


SDC FACTSHEET MULTILATERAL ORGANISATIONS

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 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC



SWITZERLAND AND THE UNITED NATIONS ENTITY FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (UN WOMEN)

FACTS AND FIGURES

Mandate

UN Women is the United Nations entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women. It acts on three fronts: UN Women supports international political negotiations to formulate globally agreed standards for gender equality; it helps UN Member States to implement those standards by providing expertise and financial support; it assists other parts of the UN system in their efforts to advance gender equality across a broad spectrum of issues related to human rights and human development.

Type of organisation

UN organisation with normative, operational and co-ordination functions

Institution

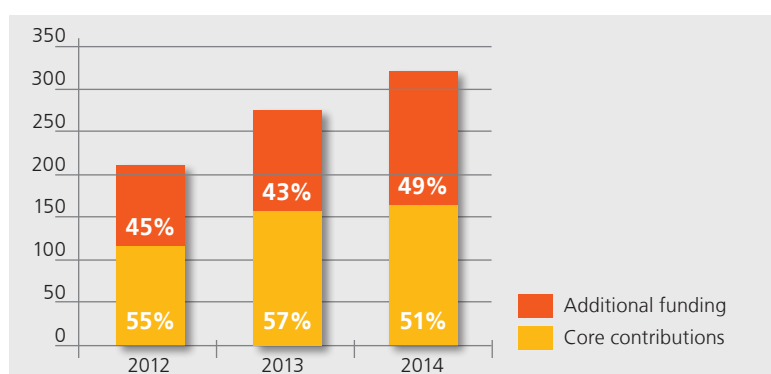
- **Head of organisation:** Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka (South Africa)
- **Headquarters:** New York
- **Number of country offices:** 47 country offices, 6 multi-country offices, 6 regional offices, and programme presences in 30 countries
- **Number of staff:** 431 (145 at headquarters and 286 in the field offices)
- **Established in:** 2010
- **Board:** Executive Board with 41 rotating members (Switzerland is a member in the rotation period 2013–2015)

Switzerland (2014)

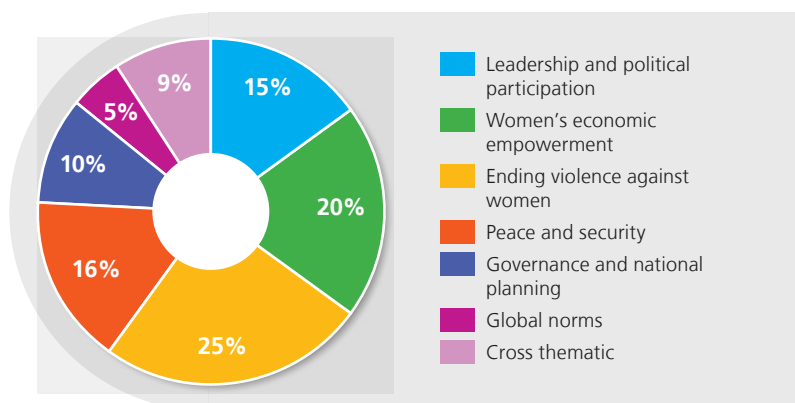
- **Annual financial contribution**
 - Core contribution: CHF 14 million
 - Additional funding: CHF 8.59 million
- **Number of Swiss staff:** 6

Website: www.unwomen.org

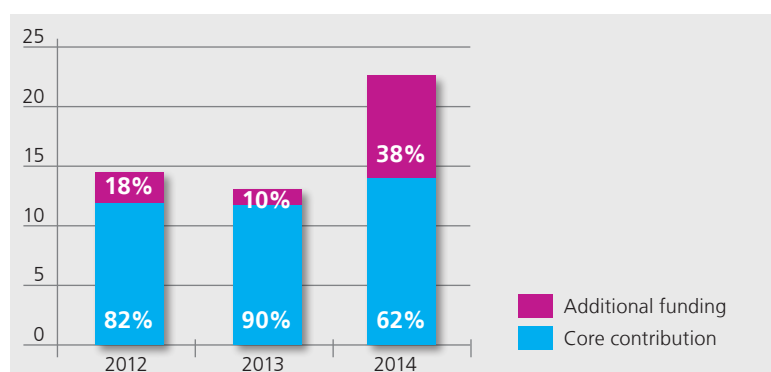
UN Women total revenues (in CHF million)



UN Women expenditure by focus area (2014)



Switzerland's contributions (in CHF million)



UN WOMEN

Mandate

UN Women is the United Nations entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women. Created as part of the UN reform process in 2010, it was established to accelerate the elimination of discrimination against women and girls and the attainment of equality between women and men.

UN Women grew out of the merger of the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW).

Despite progress towards gender equality, gender disparities and discrimination against women and girls remain a reality in areas such as political participation and leadership, economic opportunities and wages, unpaid household and care work, and violence against women and girls.

To address these challenges UN Women has a triple mandate:

1. Normative: to support inter-governmental bodies, such as the Commission on the Status of Women, in their formulation of policies, global standards and norms to achieve gender equality.
2. Operational: to help Member States implement these standards by providing advice on legislation, policies, strategies and programmes, as well as technical and financial support, and by forging effective partnerships with civil society to reduce gender disparities.
3. UN system coordination: to promote, coordinate and monitor the efforts of the entire UN system to advance the full realisation of gender equality and women's rights and opportunities based on the UN system's commitments in this regard.

Medium-term objectives

Founded on the vision of equality enshrined in the UN Charter, UN Women's strategic goals for 2014-2017 are the following:

- Women lead and participate in decision making at all levels.
- Women, especially the poorest and most excluded, are economically empowered and benefit from development.
- Women and girls live a life free from violence.
- Peace and security and humanitarian action are shaped by women's leadership and participation.
- Governance and national planning fully reflect accountability for gender equality commitments and priorities.
- A comprehensive and dynamic set of global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and women's empowerment is in place and is applied through action by governments and other stakeholders at all levels.

Results

With its triple mandate UN Women is uniquely positioned to accelerate progress in reducing discrimination against women. As the following examples show programmes in all the regions of the world reported promising results, contributing to the achievement of UN Women's strategic objectives.

Increasing women's leadership and participation

UN Women supports countries' efforts to increase women's political leadership. It helps provide women with opportunities to cultivate skills as candidates and effective politicians and to ensure that election management takes women's concerns into account. In 2014, UN Women was active in this respect in more than 60 countries. In Bolivia, for example, engagement with the electoral tribunal and UN partners to ensure political parties comply with new regulations on gender parity led to spectacular results in the 2014 elections. Bolivia became the third country in the world to reach gender parity in its lower house (51%). Elections in Guinea Bissau in 2014 provided an opportunity to consolidate the fragile stability following earlier political violence. UN Women helped ensure that the process also boosted the number of women involved. Over 4,000 women benefited from civic education, several hundred were trained as election monitors, and fifty women ran for office.

Enhancing women's economic empowerment

More women in the labour market speeds up growth. Even though this is uncontested, many women can find only poorly paid informal jobs, unprotected by labour laws and without social benefits. In 2014, UN Women assisted 76 countries in making economies work better for women. This was achieved by providing women with new skills and technology, designing gender-responsive policies on equal opportunities between men and women and guaranteeing social protection.

UN Women also helped to foster climate resilience since poverty, gender discrimination and climate shocks interact in dramatic ways. In the 10 poorest and most vulnerable districts of Bangladesh for example, UN Women formed disaster-resilience groups to learn about the impact of climate change and how to minimise risks. The poorest members received training and input to start small businesses, such as rearing chickens and goats and marketing handicrafts.

An important instrument for fostering women's political and economic empowerment is the Fund for Gender Equality, which is supported by Switzerland. The fund is committed to supporting innovative and high-impact programmes that yield concrete results in the lives of women, especially those who are marginalised (including rural women, young women, domestic workers and indigenous women), their families and communities. In the last five years, the Fund for Gender Equality has successfully awarded USD 56.5 million to 96 grantee programmes in 72 coun-



Upland women weed their rice fields, an integrated method of agro-forestry. Bokeo Province of Laos. (© UN Women/ Lamphay Inthakoun)

tries. To date, such programmes have reached 9.4 million women, girls and boys as direct beneficiaries. The fund enables grassroots initiatives to materialise through financial and technical support. Civil society organisations receive training and coaching to manage their programme and track results.

Ending violence against women and girls

Violence against women and girls has climbed up global security agendas. Dedicated action by women's rights advocates has made it a subject of new laws and policies in many countries. Still, gender-based and sexual violence remains a global problem, and during 2014 UN Women assisted 80 countries in fighting it.

UN Women, together with UNFPA, leads a UN joint programme to boost globally the availability and quality of essential services for women and girls who have been subjected to violence. By the end of 2014, it had developed standards for health care, police and judicial responses, which will be tested in 10 countries. In Rwanda for example, UN Women helped to build centres to provide medical, legal, psychosocial and protective services to support victims of violence.

Engaging women in peace and security responses

From 1992 to 2011, only 9% of negotiators at peace tables were women. Exclusion from post-conflict reconstruction limits opportunities to recover, gain justice for abuses and shape legal reforms and public institutions. UN Women seeks to strengthen women's role in peace, security and humanitarian responses. In 2014, activities in peacebuilding included training courses for judges, prosecutors and investigators on

dealing with war crimes involving sexual violence in Kosovo. In Colombia, UN Women supported women's efforts to participate in peace talks by providing training in negotiation.

Making national, sectoral and local plans and budgets more gender responsive

In 2014, UN Women supported 73 countries in their efforts to introduce or strengthen a gender perspective in their national, sectoral and local development plans, budgets and/or performance monitoring frameworks. In Jordan, UN Women advocated for gender-responsive budgeting, which was decided in 2013 and implemented in 2014. Budget allocations for gender equality increased from USD 1.9 billion in 2013 to USD 2.15 billion in 2014 and include a gender dimension in all ministry plans and budgets. In India, UN Women helped the Ministry of Rural Development to insert comprehensive provisions on reaching women in economic empowerment programmes, covering core issues such as rural livelihoods, employment, social protection and housing.

SWITZERLAND

UN Women's priorities and activities, namely the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment, correspond one-to-one with Swiss strategic priorities as outlined in the Federal Council's Dispatch to Parliament on International Cooperation 2013 – 2016. Switzerland not only consented to the resolution that led to the creation of UN Women but was very actively engaged in the negotiations that resulted in the adoption of this resolution. As a UN Member State, Switzerland committed itself to the goals contained in UN Women's mandate. Moreover, the promotion of equality between women and men in all UN organisations, which is part of UN Women's mandate, is one of Switzerland's priorities.

With the focus on the most disadvantaged and poorest, and given the positive effect that gender equality can have on economic growth and inclusive development, Switzerland's contribution to UN Women is also consistent with the cross-cutting priority of reducing poverty.

Switzerland's medium-term objectives

In 2014–2017 Switzerland is pursuing the following goals:

- Strengthening the capacities and increasing the impact of UN Women with regard to women's political participation, leadership, gender-responsive public planning and budgeting, economic empowerment as well as ending violence against women;
- Strengthening the role of UN Women in achieving more effective and efficient UN-system coordination and reform to promote gender equality;
- Encouraging UN Women to develop strategic partnerships and plan joint programmes with other UN organisations and the World Bank.



A woman casts her ballot at a rural polling station in Catembe (Mozambique) on the second day of the elections. (© UN Photo/ Pernaca Sudhakaran)

- Improving the operational effectiveness of UN Women and institutionalising a strong culture of results-based management, monitoring, reporting, knowledge management and evaluation.

Results of Swiss cooperation with UN Women

Switzerland played an important role in the creation of UN Women and is very actively involved in the UN Women Executive Board. Its experience and in-depth knowledge of the operational context and UN reform process are broadly recognised and contribute to its solid reputation within the UN Women's Executive Board management.

Some of the specific results of Swiss cooperation:

- Switzerland was an active promoter of efficient and effective coordination and programming both within UN Women's work and within the whole UN system. Coherence was strengthened through policy dialogue as well as through Switzerland's engagement with the Executive Board to foster the development of joint UN Country Team programmes on gender equality.
- Switzerland contributed substantially to incorporating a stand-alone sustainable development goal to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in the post-2015 agenda. Switzerland further advocated for the integration of gender-specific targets throughout the whole sustainable development framework.
- Through its political dialogue and the facilitation of contacts at the country level, Switzerland contributed to strengthening UN Women's cooperation with the World Bank and other UN organisations.
- Switzerland contributed to developing UN Women's evaluation policy and to strengthening the effectiveness of UN Women by financing training for its staff in evaluating and monitoring results. Switzerland also established partnerships with the Evaluation Office to strengthen results-based management.

- Switzerland's participation in the dialogue of the like-minded donor (Utstein) group enhances a common understanding on gender mainstreaming issues.

With its core contribution of CHF 14 million for 2014, Switzerland is among the four biggest donors to UN Women. Given its expertise on the UN system and experiences from its bilateral cooperation in the field, Switzerland is active in sharing knowledge and best practices. Promoting gender equality, women's rights and development policies for women's empowerment is one of Switzerland's priorities in its multilateral engagement and international commitments.

Swiss National Committee of UN Women

In addition to the support of the Swiss government for UN Women, the Swiss National Committee of UN Women, a Swiss non-governmental organisation, plays an important role in informing the Swiss public about UN Women, mobilising Swiss private enterprises to sign the Women's Empowerment Principles, and collecting financial support for projects to end violence against women. For more information see www.unwomen.ch.

UN WOMEN CHALLENGES

One of the challenges that UN Women is facing is to ensure regular core funding to enable it to carry out its mandate. Switzerland is playing a key role in prioritising its contribution to core funding.

Strengthening expertise in the field and using its coordination mandate to further promote gender equality in the normative and operational work of the UN system are key tasks. Using synergies and building partnerships with development actors, the private sector and civil society are necessary to gain the necessary outreach and means to achieve gender equality.

Achieving gender equality requires awareness and a change in mindset to address prevalent gender gaps caused by discriminatory practices, norms and social values. This is why engaging men and boys is essential for bringing together one half of humanity in support of the other for the benefit of all.

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