

UN Women is the UN organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women, with the primary purpose of accelerating progress toward meeting the needs of women and girls worldwide.

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls worldwide. It works globally to make the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals a reality for women and girls, and stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, prioritizing five strategic outcomes. Beginning with the foundational work of UN Women, to support the strengthening and implementation of a comprehensive and dynamic set of **global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women**; and by contributing to the interdependent and interconnected outcomes: **women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems; women have income security, decent work and economic autonomy; all women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence; and women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience, and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and humanitarian action**. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work on advancing gender equality.

Cover: **On the road towards “feminist excellence”**

UN Women's management from country offices, regional offices and headquarters came together from 18 to 20 January 2021 for three-half-day discussions about priority issues for our organization. Topics discussed included the Generation Equality Forum and Action Coalitions, improving our accountability and operational effectiveness, as well as building a diverse and respectful workplace. The final day also examined how we can achieve greater focus, impact and scale in our work. Graphic Recording by Angelique McAlpine, [DrawingImpact.com](https://drawingimpact.com)

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FOREWORD

BY UN WOMEN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The year 2020 ended UN Women's first decade amidst a set of unprecedented challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. From the start of the crisis, it was clear that women and girls everywhere faced distinct challenges; as the majority of frontline responders in healthcare jobs and as unpaid caregivers in families and communities; as workers in jobs that lack social protection and that have been lost at alarming rates; and as victims of a shadow pandemic of gender-based violence. Thanks to early and increased regular resource contributions UN Women had the capacity and flexibility to respond nimbly to these unanticipated needs. We are grateful to our funding partners who had the vision and will to step up when it was needed most.

UN Women first drew attention to the gendered dimensions of the crisis by producing rapid and robust sex-disaggregated data underpinning a series of global policy briefs on the gender-related fallout from the crisis. We sounded the alarm about the shadow pandemic of violence against women and girls and the need for an increased focus on social protection and infrastructure to address the growing care crisis, and we supported rapid gender assessments documenting the health, employment and poverty impacts of the pandemic. We shared these findings far and wide, including through massive outreach on social media and worked closely with the UN system, national and local policymakers, women's networks and organizations and businesses to translate them into concrete response and recovery measures. This report presents selected highlights of this work.

None of UN Women's contributions in this time of crisis would have been possible without regular resources. These funds enabled UN Women to kickstart immediate response and recovery initiatives, while maintaining the staffing and organizational infrastructure that sustain our global reach. Without regular resources, women and girls around the world in 2020 would have had fewer options to seek protection from gender-based violence, to access social protection and emergency relief, to

find alternative employment or restore their livelihoods, to reach critical healthcare services or to shape decisions about policies and financing to support the recovery.

In 2021, the burden of the pandemic has begun to ease in some parts of the world but continues to worsen in others. As the leading global champion of gender equality and women's empowerment with a presence in 88 countries and territories, UN Women will continue rallying people to act on the complex gender dimensions of the crisis. As we enter our second decade, UN Women will also bring urgent attention to getting back on track to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In many countries this will require making up for time and progress lost over the past year, as well as setting a more ambitious course for change moving forward.

For UN Women, the challenge of COVID-19, while immense, opened opportunities to channel our efforts into building back a better world; one that is greener, gender-equal and inclusive. We look forward to realizing this vision together with your continued core support.

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka

*United Nations Under-Secretary-General and
Executive Director, UN Women*

MAKING THE CASE FOR REGULAR RESOURCES

As the COVID-19 pandemic ballooned from a global health emergency into a socioeconomic crisis, it underscored the need for flexible, reliable regular resources as never before. UN Women drew on this pool of unrestricted funds to keep its programmes going while pivoting to meet the challenges of the outbreak. Regular resources meant the response could be fast, comprehensive and far-reaching, as the situation demanded.

UN Women was able to influence global, regional and national attention to the many gender dimensions of the pandemic as soon as they emerged, working tirelessly with governments, the United Nations system and civil society organizations in 88 countries and through six regional offices. Up-to-the-minute data and evidence affirmed the drastic consequences of the pandemic for women and girls, shaping policy responses and helping to sustain and target the delivery of essential services.

This evidence-based approach proved particularly critical in the face of the “shadow pandemic” of violence against women and girls that escalated during lockdowns. UN Women invoked the powerful moral authority of the United Nations Secretary-General in urging a global “ceasefire” in homes around the world. It led United Nations country teams in integrating gender-based violence, as well as issues such as women’s livelihood losses and disproportionate burden of unpaid care in 85 out of 108 country-level socioeconomic response plans. These serve as blueprints for continued national and UN country team responses to the pandemic around the world.

While influencing global and national action, UN Women also used regular resources to maintain programmes providing direct support to women amid the economic downturn. It kept open shelters for survivors of gender-based violence, and met humanitarian needs where conflicts and natural disasters exacerbated the effects of the pandemic.

If COVID-19 brought into sharp relief the value of regular resources, the case for this flexible funding source has long been clear. As the only United Nations entity fully dedicated to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women, UN Women should be adequately funded with resources that underpin global advocacy and coordination, and respond to ongoing and emerging needs.

This is true in times of crisis yet applies more broadly. Achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment is a complex undertaking, with many variations across countries and even the people within them. Making investment choices that carefully and efficiently respond to these differences, and convincing an array of other partners across societies to do the same, will be the only way that women and girls everywhere will gain equal rights, equal opportunities and equal resources. And that in turn will determine all hopes for realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is not achievable without gender equality.

Among all categories of investment, regular resources go furthest in making UN Women a strong global champion of women’s rights and empowerment. As repeatedly demonstrated during the pandemic, regular resources enable continuous and impactful calls for gender equality on multiple levels and across diverse constituencies. They make possible cutting-edge research and the extra measures required to effectively reach women and girls left furthest behind.

Regular resources also buttress the global management and leadership that are the backbone of UN Women’s global reach, making all of UN Women’s results possible, including in combination with earmarked other resources. Regular resources also embody the core multilateral values of the United Nations, signifying neutrality and independence, and a promise to act according to priorities set by women and girls themselves.

Over the last year, UN Women proved to be the only global organization that could rally continued attention to and action on gender equality and women’s empowerment despite the crushing pressures of COVID-19. As an organization increasingly oriented around partnerships, it brought people and organizations together to achieve scale and impact. Through its persuasive leadership, ministries of finance, international financial institutions and major businesses were among those putting a central emphasis on gender issues in the pandemic recovery.

Much remains to be done in building forward better. But at a time when the imperative for deep-seated transformation, including through achieving gender equality, is widely understood and desired, UN Women is poised to continue pushing agendas. With its partners and a firm foundation of regular resources, it will continue making a lasting difference for women and girls in every corner of the world.



Nuria Temirbek kyzy, local leader from Ak-Zhar village in rural Kyrgyzstan. UN Women provided trainings to more than 93 women in remote areas of Kyrgyzstan in entrepreneurship, business development and leadership skills. Photo UN Women/Alisher Aliev

OVERVIEW OF REVENUE, 2020

FIG. 1 CONTRIBUTIONS TO REGULAR RESOURCES, 2011-2020

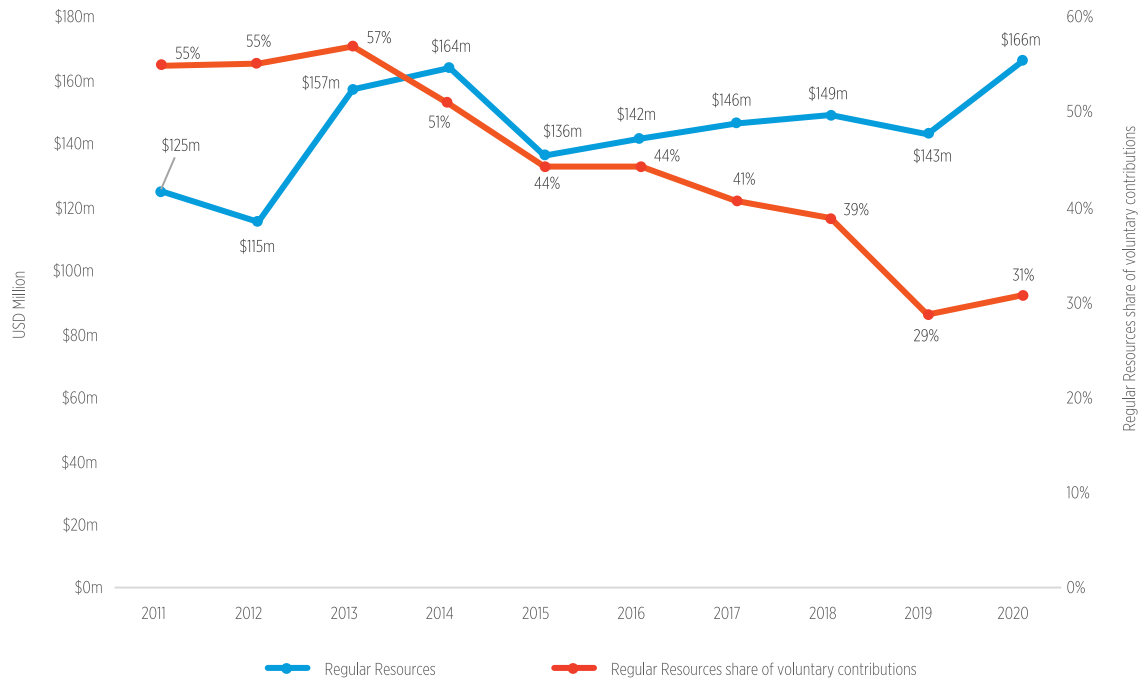
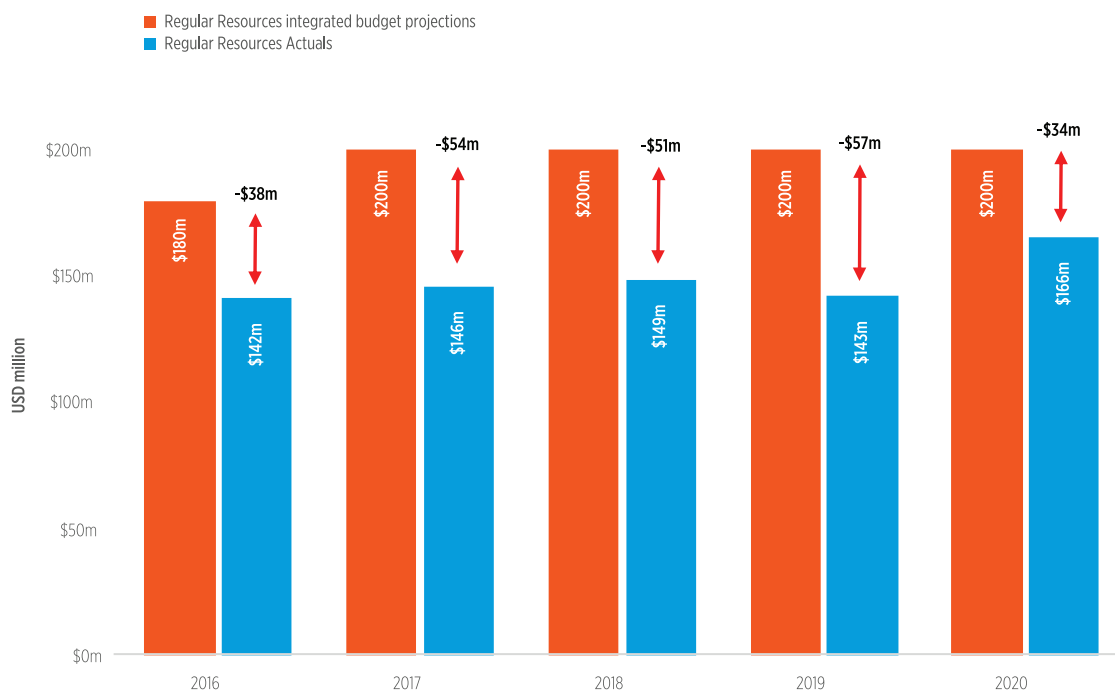
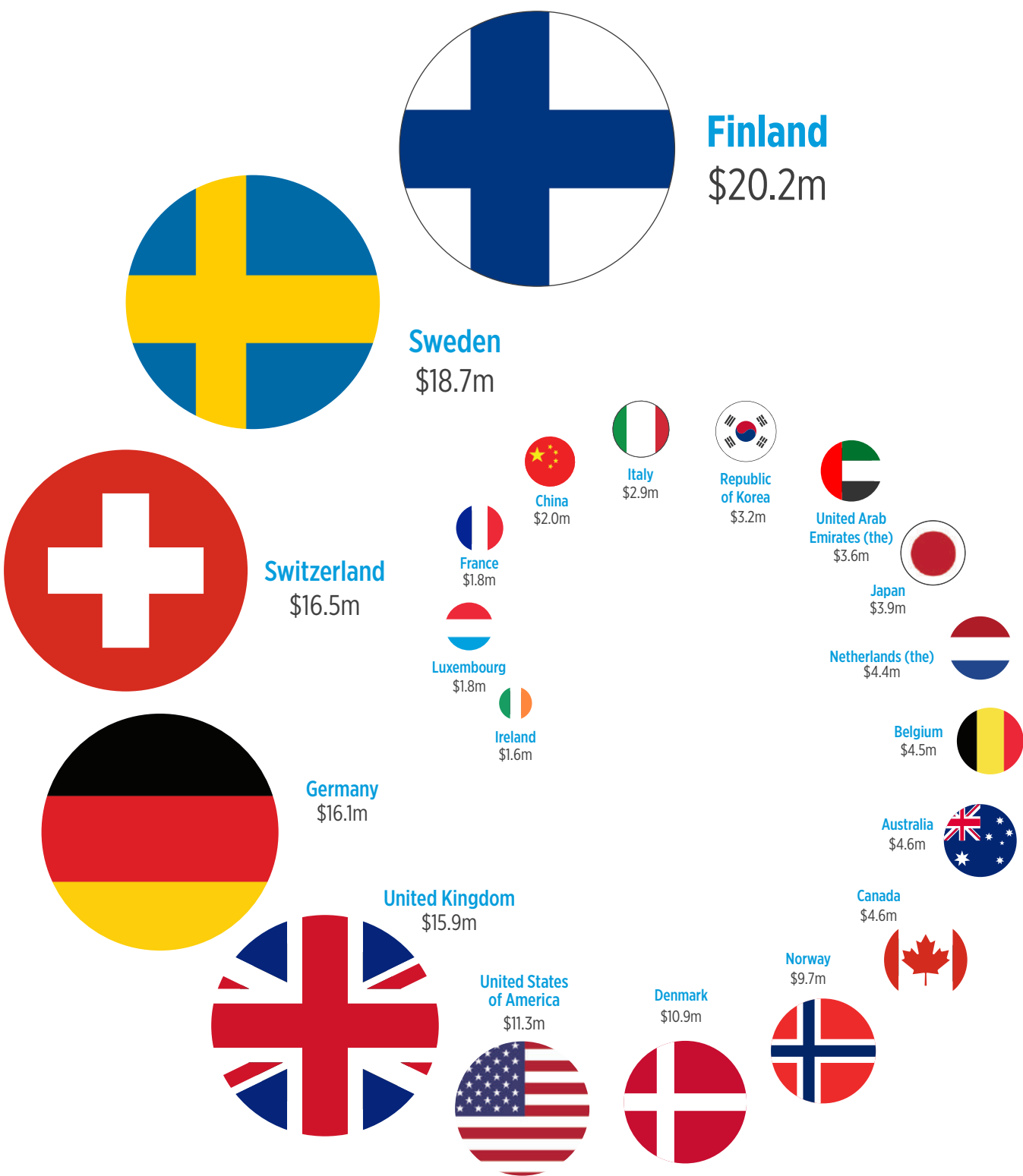


FIG. 2 REGULAR RESOURCES INTEGRATED BUDGET PROJECTIONS VS ACTUAL CONTRIBUTIONS, 2016-2020



COMMITTED TO THE CORE

FIG. 3 TOP 20 REGULAR RESOURCES PARTNERS, 2020
(IN USD MILLION)



EXPENDITURE, 2020

Regular resources expenditure in 2020 totalled USD 144.51 million. (Figure 4). Spending was greatest on programme implementation, technical support and stewardship, at 46 per cent of the total, followed by leadership on normative and coordination work as well as management, at 31 per cent. A smaller share went to partnership, communication and resource mobilization activities at 13 per cent; United Nations, intergovernmental and civil society coordination stood at 6 per cent, while policy, knowledge and results management, hovered at 4 per cent.

Figure 5, on regular resources spending by region and programmatic category, presents the funding flow, highlighting the top 20 partners in 2020. On the lower part are donors listed in descending order. The middle section in blue shows regular resources and distribution by region, with each region appearing in a different colour. On the top are nodes representing the five expenditure categories (similar to those in Figure 4). For example, the East and Southern Africa region is green, and its largest regular resources expenditure is on programme implementation, technical support and stewardship, followed by leadership on normative and coordination work as well as management.

FIG. 4 REGULAR RESOURCES EXPENDITURE BY CATEGORY

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION, TECHNICAL SUPPORT AND STEWARDSHIP - 46%

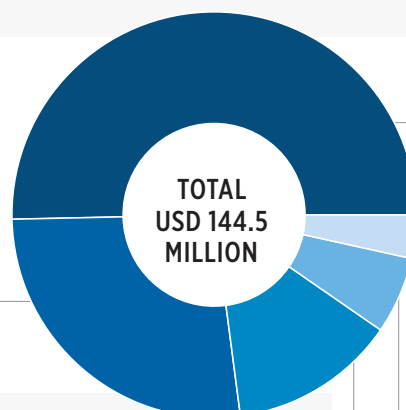
Administration and stewardship of over USD 330 million and over 400 active donor agreements with over 1,000 reporting commitments. Seed funding, support, and oversight for over 1,200 ongoing programmes spread over 12 thematic areas over 450 outcomes and tracking over 2,200 indicators. Thematic experts providing technical guidance, and leading knowledge management, training and capacity development for programme development and implementation.

LEADERSHIP ON COORDINATION AND NORMATIVE WORK AND ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT - 31%

Leadership for the implementation of the triple mandate globally and across 6 regional, 5 multi-country, 52 country, 29 programme and 8 liaison offices. Management, mentorship and supervision of over 1,000 staff and over 2,200 contractors, experts and interns.

PARTNERSHIPS, COMMUNICATIONS AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION - 13%

Partnership with 90 Member States, 12 national committees, 24 UN entities and 4,445 private sector companies, signatories of the Women Empowerment Principles in 2020, including 37 providing financial contributions to



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