trained leading to increased knowledge for WLOs on how humanitarian systems works, communication and advocacy, fund raising and setting up of governance systems among others. Of the 24 WLOs trained, three WLOs (Women Initiative For Development Organizations- WIDO from South Sudan, CO-ACT 1325 from Uganda, Overcomers from Uganda) have utilized their enhanced capacities by cascading the training to their countries and participating in humanitarian work at their local level as well as advocacy initiatives for gender mainstreaming within humanitarian actions. One of the Organizations from Uganda (CO-ACT 1325) was part of the Global Refugee Forum to advocate for gender issues. A significant development for the Horn

of Africa, the Secretary-General's Executive Committee convened on 21 December and officially endorsed the revised UN Prevention and Integration Strategy for the region. The substantive input provided by UN Women played a pivotal role in shaping the strategy, particularly in advancing the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda and integrating gender considerations. This strategic approach positions the UN to adopt a two-pronged approach in advancing the WPS agenda within the strategy's implementation: 1) WPS as a stand-alone priority under the revised pillar on regional peace and security and governance, emphasizing its intrinsic importance; and 2) Mainstreaming gender and the WPS agenda across all pillars and priority areas, ensuring a comprehensive and integrated approach to address the unique experiences, needs and priorities of women in the Horn of Africa region. This deliberate strategy ensures that gender and WPS agenda are integrated in the UN strategy, amplifying the impact of UN efforts, and collectively contributing to the overarching goal of fostering peace, security, and inclusive and sustainable development in the Horn of Africa.