

UN80 INITIATIVE | UNITED TO DELIVER

Executive Board Requests under the UN80 Initiative

Further evidence and analysis on both the merger scenario and on alternative options to enhance alignment, impact and efficiency

Deliverable – Country, Regional & Programmatic Implications Assessment

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United Nations
Population Fund



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Executive Summary

Assessment purpose and key messages

Why this

- The Executive Boards requested an assessment of the country, regional and programmatic implications of a potential merger of UNFPA and UN Women and of the jointly developed alternative options, without recommending a preferred path.
- Earlier analyses focused on strategy and design; this assesses how the merger and the alternatives would affect delivery in countries and regions.

Key messages

1

Programme priorities are largely complementary; documented overlap is concentrated

- UNFPA and UN Women hold distinct, complementary mandates and both deliver operationally: UNFPA on SRHR and population, UN Women on gender equality and women's rights and empowerment, across normative, coordination and operational work.
- Documented overlap is concentrated in EVAWG/GBV and gender data; humanitarian action is a shared operating context, not a standalone overlap. This is where joint delivery adds most value at country level, and where distinct delivery should be preserved.

2

On GBV/EVAWG, the field calls for Board-reviewed, HQ-driven joint framework

- Some interviewees supported development of a joint framework. This constitutes stakeholder input rather than agreement by the two organizations or their Executive Boards. The immediate option is therefore limited to a mutually agreed process to explore the framework's possible scope, roles, financing, accountability and relationship to existing architecture.
- The key ask is clarity on division of labor and common rules of engagement, particularly on aligned financing and resource mobilization for programmes, while preserving the respective roles of both organizations, including UNFPA's IASC-mandated humanitarian roles, UN Women's leadership of Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA), and UN Women's Security Council-mandated role on women, peace and security.

3

UN80 reforms are reshaping country and regional presence in parallel

- UNCT reconfiguration and the regional reset are already changing country and regional presence, and both agencies are engaged across the work packages.
- Any option must connect to these reforms at country and regional level rather than run separately from them, or it risks duplicating structures already changing.

4

No single model fits every country

- UNFPA and UN Women differ in country presence and depth, from full offices to non-resident arrangements, so the starting point is not the same everywhere.
- What works in a large, fully staffed country does not work in a small or non-resident one; arrangements must be adapted to each country's context, presence and capacity. Civil society consultations similarly emphasized adapting arrangements to country context while safeguarding mandate-specific delivery, programme continuity, and partnerships and funding for local women's organizations.

5

The regional level is central to delivery, not a coordination layer

- A great deal can be built at regional level to advance both mandates, provided it delivers tangible, solution-focused support such as systematic joint regional programmes on data and policy engagement.
- Regional structures need to lead collaborative approaches, not act as an additional coordination layer.

6

Institutional culture will make or break any option

- Change management is essential, and the real tensions between UNFPA and UN Women must be addressed openly.
- Beyond tone at the top: a dedicated change programme, clear new ways of working and feedback mechanisms across both agencies, which could become a model for the wider UN80 reform.

Executive Summary

What the evidence shows for the merger and each alternative option*

The following sets out the main finding and implication for the merger and for each of the alternative options, based on the documents reviewed and interviews conducted.

	Speed of Implementation	Potential Benefits & enabling conditions		Feasibility & Key risks	Indicative rating
Structural Merger	Medium/long-term (3 to +4 years). Requires Member State decision, legal and governance changes, and transition across global, regional and country levels.	- Single institutional platform across gender equality, women's rights, SRHR and population – with the ability to harmonize theories of change and introduce a full life cycle offering across the UN System - Consolidates the core benefits associated with integrated country delivery, EVAWG/GBV collaboration, and combined data, analytics and foresight capabilities within a single institutional platform. - Integrated regional and country-level delivery and accountability of a consistent set of outcomes and Key Performance Indicators; single chain of command on thematic areas where both Organizations interact (e.g., EVAWG/GBV and data capabilities) - Integrated approach to institutional engagement with governments, UNCTs and donors across geographies; coherent representation models across countries and, if funding remains at least at the same levels, increased representation capacity - Enabling conditions include preserving mandate-specific expertise, protecting continuity of delivery and sequencing transition carefully.		- Requires General Assembly decision, which necessitates safeguards on business continuity and mandate protection (reflected in CSO statements) - Transition effort to align structures and operating models at regional and country levels - Benefits depend on preserving mandate-specific expertise and partnerships - Host-country agreement renegotiation may be needed.	Medium to high. General Assembly decision, mandate protection, host-country agreement renegotiation, transition costs and continuity risks.
	Speed of Implementation	Potential Benefits & enabling conditions	Feasibility & Key risks	Indicative rating	
Alternative Option	Integrated Country-Level Delivery	Short to medium (1-3 years). Can build on existing mandates, UNSDCF/CPD cycles, country workplans and common premises where relevant.	- More consistent joint engagement with governments and UNCTs - More coherent planning, programming and accountability - Improved country-level coordination while preserving separate mandates - Enabling conditions include country-context adaptation, leadership commitment, RC/UNCT alignment and clear accountability.	- Success depends on country context and sustained leadership commitment at regional and country levels - Requires clear accountability and alignment with existing UN80 and UNSDCF processes - Continued coordination requirements across two separate institutions may create transaction costs and limit consistency of implementation across countries	Medium. Risk of added coordination burden, uneven uptake across countries and transaction costs if arrangements are not aligned with existing UN80 and UNSDCF processes.
	Joint EVAWG / GBV Framework	Medium (1-4 years). Can start through a mutually agreed process, but full implementation depends on agreed scope, governance, roles, financing and accountability.	- Potential for more coherent action in jointly agreed areas. Any division of labor, shared outcomes or accountability arrangements remain to be negotiated and agreed. - Potential for improved programme coherence in selected areas, subject to mandate-based roles, financing, country context and evidence that additional coordination does not outweigh the benefits. - Potential to increase coordinated engagement between the two agencies with women's rights organizations and partners - Enabling conditions include agreement by both organizations, mandate-based role allocation and sustained leadership.	- Requires agreed governance arrangements and Executive Board support - Benefits depend on sustained leadership commitment and implementation discipline - Joint planning, decision-making and programming may increase transaction costs, slow implementation and lead to uneven uptake across countries - Over time, continued implementation requires sustained leadership (global, regional and country levels), aligned incentives, financing, accountability mechanisms and continued coordination across two separate institutions	Low to high. Risks include transaction-heavy joint programming, unclear role allocation, duplicated coordination architecture and uneven country-level implementation if governance and accountability are not defined.
	Data, Analytics & Foresight	Short to Medium (1-3 years). Faster where existing platforms can be used. Can be phased through existing data systems, regional expertise and national data-system support.	- Robust joint evidence offer for governments, RCs and UNCTs, including joint strategy to engage other UNCT members across contexts, particularly in humanitarian settings or Humanitarian-development-peace nexus - Combines demographic, population and gender data expertise to develop joint analytics, foresight and evidence-based advocacy - Create opportunities for joint investment with the private sector (e.g. joint foresight data hub) - Enabling conditions include interoperable systems, common methodologies, data governance, financing and country uptake.	- Requires interoperable systems, data governance and sustained investment - Maintaining separate governance and accountability structures may increase transaction costs, slow joint decision-making and reduce consistency of implementation across countries - Benefits depend on country uptake and continued alignment of priorities, governance and investment decisions across two separate institutions	Medium to high. Risks relate to data governance, risk of duplicated UN data initiatives, insufficient analytical capacity, financing gaps and uneven country demand or uptake.
Alternative options (combined package)		Medium (3-4 years). The package can avoid some legal and structural-transition requirements of a merger, but implementation is not automatic or uniformly faster.	- Strengthens collaboration across country delivery in the areas of EVAWG/GBV and data. - Creates a more coherent offer to governments, donors, RCs and UNCTs across areas of common interest - Enabling conditions include sustained leadership commitment, aligned incentives, financing and clear accountability across both organization	- Benefits remain dependent on coordination across two separate institutions - Additional governance, reporting and coordination requirements may increase transaction costs - Results depend on country uptake, implementation capacity and sustained institutional agreement on priorities and accountability	Medium. Package-level outcomes are not yet demonstrated. Risks include added transaction costs, coordination burden, accountability complexity, financing constraints and uneven implementation across countries.

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Deliverable provides additional evidence on the country, regional and programmatic implications of the reform options under consideration

Scope	Deliverable examines the country, regional and programmatic implications of the potential structural merger of UNFPA and UN Women and the jointly developed alternative options, in response to Executive Board decisions 2026/2 and 2026/16. Its objectives are to: • assess implications across the elements requested by the Boards: operational delivery, country programming, country office configurations, mandate-specific technical capacities, responsiveness to national priorities, regional operational support, and normative functions • assess these elements through eight criteria grounded in the two agencies' mandates and strategic plans (set out under Methodological approach), with mandate delivery and protection applied throughout • situate the analysis against relevant UN80 work packages: UNCT reconfiguration (WP5), Regional Reset and Regional Platforms for Integration (WP6/WP12), Expertise-on-Demand (WP8), Joint Knowledge Hubs (WP7), Unified Services Roadmap (WP14), Data (WP16) and Funding Mechanisms (WP18) • build on the Strategic Merger Assessment, the alternative options and organizational data, generating incremental value without duplication The analysis covers three of the five Strategic Areas and nine of the 18 means of implementation presented in Deliverable “Alternative Options Assessment”: 1. Integrated country delivery aligns planning and results without changing mandates or legal status 2. Joint Strategic UNFPA-UN Women EVAWG/GBV Framework 3. Enhanced SDG5 Data, Analytics, Evaluation, and Foresight Collaboration
Context	• The Strategic Merger Assessment examined the potential benefits and risks of a merger, including transition risks to delivery continuity, including SRHR services, GBV response, humanitarian capacity and population data systems • UNFPA and UN Women also jointly developed alternative options for enhanced alignment, with operational continuity set as a design condition • Both defined the rationale, the options and the high-level risks, but did not test them for delivery at country, regional and programmatic level, which is the gap 4 fills • UN80 reforms are being delivered on a separate track, not linked to this assessment, but shape the environment in which the implications will play out
Data collection tools	Documentary review: • Executive Board decisions, Strategic Merger Assessment, Alternative Options package, strategic plans, country and regional documentation, organizational data, and relevant UN reform materials. • Review of country footprint, expenditure, staffing, programme documentation, strategic notes, governance materials and other client-provided evidence. • Independent assessments and evaluations used to substantiate findings: the 2025 MOPAN assessments of UNFPA and UN Women, and the joint evaluations (UNFPA-UN Women CERF GBV grant, Spotlight Initiative, Joint Gender Programmes) Targeted interviews (52) • Interviews and consultations with UNFPA and UN Women leadership, regional directors, technical functions and operational stakeholders. Country focus consultations • Survey targeting UNFPA and UN Women representatives in a sample of 26 countries. • Targeted interviews with UN Resident Coordinators in a selected number of countries where UN Women is non-resident. • Geographic viewpoints were considered across country typologies, including joint-presence, non-resident, multi-country and thin-presence settings, and across all six regions covered by the two agencies.

Assessment approach

Methodological approach	• Assessment of institutional arrangements through a theory-of-change lens, tracing implications from governance and organizational design to operational performance and country, regional and programmatic results • Assessment of the merger and each alternative option against eight criteria*, grouped in four clusters, across global, regional and country levels: • Strategic positioning and mandate: (1) vision, mandate and strategic positioning, including comparative advantage, results leadership and culture; (2) normative and policy influence, including responsiveness to national priorities • Coordination and partnerships: (3) UN-system coordination and convening; (4) partnerships and stakeholder engagement • Delivery and results: (5) programme effectiveness and results, including capacity to deliver and data, evidence and learning; (6) service reach and country-level delivery • Resources and feasibility: (7) resources and financial sustainability; (8) feasibility, transition and speed of implementation • Attention given to mandate protection, operational continuity, political feasibility, country typologies and broader UN system collaboration • Findings are triangulated across documentary review, independent assessments and evaluations, the country survey, and targeted interviews, and validated with designated focal points from both organizations. Criteria are drawn from the two agencies' Strategic Plans 2026-2029, GA Resolution 64/289, the UN-SWAP accountability framework, the Funding Compact and the QCPR, and are substantiated by the 2025 MOPAN assessments of both agencies and the independent joint evaluations.
Limitations	The analysis should be interpreted in light of the following limitations: • Findings reflect currently available evidence, not an implementation plan, cost-benefit assessment or legal determination; the options remain proposals rather than fully designed models, so implications reflect direction and magnitude, not final configurations • Deep, context-specific analysis was not possible in the compressed timeframe (approximately 2.5 weeks); implications vary by country typology, operating environment and region, and need closer case-by-case testing. • Several benefits and risks depend on future governance and implementation choices; UNCT reconfiguration and regional reset are still at design stage, which could affect the validity of related findings. • The assessment does not evaluate risks to, or changes in, the substantive mandates of either organization. Such questions are outside the scope for this specific assessment, but have been, and will continue to be considered through a separate process involving Member States, the organizations and the Secretary-General's Office.

CSO perspectives on the deliverable's themes

The perspectives below were gathered through direct consultations and written submissions from civil society organizations, reflecting the views of women's rights and other civil society actors on the reform options and their implications.

What we heard

- Participants consistently emphasized the **importance of maintaining country-level partnerships**, specialized technical capacities and support to women's rights organizations across any reform scenario.
- Consultations reflected **broad concern about potential disruption to service delivery, humanitarian response, SRHR functions and gender equality programming** during periods of institutional transition.
- Civil society perspectives highlighted the **value of collaboration through joint programming, coordinated delivery and complementary roles**, while maintaining clear accountability arrangements.
- Many stakeholders emphasized the **importance of structured civil society engagement** and the continued inclusion of local perspectives in implementation and accountability processes.
- Participants noted that the effectiveness of reform arrangements would likely depend on their ability to **adapt to different country contexts, operating environments and institutional capacities**.
- Several participants highlighted the **importance of maintaining continuity of existing country programme frameworks** and avoiding disruption to approved planning and implementation processes during any transition.

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UNFPA and UN Women country footprints reflect different models of presence, representation and coverage

UNFPA & UN Women: Duty Stations by Region

# Duty Stations by Region	Asia & Pacific	East & Southern Africa	West & Central Africa	Americas & Caribbean	Europe & Central Asia	Arab States	Total
UNFPA	31	22	22	26	16	15	132
UN Women	22	17	15	26	17	11	108

- Both agencies deliver well beyond their resident offices, so presence is set out on three consistent tiers (see table). The gap between the totals reflects two different models of representation, not a difference in how many countries each agency reaches.
- Under the resident-office definition, there are no countries where UN Women holds a resident office and UNFPA does not, though UN Women covers additional countries through non-resident arrangements.
- Five of the six Regional Office pairs share the same country and city, the exception being Eastern & Southern Africa (UNFPA: Johannesburg; UN Women: Nairobi).
- Regional Offices play different roles within each operating model: UNFPA supports programme delivery through a distributed multi-hub structure, while UN Women integrates normative, UN-system coordination and operational functions, including support to resident and non-resident contexts.

Overall Country Level Personnel & HQ Layer

8,759 combined total personnel			
	5,065 personnel	HQ: 664 (13%)	
	3,694 personnel	HQ: 729 (19.7%)	

UNFPA	UN Women
Multi-hub Head Quarter Model: through a geographically dispersed, multi-hub HQ model that form a part of its delivery architecture	Multi-hub Head Quarter Model: HQ staff is concentrated in New York. UN Women is currently testing a decentralization model (Bonn and Nairobi).

Forms of Country Presence

Country Presence	 United Nations Population Fund	
Tier 1 — Full resident country offices	132 country presences (incl. 15 MCOs)	85
Tier 2 — Countries with personnel physically present	132	108 (of which 94 have standalone workplans)
Tier 3 — Non-resident coverage	Multi-country offices extend reach to 36 additional countries and territories; further coverage via the RC/UNCT system	Through its grant making facilities, UN Women funds programming in 140 countries.

Footprint is compared on three consistent tiers to avoid mixing definitions. Tier 1 counts full resident offices under each agency's own classification. Tier 2 counts countries with personnel physically present, on an HR duty-station basis, the most like-for-like measure. Tier 3 captures non-resident and coordination-based coverage. Figures are not additive across tiers.

Source: footprint data provided by UNFPA and UN Women.

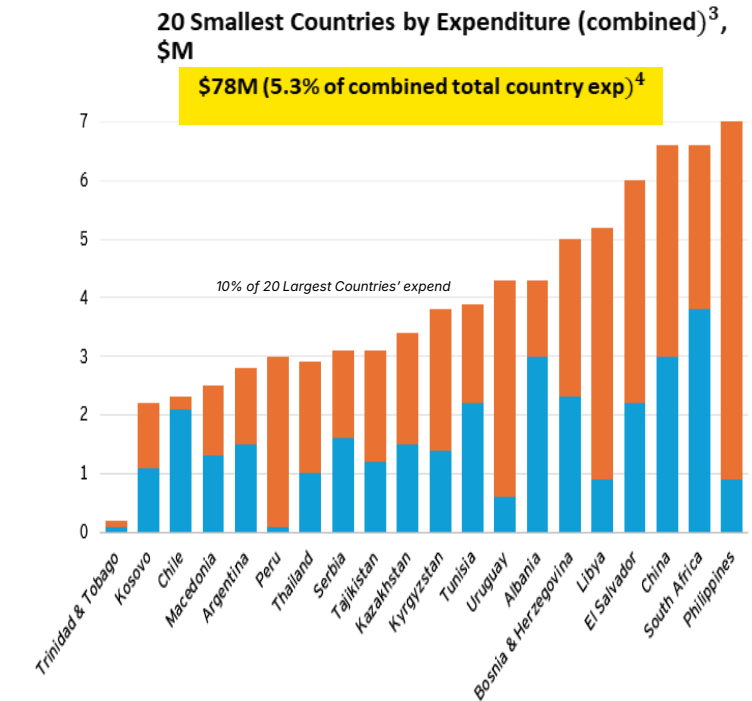
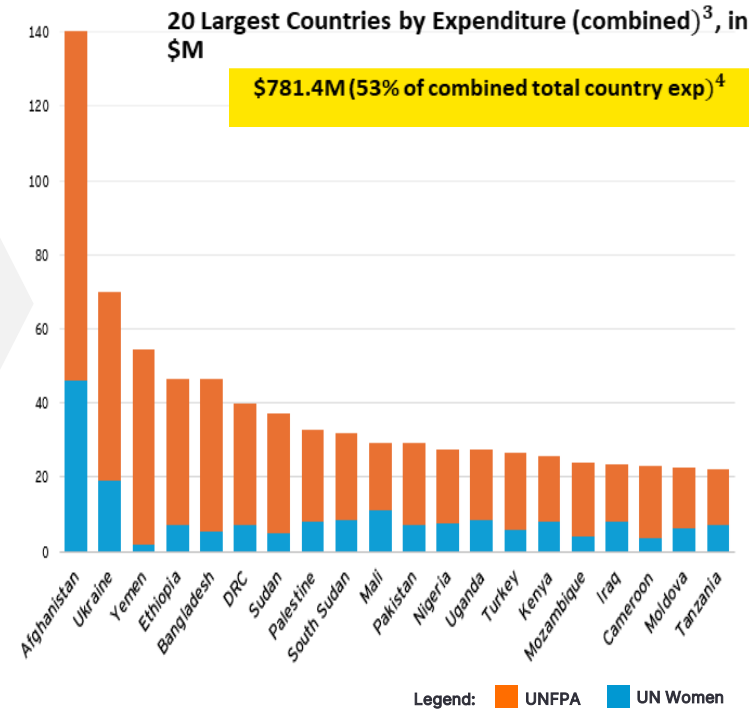
UNFPA	UN Women
Present through a mix of country offices, regional offices and a larger network of multi-country offices, supporting closer operational and programme delivery	Present through a combination of country offices, multi-country offices, regional and liaison offices, non-resident arrangements (NRA) and gender equality coordination (GEC) locations, complemented by its UN-coordination role through the RC/UNCT system

Geographic overlap overstates convergence: over half of expenditure is concentrated in 20 countries

\$2.1B² total expenditure

\$1.5B expenditure | 71.4% of total  United Nations Population Fund

\$0.6B expenditure | 28.6% of total 



- Shared presence does not mean shared weight: more than half of all expenditure is concentrated in 20 countries, so most overlap countries involve small budgets.
- The smallest overlap countries form a long tail, where presence reflects mandate coverage more than the scale of spending; Chile and Trinidad and Tobago are the clearest micro-overlap cases, with both small expenditure and few staff.
- Concentration at the top and a long tail at the bottom point to two different responses: protect delivery in the large countries and examine shared or lighter arrangements across the many small overlap offices. This offers opportunity for harmonization of country presence models, and greater systematic coordination for delivery rather than case-by-case arrangements.

Largely complementary mandates, with real common interest in GBV and data



Implications

Mandates of both Agencies

Originates from the population & development agenda, anchored in the ICPD Programme of Action (1994). Key focus areas

- Sexual & Reproductive Health & Rights (SRHR) – family planning, maternal health, safe pregnancy & childbirth, reproductive health
- Population dynamics & demographic analysis & data
- Ending Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and harmful practices
- Gender equality and women's empowerment – advancing gender equality, women's and girls' rights and bodily autonomy across SRHR, population and youth programming, beyond GBV alone
- Youth & adolescent health, rights & agency (not limited to girls)
- Humanitarian response- delivery of life-saving SRHR and GBV services in crises and fragile settings

Triple mandate est. by UN GA Resolution 64/289 to advance gender equality & empowerment of women & girls through:

- **Normative support-** development & implementation of global norms, standards and policies on gender equality
- **UN System coordination-** leading, coordinating and promoting accountability for gender equality across the UN system
- **Operational activities-** supporting countries to implement programmes and policies that advance women's rights and empowerment across contexts (i.e., including in humanitarian contexts, or across the humanitarian-development nexus, peace and security)

Distinct foundational mandate & normative focus. UNFPA is a service-delivery and technical agency; UN Women is a systems-change entity with an integrated mandate spanning normative support, UN-system coordination and operational delivery.

- UNFPA is issue-led: SRHR, population dynamics, fertility and demographic change. Focus on service delivery & systems strengthening. Beneficiaries go beyond women and girls to include men, boys, youth and adolescents
- UN Women is constituency-led: cross-cutting entity that champions women and girls' rights and gender equality in all aspects. Conceived as a cross-cutting entity with a mandate that spans gender equality across the UN system

Programme priorities as per Strategic Plans (UNFPA & UN WOMEN)

Core programmatic themes:

- **SRHR-** family planning, contraception, maternal health, safe pregnancy & childbirth, reproductive health services, reproductive rights. Including procurement of health commodities
- **Population Data & Evidence for Development-** census support, CRVS systems, demographic data, population analytics and forecasting
- **GBV & Harmful Practices-** Prevention and response to GBV, child marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), survivor support
- **Youth & Adolescent Health, Rights & Agency-** adolescent SRHR, youth empowerment, participation, education and demographic dividend
- **Humanitarian Response-** life-saving SRHR and GBV services, reproductive health commodities, emergency preparedness and crisis response

Core programmatic themes:

- **UN System Coordination on Gender Equality-** UN wide coherence, accountability and coordination (e.g. UN-SWAP, GEAP)
- **Women's Leadership & Economic Empowerment-** political participation, employment, entrepreneurship, financial inclusion & care economy
- **Gender equality policy and normative support** – legal reform, policies, institutional strengthening and implementation of gender equality commitments
- **Ending Violence Against Women & Girls (EVAWG)-** prevention, protection, survivor support, access to justice, legal reform, institutional response, humanitarian programming and women's rights organisations (e.g. UN Trust Fund to end EVAWG)
- **Gender data-** gender statistics, sex-disaggregated data, research, monitoring and accountability (e.g. Gender scorecard)
- **Women, Peace & Security (WPS)-** peacebuilding, mediation, protection and recovery
- **Humanitarian Action & Crisis Response-** gender-responsive humanitarian action, and resilience

- 1. Opportunity for joint action: Areas of strongest "common interest" or thematic alignment, with opportunities for joint actions: GBV/EVAWG,**
 - **UNFPA** – survivor services, health response, protection, humanitarian GBV coordination
 - **UN Women** – prevention, policy reform, survivor support, access to justice, legal frameworks, institutional response and women's rights
- 2. Shared goals, complementary pathways: Areas of thematic intersections, but delivery pathways and outcomes differ "Complementarity":**
 - **Strong data agenda-** UNFPA focuses on population and demographic data; UN Women focuses on gender statistics and gender equality evidence
 - **Humanitarian settings-** shared operating context in which both agencies contribute through distinct but complementary roles. UNFPA delivers life-saving SRHR and GBV services, while UN Women undertakes gender-responsive humanitarian programming, including prevention, protection, recovery and support and services for VAWG survivors through established partnerships with women's rights organizations, service providers and Ministries of Gender.
- 3. Distinct mandates requiring separate delivery "Differentiated Mandates":**
 - **UNFPA-** SRHR (core mandate), with no equivalent in UN Women or the broader UN system
 - **UN Women** Gender mainstreaming, UN-system advocacy & Coordination (core normative role), no equivalent across the UN

Key Insight: The strongest area of common interest lies in EVAWG/GBV and data. Humanitarian settings are a shared operating context in which both agencies act on distinct mandates, not a standalone area of overlap. This calls for further alignment within a broader GBV/EVAW programmatic framework. Elsewhere, UNFPA and UN Women pursue similar goals through different mandates, theories of change and delivery models, so collaboration should target these areas of common interest rather than assume broad integration.

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A structural merger would bring UNFPA and UN Women together within a single institution

The merger scenario envisages the consolidation of UNFPA and UN Women within a single institutional framework, aimed at creating a stronger institutional and political platform for gender equality and women's rights. Two broad configurations are possible: (i) absorption into a surviving entity, where one organization incorporates the functions, assets and mandates of the other; or (ii) creation of a new entity, where both organizations cease to exist and are replaced by a new institutional architecture. Both pathways would require decisions by Member States and would go beyond organizational restructuring to include governance, legal, country programming arrangements, operational systems and accountability mechanisms.

Description	Features
Definition - what a structural merger of UNFPA and UN Women entails	- Brings governance, programming, policy engagement and operations under a single institutional framework. - Creates a single external platform for engagement with Member States, donors and partners on gender equality and women's rights. - Two potential pathways would require a General Assembly decision and transition arrangements for mandates, governance and staffing arrangements: - Absorption model: one organization survives and incorporates the other. - New entity model: both organizations cease to exist over an agreed timeframe and are replaced by a new institution – in such case, existing hosting arrangements would need to be reviewed throughout the transition process. - Changes would impact UNFPA and UN Women, as well as Resident Coordinators, UN Country Teams, implementing partners, civil society organizations, donors and Member State relationships.
Mandate and normative architecture	- Combines both mandates: SRHR and population (ICPD) with gender equality, women's rights and UN-system coordination (GA 64/289). - Brings together UNFPA's SRHR, population and humanitarian GBV functions and UN Women's normative support, UN-system coordination and operational functions, while preserving the specialized capacities associated with each mandate.
Global governance, strategic direction and accountability	- Establishes a single strategic framework, Executive Leadership structure and results architecture - Consolidates reporting, planning and accountability arrangements across currently separate entities. - Requires clarity on mandate architecture, Board oversight arrangements and institutional positioning.
Regional architecture and technical support	- Combines regional technical support, advisory functions and oversight arrangements. - Could create integrated regional support platforms across gender equality, SRHR, humanitarian and demographic portfolios. - Regional restructuring may involve revision of office locations, leadership positions, advisory functions and support models.
Country presence and representation	- Establishes a single country representation model and country-level institutional presence. - Requires review of existing country programme instruments, government agreements and implementing partner arrangements. - In some countries, host-country agreements, legal status arrangements and partnership frameworks may need review to enable operation under a new institutional configuration.
Programme and thematic integration	- Integrates planning, resource allocation, reporting and results management under a unified framework. - Creates a common delivery model linking normative functions, technical assistance, programme implementation and accountability.
Financing and resource mobilization	- Creates a single funding case and one resource-mobilization platform. - Consolidates two resource bases into one funding platform; financial sustainability and transition costs assessed under separate deliverables.
Operations, systems and support services	- Combines corporate services, management systems and operational processes within a single organizational environment. - Provides a common administrative platform covering finance, HR, procurement, ICT and support services.
Transition and change management	- Requires a dedicated transition architecture covering workforce integration, communications, leadership alignment, change management. - Change and transition requirements would extend across all levels.

A structural merger offers a single institutional platform, with benefits dependent on transition and, where applicable, adjustment of country-level arrangements in consultation with host governments

	Global		Regional		Country	
	Benefits	Challenges & Risks	Benefits	Challenges & Risks	Benefits	Challenges & Risks
Strategic positioning	Creates a single institutional platform and a more unified external voice on gender equality, women's rights and SRHR, with greater potential to influence other UN agencies and position the entity as a champion of joint programming	Requires Member State agreement on the institutional model and on mandates; The merged mandate architecture would need to safeguard the full scope and distinct institutional authority of both organizations' mandates, including UNFPA's population, demographic and SRHR functions and UN Women's normative support, UN-system coordination and operational mandate on gender equality and the empowerment and rights of women and girls.	Could reduce fragmentation of regional advocacy platforms and policy engagement	Would require maintenance of the distinct positioning of gender equality, women's rights, SRHR and population mandates.	Offers governments one clear counterpart across gender equality, women's rights and SRHR, simplifying engagement and strengthening political weight at country level	Differentiated counterparts require tailored engagement; in a limited set of contexts, two separate voices may be better positioned to defend rights while sustaining delivery (reinforced by CSO interviews)
Coordination and partnerships	Could simplify governance by bringing two entities under the same structure that would then champion a rights'-based agenda within the broader UN system	Benefits depend on successful integration of governance, systems, accountability frameworks and organizational cultures; the new organization would still have to engage with other UN Agencies to foster coordination (e.g., UNDP, UNICEF)	Could reduce duplication in selected support and management functions and streamline programmatic engagements in specific areas of common interest, e.g. GBV/EVAWG, Data	Requires redesign of regional architectures, leadership positions and reporting arrangements	Clearer accountability through a single structure and a single counterpart, which could simplify engagement with governments, donors and the private sector, depending on leadership, resources and country context.	Continuity of partnerships would need safeguarding during transition; CSOs flagged a risk that a larger entity could reduce funding to local women's rights organizations
Delivery and results	Potential for more integrated strategic planning, reporting and resource allocation across mandates	Would require redesign of country programmes, operating models and delivery arrangements; transition carries risk to continuity of life-saving SRHR, GBV and humanitarian delivery, requiring phased sequencing and safeguards	Could enable common regional planning frameworks and technical support structures; would create de facto a joint accountability across EVAWG/GBV activities	Regional restructuring could require changes to office configurations, advisory functions, technical backstopping and mandate-specific capacities to maintain the full scope of current services across countries	Potential for integrated planning and programming in selected thematic areas; a single presence could extend combined reach where one agency is currently thinly present	Transition could disrupt country programming while new arrangements are established. Sustaining responsiveness to different country typologies and national priorities would depend on how the new entity configures its country presence
Resources and feasibility	Consolidates two resource bases into one funding platform and a single case to donors, with a stronger basis to engage the private sector and diversify resource mobilization	Combined scale does not by itself unlock new funding. The CERF evaluation found funding remained insufficient against demand even under a joint grant, suggesting that consolidation alone does not expand the funding base.	Could streamline regional structures and support functions over time	Regional restructuring adds transition cost.	May simplify the funding and partnership interface for governments	Host-country agreement renegotiation and transition are the principal dependencies, most acute under a new entity

Key insights:

- A merger's clearest gains are global: a single platform and one voice on gender equality, women's rights and SRHR. Country-level opportunities for joint action are strongest in EVAWG/GBV and data.
- The main country dependency is host-country renegotiation, most acute under a new entity; an absorption model allows more continuity because the surviving organization keeps its legal personality and existing agreements.
- Benefits for women and girls depend on a well-managed transition, with phased sequencing and safeguards to protect SRHR, GBV and humanitarian delivery.
- UN Women's coordination mandate (resolution 64/289) and UNFPA's sector coordination would need preserving under one structure; RC and UNCT interfaces remain.

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1. Integrated country delivery aligns planning and results without changing mandates or legal status

This first option aims at strengthening country-level coherence by aligning UNFPA and UN Women around shared planning, joint work plans and complementary delivery, while each organization retains its own mandate, governance and legal status. It comprises four sub-options, spanning integrated delivery, regional support, coverage where one agency is absent, and representation and accountability. We assess each in the following pages.

Description	Features
1.1 Targeted country-level collaboration to be considered case by case in a phase approach, to be implemented in a phased approach across all countries where both UNFPA and UN Women are present, and in areas of complementarity	- Joint engagement in UN Country Teams planning and reporting processes (Common Country Analysis (CCAs) and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), including joint advocacy for the integration of shared priorities, drawing on complementary areas such as EVAWG/GBV and SDG5 data (the integrated GBV programme is addressed under option 2). - Integrated, end-to-end strategic planning and reporting in support of UNSDCF results, through aligned/harmonized Strategic Notes (SN) and Country Programme Documents (CPD) - To be rolled out in a phased approach, starting with SNs/CPDs developed in 2027, deriving from the new UNSDCFs to be finalized in 2026 - SN/CPD approval process to remain separate, but derived from common analysis and, where relevant, aligned results (outcomes, outputs and indicators) and partnerships sections, anchored in the UNSDCF and Joint Work Plan - Development and implementation of joint work plans, supported by joint monitoring and reporting, communications and advocacy, and aligned and coordinated resource mobilization in complementary areas (i.e., EVAWG/GBV, SDG5 data), to be assessed against agreed KPIs on joint programming with joint accountability limited to demonstrated areas of programmatic overlap and linked to a clear TOC for improved country-level coherence. - Common in-country premises - Reflects UN Women's UN-system coordination and accountability functions (e.g., UN-SWAP/UNCT-SWAP, system-wide gender mainstreaming), recognizing existing non-resident coverage (42 NRA, five GEC, MCO, regional and RC/UNCT-supported).
1.2 Regional level support to country-level delivery	Supported by co-located Regional Offices, with integrated cells in key areas, coordinating with the Regional Platforms for Integration being established under the UN80 Regional Reset (WP6) and clearly distinguishing regional bilateral support from wider UN-system gender coordination functions.
1.3 Support to countries where either organization does not maintain a resident country office, while recognizing existing personnel-based programme, multi-country and non-resident coverage arrangements	- Harmonization of country presence models, so that coverage in single-agency contexts follows common rules and principles rather than case-by-case arrangements - Where one agency is non-resident, any arrangement for the resident agency to support or host selected programme resources would require case-specific approval, a formal legal basis and clear safeguards, and should not be treated as a default model. It will be subject to confirmed mandate-based expertise, partnerships, operational capacity, legal authority and dedicated human and financial resources. - Hosting in the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator Office remains a model among several, aligned with UN Country Team/UNSDCF priorities, in case the objective is to deploy resources dedicated to normative, policy and/or coordination with UNCTs. - Either agency retains the option to deliver through other UN entities where better placed to meet programme objectives, facilitated by common hosting and cross-representation rules - UNFPA and UN Women regional and global expertise remains available to support Resident Coordinators, the Resident Agency and UN Country Teams, drawing on relevant UN system capacities and aligned with UN80 Expertise on Demand (WP8) and UNCT Reconfiguration (WP5) work packages.
1.4 Country-level representation and accountability	Commitment to further examine representation and accountability arrangements at country level, recognizing the complexity and the time required to address the issues in detail

1.1 Integrated country-level delivery and impact, to be implemented in a phased approach across all countries where both UNFPA and UN Women are present, and in areas of complementarity

	Global		Regional		Country	
	Benefits	Challenges & Risks	Benefits	Challenges & Risks	Benefits	Challenges & Risks
Strategic positioning	More coherent narrative and joint positioning on EVAWG/GBV and gender data	Risk of reducing clarity around institutional responsibilities and accountability, particularly where mandates and governance roles remain distinct	Stronger regional alignment on policy priorities and engagement agendas	Regional priorities and stakeholder ecosystems differ significantly: excessive harmonization may reduce flexibility	More coordinated engagement with national counterparts on EVAWG/GBV and data, strengthening alignment with national gender and population priorities where they converge	Engagement with different stakeholders and accountability frameworks; joint positioning may not align with national counterpart structures and policy processes
Coordination and partnerships	Clearer institutional incentives for collaboration and more systematic alignment across agencies	Additional joint governance mechanisms may increase reporting and coordination requirements	Co-located regional support and integrated technical cells could improve responsiveness to country offices and slightly improve the management of a pipeline of proposals and engagement of key donors	Risk of creating new coordination layers if not aligned with wider UN80 and UNCT reform mechanisms	Joint work plans, common premises and more structured collaboration may reduce fragmentation and personality-driven cooperation and strengthens joint engagement with governments, donors and women's rights organizations	Implications vary by country typology; a single model does not fit all contexts, requiring adaptation to country agreements and implementation arrangements
Delivery and results	More coherent end-to-end results frameworks and common strategic priorities	Benefits likely concentrated in areas of complementarity rather than across all programme portfolios	Better alignment of technical support, learning and regional programme oversight in EVAWG/GBV and data.	Additional coordination requirements may slow decision-making and require additional regional coordination capacity	Preserves current institutions. Selected joint programmes can improve the coherence of services reaching women and girls. The option could potentially extend combined reach where one agency is thinly staffed	Aligned planning must still protect mandate-specific delivery including in areas of SRHR, humanitarian, WPS, demographic and governance, women's political participation, CSO, women's economic empowerment and EVAWG/GBV.
Resources and feasibility	Coordinated resource mobilization in areas of complementarity (EVAWG/GBV, SDG5 data) strengthens the joint funding case without new structures	Feasible under existing mandates and governance; no renegotiation of country agreements required. Financial sustainability depends on sustained agency commitment	Shared planning can align regional resourcing behind common priorities	Depends on adequate regional capacity and predictable funding	Common premises and joint work plans can reduce duplication and support coordinated resource mobilization	Gains depend on country-level leadership and are phased through existing UNSDCF/CPD cycles

Key insights:

- Potential to improve planning, accountability and coherence while preserving separate institutional mandates – no renegotiation of country agreements required.
- Benefits are most evident in areas of demonstrated complementarity, particularly EVAWG/GBV, SDG5 data and selected joint policy engagement priorities, and should be expanded only where country evidence supports broader collaboration.
- Effectiveness depends on flexibility across country typologies, operational contexts and mandate-specific delivery models.
- Additional coordination arrangements should respond to identified government or UNCT demand and build on existing UN80, RC, UNCT mechanisms rather than create parallel structures.
- Evaluation evidence (Joint Gender Programmes) indicates joint planning strengthens coherence and policy influence but does not automatically deliver efficiencies without clear roles and design; CSOs confirm GBV common interest, cite the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation as proof coordination can work, and stress both agencies otherwise hold differentiated roles.

1.2 Regional-level support strengthens access to expertise, with benefits dependent on the UN80 regional reset and tailoring to country context

	Global		Regional		Country	
	Benefits	Challenges & Risks	Benefits	Challenges & Risks	Benefits	Challenges & Risks
Strategic positioning	Supports more consistent interpretation and promotion of shared work on EVAW/GBV and data.	Requires maintaining distinct normative mandates and advocacy functions, so that regional coordination reinforces agency-specific positioning.	Strengthens regional advocacy platforms and coordinated policy support, provided differentiated priorities are respected.	Regional priorities and political contexts differ substantially, a common approach must retain flexibility across regions.	Improves access to specialized expertise for countries without in-country capacity, most proportionate for low-expenditure settings, where regional positioning complements national engagement.	Regional priorities may not always reflect country-specific political realities
Coordination and partnerships	Promotes more systematic collaboration and institutional learning across regions on EVAW/GBV and data, building on existing coordination mechanisms rather than creating new.	Requires clear governance, accountability and decision-making arrangements across headquarters, regional and country levels.	Coordination with the Regional Platforms for Integration under the UN80 Regional Reset (issue-based coalitions, peer-support groups) improve coordination and reduce reliance on informal cooperation.	Effectiveness depends on regional reset outcomes still at design stage; risk of increased reporting and coordination burdens if layered onto existing mechanisms.	Provides more predictable and structured support for country offices through regional and RC/UNCT mechanisms and can strengthen engagement with governments and partners at country level through regional backstopping	Regional support may not always align with country priorities, implementation timelines or Resident Coordinator-led approaches.
Delivery and results	Better dissemination of technical guidance, lessons learned and common approaches on EVAW/GBV and data with benefits contingent on sufficient regional capacity.	Benefits depend on sufficient regional capacity, technical expertise and sustainable resourcing across regions.	Co-located Regional Offices with integrated cells could support systematic regional programmes on shared priorities, such as advocacy against gender backlash and joint SDG5 data delivery, alongside surge and backstopping to Country Offices.	Regional office configurations depend on the UN80 regional reset, still at design stage, which could change locations, cells and reporting lines.	Countries without in-country technical depth gain faster access to pooled regional expertise and surge support, reducing reliance on full local staffing - for women and girls, this improves the quality and timeliness of services in countries lacking in-country expertise	May not fully address delivery challenges in humanitarian settings, large-country programmes or contexts requiring sustained in-country technical presence.
Resources and feasibility	Enables shared use of regional expertise and surge capacity on EVAW/GBV and data, offering an efficiency route.	Requires sustained and predictable regional resourcing. Benefits are constrained where regional capacity is already stretched.	Allows regional resources to be mobilized flexibly across countries, subject to agreed prioritization and allocation criteria.	Additional regional mechanisms could add cost if layered onto existing structures rather than integrated into the regional reset.	Improves value for countries with limited capacity by extending reach without new country structures.	Sustainability depends on continued regional investment and clarity on financing responsibilities across levels.

Key insights:

- This option strengthens support to countries by drawing on regional expertise, without changing either agency's mandate, governance or country presence; its effectiveness depends on tailoring implementation to country context rather than applying a universal model.
- Regional platforms are most valuable for shared solutions such as joint policy engagement against gender backlash and joint gender-data delivery, where one regional approach adds more than each country acting alone.
- The clearest near-term value is faster access to specialist expertise and surge capacity for countries that lack it in-country, particularly smaller offices, subject to sufficient and predictable regional resourcing.
- The model depends on the UN80 regional reset, still being designed, and should be built into that reform rather than run as a separate track; civil society organizations stress this is essential to protect accountability for gender results.

1.3 Supporting non-resident countries extends each agency's reach through the RC system and regional support, with results dependent on country context and existing UNCT arrangements

	Global		Regional		Country	
	Benefits	Challenges & Risks	Benefits	Challenges & Risks	Benefits	Challenges & Risks
Strategic positioning	Could expand access to UNFPA and UN Women mandates, through existing RC, UNCT and regional mechanisms.	Normative priorities become diluted when delivered indirectly through other actors, requiring safeguards to sustain mandate clarity.	Regional expertise can provide policy, advocacy and normative support while maintaining engagement where direct presence is limited	Regional teams may have limited visibility of country-specific political dynamics, requiring close links to national counterparts.	Normative and advocacy functions can be carried through the Resident Coordinator and UN Country Team, who convene and convey the agency's positions, giving countries access to expertise not otherwise available locally	Indirect representation may limit sustained engagement with national counterparts and politically sensitive advocacy agendas
Coordination and partnerships	Strengthens system-wide delivery by using existing UNCT and RC mechanisms.	Success depends on sustained RC engagement and clear accountability arrangements. Limited potential impact.	Encourages stronger links between regional platforms, country teams and expertise-on-demand mechanisms under UN80	Additional coordination requirements may not always be matched by resources or authority	Where UN Women is non-resident, its UN-system coordination and accountability mandate under resolution 64/289 can continue to be exercised through engagement with the Resident Coordinator, UN Country Team and, where applicable, personnel delegated to the RCO. Where UNFPA is non-resident, its mandate-specific coordination and technical functions would require separately defined representation, accountability and backstopping arrangements.	Results depend heavily on RC leadership, agency presence, local partnerships and the effectiveness of existing UNCT arrangements; indirect representation can weaken local organizations' access to dialogue and funding unless safeguarded
Delivery and results	Extends programme reach without significant institutional expansion where delivery can be supported remotely or regionally.	Remote support may be insufficient for complex or delivery-intensive programmes, particularly in humanitarian settings.	Regional technical advisers can support Programme design, quality assurance and surge needs	May increase demand on already stretched regional capacities, requiring prioritization.	Programme delivery requires accountable country-level oversight; any representation arrangement would require appropriate legal authority, accountability arrangements, Programme oversight and technical backstopping. Can support continued access to both mandates in selected non-resident contexts without establishing office.	Resource mobilization, procurement and mandate-specific funding responsibilities may require dedicated arrangements to avoid gaps in accountability
Resources and feasibility	Offers a lower-cost route to maintaining presence by using existing RC, UNCT and regional capacities rather than new footprints.	Value depends on the capacity of resident agencies, RC offices and regional teams to absorb additional functions.	Enables flexible mobilization of regional resources to countries without in-country presence, subject to agreed criteria.	Sustained delivery may require additional regional resourcing where demand is high.	Allows representation arrangements to be tailored to country needs and expenditure levels, concentrating resources where they add most value.	Resource mobilization, procurement and mandate-specific funding responsibilities may require dedicated arrangements to avoid gaps in accountability.

Key Insights:

- This option extends each agency's reach into countries where it is not resident by using Resident Coordinators, UN Country Teams and regional support, rather than opening new offices; effectiveness depends on the strength of existing UNCT arrangements and RC leadership.
- Representation is not a single function: normative and advocacy work can run through the Resident Coordinator's office, while Programme delivery needs an accountable representative, which can be the head of the other resident agency. As both agencies define representation differently by country, any arrangement needs common rules applied flexibly.
- Civil society organizations stressed there should be no one-size-fits-all model and noted that indirect representation must be designed to preserve local organizations' access to dialogue and funding.

1.4 Country representation can be tailored through several models, with the right setup dependent on delivery levels, mandate needs and coordination requirements

Country representation cannot be reduced to one model. We identified five options: full dual presence (each agency keeps its own representative); designated representation (one agency's head represents the other via delegation of authority); third-entity hosting (another agency, such as UNDP, UNICEF or ILO, represents where better placed); RCO-carried (the Resident Coordinator's office hosts a normative/advocacy capability); and regional-hub (coverage from a regional or multi-country office). The matrix compares each model across the four clusters, recognizing that the right setup differs by country — what suits a large, high-delivery country is disproportionate in a small one.

	M1 Full dual presence	M2 Designated representation	M3 Third-entity hosting	M4 RCO-carried	M5 Regional-hub
Strategic positioning	Keeps each mandate fully visible; suits large, complex, high-delivery countries with adequate funding capacity	Maintains both mandates through one representative; visibility depends on that representative carrying both mandates credibly	Suitable where another UN entity is better placed for a specific programme; requires safeguards so the mandate is not subsumed in the host's identity	Adequate for normative and advocacy functions; the RCO conveys positions but does not own the mandate	Provides regional coverage with a lighter in-country voice; suits very low-delivery settings
Coordination and partnerships	Allows both agencies to engage directly in UNCT planning; interview evidence indicates the coordination function is often under-resourced and partly cross-subsidized through projects	The scope of the designated representative must be defined against the role of the regional office, with clear expectations, targets and division of responsibility (under the authority of the Regional Director)	Requires joint alignment on programmatic and advocacy outcomes between both agencies and the host, ideally anchored in a joint programme	Scope focuses on informing UNCT planning and monitoring; roles can be tailored with the Resident Coordinator and Regional Director and monitored by the regional office, with a view to sustaining engagement with governments and local partners through the RC system where the agency is non-resident	Coordination and gender analysis feed into UNCT planning from regional level, with a country delegate designated where needed
Delivery and results	Each agency delivers its own Programme with clear accountability, based on existing Programme policies and procedures	Potentially available now via delegation and credential letter in specific cases, subject to formal legal authority, mandate safeguards, agreed accountability, technical backstopping and dedicated resources.	Used where another UN entity already leads the relevant programme; requires clear host accountability to the mandate agency	Not designed for Programme delivery; suitable for normative and advocacy functions only	Provides surge and backstopping from the region; no sustained in-country delivery
Resources and feasibility	Highest fixed cost; justified where delivery volume and funding capacity are sufficient	Cost-efficient in low-delivery countries; resource mobilization and procurement may still require separate arrangements to protect funding responsibilities	Can reduce cost by using an existing footprint, provided funding, procurement and accountability responsibilities are clearly assigned	Low incremental cost as it uses the RCO; limited to normative/advocacy scope, so delivery resourcing still needs a separate route	Lowest in-country cost; feasibility depends on sufficient regional capacity and predictable backstopping resources

Key insights:

- Flexible representation can be achieved through an administrative arrangement in specific contexts but requires case-specific legal, operational and accountability assessment before implementation.
- Delivery presence and the gender-coordination mandate move independently: presence can be right-sized to country delivery levels, while UN Women's coordination mandate under resolution 64/289 does not scale down with it and must be preserved.
- Gender is mainstreamed across the UN, but without a named champion, accountability can be diffused; making any model work depends on tone at the top and on holding Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams accountable for gender results, not on country-level goodwill alone.
- For women and girls, the priority is uninterrupted access to both mandates; the right model is the one that sustains service continuity and accountability in each country context
- Alternative approaches, including strengthened NRA arrangements, regional support models and technical backstopping, should be assessed alongside any representation arrangement.

2. A joint UNFPA-UN Women EAWG/GBV framework would establish a structured platform for joint action without changing mandates

Option 2 explores the development of a possible UNFPA-UN Women collaboration framework for EAWG/GBV. Subject to agreement by both organizations, the framework-development process would examine areas of complementarity, roles and responsibilities, programme and financing arrangements, accountability and links to existing UN-system and humanitarian coordination mechanisms, in line with both Entities' mandates and comparative advantages. No division of labour or institutional design is presumed at this stage.

Description	Features
2.1 Joint Strategic Framework: establish a high-level UNFPA-UN Women framework	- Shared document mandated by executive leadership and governing bodies, defined at headquarters level rather than negotiated country by country - Endorsed through each agency's existing governance and Executive Board procedures, without implying a formal joint Board decision, and providing a high-level basis for collaboration on EAWG/GBV - Leverages existing programmes to preserve momentum, and keeps processes light-touch in new areas so collaboration does not add heavy process or slow delivery - A process to define roles by mandate, expertise and comparative advantage within a future collaboration framework, while preserving mandate-specific accountability. - A common taxonomy, shared outcomes, KPIs and data requirements defined at HQ, so results are measurable and comparable across countries - Joint vision, complementary priorities, results and accountabilities, aligned — once the joint framework is defined — with the relevant CEB-mandated accountability frameworks. - Applies across global, regional and country levels - Implementation should remain flexible and context-specific, based on mandates, roles, expertise and strategic priorities.
2.2 Joint programming and coordinated delivery: move from parallel programming to integrated delivery through joint work plans, joint programmes, and functionally integrated teams where appropriate	- Joint work plans at global, regional and country levels - Joint or coordinated programming may be considered in specific areas and contexts jointly agreed by both organizations, based on mandates, roles, expertise, strategic priorities, national context and existing coordination arrangements - Context-specific implementation within that Framework - Built-in flexibility to involve other UN entities (for example UNICEF, UNDP, WHO) where relevant to delivery, using existing coordination mechanisms rather than creating duplicative structures - Possible team-level collaboration or co-location may be explored where jointly agreed and demonstrably beneficial; no integrated staffing model is presumed. - Possible arrangements for improved exchange and use of EAWG/GBV evidence, guidance and data may be examined, taking account of existing institutional and UN-system knowledge architecture - Coordinated communication and advocacy on agreed EAWG/GBV priorities, while preserving mandate-specific positioning where required.
2.3 Aligned programme financing and resource mobilization: align financing behind joint priorities using existing mechanisms	- Aligned and coordinated programme resource mobilization as part of the UNSDCF, in coordination with Resident Coordinators - Joint advocacy to present a coordinated funding case, while preserving each entity's mandate and comparative advantage. - Use of existing financing and coordination tools rather than new ones, as appropriate, with periodic review to ensure efficiency, clarity and results focus. - Joint monitoring and reporting where feasible, aligned with existing accountability mechanisms to avoid additional burden. - Aligned and coordinated programme resource mobilization as part of the UNSDCF in coordination with Resident Coordinators, with financing roles defined by mandate, expertise and strategic priority.
2.4 Shared accountability and country-level results: establish common accountability arrangements that connect global commitments to implementation and measurable results for women and girls	- Common results framework anchored in Strategic Plans and UNSDCF, using the shared taxonomy and KPIs defined at HQ - Potentially more coherent presentation of jointly agreed results, while preserving mandate-specific results, institutional accountability, distinct contributions and visibility. - Commitment to develop and implement the proposed Joint Strategic EAWG/GBV Framework, with the detailed allocation of roles to be defined through its development rather than prescribed in advance. - Possible coordinated reporting through existing Executive Board processes, subject to agreement by both organizations and their respective governing bodies - Appropriate arrangements for resolving disagreements would be considered as part of framework development and would remain subject to agreement by both organizations - Oversight through each agency's existing management structures, aligned with country UNSDCF, rather than a new governance body

2.1 A joint EAWG/GBV framework would create a common platform for coordinated action, with benefits dependent on agreed governance and role allocation

	Global		Regional		Country	
	Benefits	Challenges & Risks	Benefits	Challenges & Risks	Benefits	Challenges & Risks
Strategic positioning	Creates a common framework for coordinated EAWG/GBV action across prevention, response and humanitarian settings.	Benefits depend on agreed role allocation, governance arrangements and accountability mechanisms covering both mandate-specific responsibilities and jointly agreed commitments.	Strengthens regional advocacy, policy support and implementation guidance through a common framework	Regional priorities and political sensitivities may require differentiated approaches	Provides governments with a more coherent EAWG/GBV framework while preserving complementary institutional roles	Different national counterparts and legal frameworks may limit standardization and ease of adoption
Coordination and partnerships	Creates a stronger platform for coordination across Executive Boards, UN entities, implementing partners and women's rights organizations. Common taxonomy, HQ-defined outcomes, KPIs and data requirements make joint results measurable across countries, supporting aligned resource mobilization and joint Board reporting	Additional coordination requirements may increase transaction costs; effectiveness depends on clearly defined governance, accountability arrangements and any governing-body consideration would follow agreement by both organizations on the proposed scope and content. Instead of being negotiated country by country; to move collaboration from voluntary cooperation to systematic practice.	Creates a stronger basis for issue-based coalitions (open to other UN Agencies) and coordinated regional support mechanisms, including engagement with other UN entities where relevant.	Additional regional coordination requirements may increase management overhead and transaction costs.	Provides a platform for stronger coordination across UNCTs, RC/HC structures and relevant implementing partners	Without clear HQ-defined roles, responsibilities and accountability mechanisms, joint commitments may not translate into consistent delivery at country level.
Delivery and results	Establishes common taxonomy, HQ-defined shared outcome, accountability frameworks and governance mechanisms. This makes joint results measurable across countries, supports aligned resource mobilization, coordinated delivery and joint Board reporting	Effectiveness depends on sustained leadership commitment and shared ownership of common outcomes without it the framework may remain strategic rather than operational	Facilitates pooled technical expertise and shared regional common support models	Need for alignment with existing GBV coordination architecture and regional UN reform mechanisms to ensure duplication is avoided.	Represents the strongest opportunity for joint action through shared outcomes, coordinated delivery and common results	Risk of diluting specialized capacities in humanitarian GBV, SRHR and mandate-specific functions unless roles are clearly allocated and preserved
Resources and feasibility	Offers an opportunity to streamline pipeline management and overall engagement strategies with key donors – and set basic principles for resource mobilization that runs across	Any governing-body consideration would follow agreement by both organizations on the proposed scope and content, leadership sponsorship and sustained institutional adoption – together with a change management Programme across organizations	Uses existing regional expertise and support mechanisms rather than creating a new institutional architecture	Requires adequate resourcing and coordination capacity to sustain implementation over time	Can be implemented through existing country delivery arrangements and partnerships	Benefits depend on country uptake, implementation capacity and sustained engagement by both organizations

Key insights:

- GBV/EAWG is an important area of intersection and complementarity between the organizations. This supports exploring a possible collaboration framework but does not predetermine an integrated model, division of labor, Programme coverage or institutional lead.
- If both organizations agree to develop a framework, they would need to determine whether and where common or complementary terminology, outcomes, indicators and data arrangements would add value while preserving mandate-specific accountability.
- Effective implementation depends on sustained commitment from both agreement by both organizations on the proposed scope and content, rather than relying solely on country-level initiative. Evaluation of the two-year joint UNFPA-UN Women GBV response (CERF block grant, USD 25M; Samuel Hall, September 2023) demonstrated that coordination improved quality where structured (Myanmar), but in several countries staff were unaware it was a joint project.
- It works best alongside the wider UN system and existing GBV coordination mechanisms, not as a standalone arrangement between the two agencies. UN Women's wider UN-system coordination mandate remains distinct from any bilateral UNFPA-UN Women accountability arrangements.

2.2 Joint programming and coordinated delivery would move collaboration from parallel programming to structured joint action in areas of common interest and where country conditions support it

	Global		Regional		Country	
	Benefits	Challenges & Risks	Benefits	Challenges & Risks	Benefits	Challenges & Risks
Strategic positioning	Provides a structured mechanism to translate shared EAWG/GBV commitments into coordinated Programme action	Benefits are strongest in areas of demonstrated common interest; joint programming should not be assumed across the full portfolio	Supports more consistent translation of global commitments into regional priorities and implementation support	Regional contexts require differentiated implementation models, phasing and in-built flexibility	Creates a more integrated offer to governments and UNCTs for shared priorities such as EAWG/GBV and gender data	Joint programming may be less appropriate where mandates require engagement with different ministries, policy processes and accountability frameworks
Coordination and partnerships	Creates stronger incentives for collaboration through shared workplans, reporting and clearer accountability for shared outcomes	Joint programming is often transaction-heavy and slow, with dual management arrangements (two teams, separate reporting lines and different institutional incentives) increasing coordination costs. Evaluations of large joint programmes highlight these burdens, and some donors have reduced support for joint programmes as a result.	A jointly appointed regional Programme Head (50-50) can strengthen regional ownership and delivery of shared EAWG/GBV outcomes, while allowing other UN entities (with existing footprints & common outcomes) to participate where relevant	A 50-50 appointment requires clear reporting lines to avoid divided accountability, and sustained regional backstopping capacity	Can reduce fragmentation through joint work plans, joint monitoring and coordinated resource mobilization	Effectiveness depends on country leadership, Resident Coordinator engagement, UNCT dynamics and partner capacity
Delivery and results	Encourages common results frameworks, aligned planning and clearer accountability for shared outcomes.	Convergence potential varies significantly across programme areas and should not be assumed beyond demonstrated complementarity	Supports shared technical expertise and cross-country learning where regional coordination capacity is available	Requires sufficient technical support and clear sequencing so regional coordination does not become additional administrative burden	Strongest gains expected in GBV/EAWG, gender data and other areas of demonstrated complementarity	Less suitable where delivery depends on mandate-specific capabilities, distinct accountability frameworks or engagement with different government counterparts
Resources and feasibility	Builds on existing joint programming instruments and can be phased without new institutional architecture	Cost savings are limited; joint programming typically adds coordination and transaction costs. Benefits depend on sustained HQ and regional backstopping, leadership commitment and resource availability.	Uses existing regional expertise and support mechanisms to deepen collaboration where it is already feasible	Requires adequate coordination capacity and clear funding for joint support functions	Can be phased by country context and existing collaboration levels, reducing implementation burden	Benefits depend on country uptake, implementation capacity, partner readiness and continued protection of direct funding to women-led and women's rights organizations

Key insights:

- Joint programming is one possible way to deepen collaboration in specifically agreed areas and contexts. Evaluation evidence also shows that it may be transaction-heavy, slow and costly to coordinate; it should therefore be selected only where expected development, and rights benefits clearly outweigh the additional burden.
- Potential benefits concentrate in specific areas, particularly GBV and EAWG, gender data and selected joint initiatives, rather than across the whole portfolio. It is less applicable where delivery depends on mandate-specific capabilities such as SRHR services, population dynamics, women peace and security, and governance.
- Evaluation evidence shows joint programmes can be transaction-heavy and slow, with dual management arrangements and limited cost savings; some donors have consequently reduced funding for joint programmes. Design should minimize transaction costs and avoid assuming efficiency gains.
- CERF evaluation findings (September 2023) showed the value of two common outcomes (social norms; women-led organization empowerment) alongside preserved agency-specific outcomes, supporting a division of labor by function rather than full integration.
- Protection of direct funding to women-led and women's rights organizations should remain a design feature of any joint EAWG/GBV framework. The CERF grant (September 2023 evaluation) exceeded its 30% funding target for women-led and women's rights organizations.
- Possible arrangements for strengthened regional support may be explored, subject to clear accountability, mandate-based functions, reporting lines, financing and agreement by both organizations.

2.3 Aligned financing and resource mobilization to support shared priorities using existing mechanisms

Option 2.3 aligns financing behind joint priorities using existing mechanisms, with no new structure: a shared project pipeline and shared donor intelligence so the agencies present one funding case, not two competing ones. The value is coherence and reduced competition, not additional funding. The framework rests on:

- A shared, prioritized pipeline of joint EVAWG/GBV projects
- Systematic sharing of donor intelligence to present a single funding case

	Global		Regional		Country	
	Benefits	Challenges & Risks	Benefits	Challenges & Risks	Benefits	Challenges & Risks
Strategic positioning	Strengthens coherence between normative commitments and programme implementation. Creates a stronger collective funding proposition around shared priorities and agreed outcomes	Alignment is easier in areas of demonstrated complementarity rather than across the full mandate spectrum	Can support regional priorities such as GBV/EVAWG, gender backlash and SDG5 data through coordinated donor engagement	Regional priorities may compete for limited resources and donor attention	Provides a stronger, single funding case to governments and donors on shared priorities	Government, donor and funding arrangements often remain structured around separate mandates, priorities and accountability frameworks
Coordination and partnerships	Enables shared donor intelligence, joint advocacy and reduced internal competition for funds, without creating a new financing structure	Requires formal direction from both principals; aim is to combine resources in areas of demonstrated complementarity not create country-level goodwill mechanisms alone	Encourages coordination across regional initiatives and pooled effort where collaboration already exists	May increase complexity if introduced alongside existing financing and reporting arrangements	Shared donor intelligence reduces competition for the same funds and strengthens joint delivery	Effectiveness depends on sustained donor support, Resident Coordinator leadership and continued agency commitment to shared priorities
Delivery and results	A shared project pipeline can direct investments to areas of demonstrated complementarity and joint results potential	Financing alignment create coherence in funding but does not by itself unlock new resources in a constrained, earmarked environment	Improves predictability of financing for regional initiatives and technical support	Requires agreement on funding priorities, allocation criteria and accountability, including concerted coordination effort, without a new structure	Aligns resource mobilization with UNSDCFs, joint programming and shared outcomes	Differences in programme funding modalities, donor requirements and reporting obligations may constrain alignment
Resources and feasibility	Uses existing financing tools, pooled funds, joint programmes and inter-agency mechanisms rather than new financing architecture.	Aligned financing may complicate attribution, mandate visibility and donor engagement where funding priorities and accountability requirements differ.	Can improve flexibility and predictability where regional or humanitarian funding windows allow multi-year or portfolio approaches.	Short funding horizons and constrained earmarked funding may limit impact on social-norm change and sustained prevention work.	Can be anchored in existing country financing mechanisms and resource-mobilization processes.	Civil society calls for donor-base diversification, national financing, flexible/core funding and private-sector engagement to strengthen both entities independently of structural change

Key insights:

- Financing alignment strengthens collaboration through shared project pipelines and donor intelligence, without creating a new structure.
- The value is coherence and reduced internal competition for funds, not additional funding, which consolidation does not by itself unlock.
- Financing alignment should be additional to, not a substitute for, agency-specific resource mobilization.
- CERF evidence (September 2023) shows flexible allocation can improve response while that short funding horizons limit impact on social-norm change- joint financing should be flexible and multi-year.
- Alignment is harder where funding streams, donor expectations and accountability arrangements differ.
- Depends on clear direction from both principals, not country-level goodwill: the aim is to combine UNFPA and UN Women into a champion coalition that draws others in.
- Civil society calls for a financing strategy covering donor-base diversification, national financing, flexible and core funding, and private-sector engagement, to strengthen both entities independent of any structural change

2.4 Shared accountability to strengthen ownership and delivery of jointly delivered outcomes that translate global commitments to tangible results for women and girls

	Global		Regional		Country	
	Benefits	Challenges & Risks	Benefits	Challenges & Risks	Benefits	Challenges & Risks
Strategic positioning	Strengthens accountability for translating global commitments into measurable results while preserving mandate-specific responsibilities	Common accountability frameworks may not fully reflect mandate-specific contributions, comparative advantages and institutional responsibilities	Creates clearer expectations for regional oversight of shared priorities	Regional accountability arrangements may become more complex where mandates, reporting arrangements and priorities diverge	Can improve tracking of country-level progress on shared outcomes for women and girls	Joint indicators may not fully reflect country-specific priorities, mandate-specific outcomes and national implementation contexts
Coordination and partnerships	Creates stronger incentives for collaboration through joint accountability and annual reporting to a joint session of both Executive Boards, backed by joint escalation mechanism for disputes	Additional accountability arrangements could increase reporting requirements and create ambiguity if not clearly distinguished from each agency's existing governance responsibilities.	Strengthens links between regional support functions and country performance	Roles and responsibilities may become unclear if accountability frameworks overlap existing structures	Helps align country teams, Resident Coordinators and agencies around common outcomes and shared accountability	Effectiveness depends on Resident Coordinator leadership, country team dynamics and sustained institutional commitment to shared objectives
Delivery and results	Uses the common taxonomy, outcomes, KPIs and data defined at HQ to make results measurable and comparable across countries, encouraging focus on outcomes rather than parallel activities	Requires agreement on common indicators, measurement approaches, reporting systems and responsibilities for results delivery	Supports more consistent performance management across countries and regions	Additional monitoring and reporting may increase transaction costs and management workload	Can strengthen delivery through shared results frameworks, joint monitoring and clearer responsibilities	Benefits depend on the quality of implementation and country-level ownership
Resources and feasibility	Uses existing governance and reporting arrangements rather than creating a new institution.	Requires sustained commitment from both organizations and both Executive Boards.	Can be supported through existing regional performance and oversight mechanisms.	Requires dedicated coordination capacity where additional monitoring and reporting expectations are introduced.	Can be integrated into existing UNSDCF and country reporting processes where appropriate	Shared accountability should apply only to jointly agreed outcomes; UN Women's institutional and UN-system accountability responsibilities remain distinct from joint programme accountability arrangements

Key insights:

- Shared accountability directly addresses one of the most frequently identified gaps in the current setup: limited accountability for results delivered jointly by UNFPA and UN Women.
- It strengthens incentives, oversight and alignment without requiring major institutional restructuring.
- It works through a common results framework with indicators and reporting anchored in the shared taxonomy and KPIs defined at headquarters, so results are measurable and comparable across countries.
- Benefits rely on tone at the top: joint reporting to both Executive Boards and commitment from the two principals and a clear escalation mechanism for disputes, rather than country-level goodwill alone.
- Accountability should preserve clear responsibility for each agency's mandate-specific functions while strengthening it for shared outcomes, and civil society organizations stress it should include published gender data to hold the wider UN system to account.
- UN Women's institutional and UN-system accountability responsibilities remain distinct from shared programme accountability arrangements.

3. Enhanced SDG5 Data, Analytics, Evaluation, and Foresight Collaboration

Option 3 turns data into a shared strength. Today, UNFPA and UN Women hold complementary assets, demographic and population expertise on one side, gender statistics and analysis on the other, but use them through separate systems. This option brings them together into a joint offer built around beneficiaries' life journey and organized by country typology, so evidence is produced once and used across programming, planning, financing and accountability. It works with existing UN data initiatives and national systems rather than adding parallel ones.

Description	Features (adjusted based on interviews)
3.1 Joint strengthening of data systems and increased data production for SDG5	Joint strengthening and modernization of SDG5-related data systems, with a focus on sustainable statistical capacity building and stronger support to National Statistical Offices and relevant line ministries. Coordinated global, regional and country workplans, informed by joint annual consultations and mid-year progress reviews, to clarify roles, sequencing and complementarity of support. Harmonized guidance, terminology, methodologies and minimum indicator sets for SDG5 monitoring, including GBV/EVAW, SRHR, harmful practices, administrative, humanitarian and citizen data. Support to interoperable gender data systems at country, regional and global levels, aligned with national data systems and the UN System Data Commons where relevant. Aligned and pooled technical and financial support to priority data production, including GBV/EVAW surveys, Demographic and Health Surveys, administrative data systems, humanitarian data and citizen data, while promoting and supporting minimum indicator sets to monitor SDG5.
3.2 Research and data for policy and programming	Greater connectivity and interoperability between UN Women's Women Count Data Hub and UNFPA's Population Data Portal, focused on SDG5 indicators and aligned with the UN System Data Commons. Joint and co-branded data-use products, including briefs, dashboards, trainings, analytical notes and evidence packages, to replace parallel outputs and strengthen the country-facing evidence offer. Deeper cooperation on regional and country programmes on data, analytics and evidence-based advocacy, including joint support to produce UN Country Gender Equality Profiles. Joint foresight capability on demographic, social, humanitarian and gender risks, joint applied analytics and rapid analysis, including integrated SDG5 analytics Data use organized around country context, national priorities, population and gender analysis, humanitarian and development needs, and relevant policy and planning cycles
3.3 Strengthened partnerships for data use in context and evidence-based policy advocacy	Policy-facing thought leadership and a stronger joint data and evidence offer to regions, countries and UN Country Teams, focused on the uptake of SDG5 evidence in policy and programming. Coordinated evaluations in areas of shared programming, including EVAWG/GBV, to generate evidence on results and inform future programming, policy dialogue and accountability. Joint evidence-based advocacy and partnership engagement with governments, UN Country Teams, Member States, development partners and civil society to increase demand for and use of gender data. Humanitarian action: a joint influence strategy to mobilize better-resourced agencies, humanitarian and development actors to invest in gender and SDG5 data. Development: coordinated data use, analysis and advocacy aligned with national planning, budgeting, financing and policy-review cycles.

3.1 Enhanced SDG5 data, analytics, evaluation and foresight collaboration would connect complementary UNFPA and UN Women capabilities within existing mandates

	Global		Regional		Country	
	Benefits	Challenges & Risks	Benefits	Challenges & Risks	Benefits	Challenges & Risks
Strategic positioning	Strengthens the evidence base for SDG5 advocacy and accountability; a shared foresight capability helps anticipate gender and SDG5 setbacks and respond early; in humanitarian settings, supports an influence strategy to engage better-resourced agencies	Requires agreement on common methodologies, terminology and analytical approaches, ethical data governance and role clarity across distinct institutional mandates.	Supports more consistent regional evidence products and policy engagement	Regional priorities for data and evidence use may differ significantly	Improves gender-responsive evidence for national strategies; in development settings, links evidence-based policy engagement with data collection	Demand for data, analytics and foresight varies across country contexts and institutional capacities
Coordination and partnerships	A nexus approach and common indicators per typology reduce fragmentation across agencies and align the data offer with national systems	Governance is needed to avoid duplicating existing UN data initiatives	Can support regional data commons, shared analytics and coordinated technical assistance	Risk of duplication if not aligned with existing UN data initiatives, Data Commons efforts and regional coordination mechanisms	Strengthens collaboration with NSOs, Resident Coordinators, UNCTs and national partners through a more integrated evidence ecosystem	Effectiveness depends on country-level capacity, data availability and institutional uptake and partner readiness
Delivery and results	Combines UNFPA's demographic and population-data expertise with UN Women's gender statistics; a shared innovative data-collection hub concentrates key development-project data and enables targeted action with external private partners	Benefits depend on translating global collaboration into operational support and country uptake; private-partner engagement requires clear data governance and safeguards	Systematic regional programmes on data, analytics, foresight and evidence-based policy engagement help anchor the evidence in regional and country context, combining demographic and gender analysis to inform programming	Requires sustained investment in systems, skills and regional analytical capacity	Data organised by country typology and life journey enables a systematised response, better support to governments and more impact for beneficiaries	Data ownership, financing responsibilities, governance arrangements and operational roles may require formal clarification
Resources and feasibility	Builds on existing platforms and capabilities, including UNFPA population data systems and UN Women gender data infrastructure, rather than creating a new entity or institutional architecture	Requires sustained financing, analytical capacity, interoperable systems and agreement on data stewardship, quality assurance and accountability for use	Uses regional expertise to strengthen data products, knowledge hubs and foresight capabilities without creating parallel structures	Regional uptake depends on available skills, resources and management attention	Can be phased through existing country planning, UNSDCF processes and national data-system support	Success depends on country uptake, integration with existing UN and national data systems and sustained investment in analytical capacity

Key insights:

- One of the strongest areas of complementarity between UNFPA and UN Women, building on existing demographic data, gender statistics, analytics and foresight rather than requiring major institutional change.
- The value lies in a data offer organized by country typology, common indicators and beneficiaries' life journey, systematizing the response rather than costly one-off studies.
- Foresight is a high-potential area: combining demography and gender analysis to anticipate risks and inform planning, instead of reacting after the fact.
- Governments increasingly expect integrated solutions interoperable with their systems; the main challenge is operationalizing collaboration through common governance, financing and accountability.
- Success depends on common methodologies, data governance, financing, accountability, country uptake, integration with existing UN data initiatives and sustained investment in analytical capacity.

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Structural merger: implications across levels

		Speed of implementation	Potential benefits & efficiency opportunities	Implementation risks (and mitigation)	Enabling conditions of success
C r i t e r i a C l u s t e r s	Strategic positioning	Long term (4+ years)	- Single institutional platform and one voice on gender equality, women's rights, SRHR and population - Greater political visibility and coherence from global commitments to country delivery	- Requires a General Assembly decision - Geopolitical tensions and the pushback on gender equality - Gender-related mandates remain distributed across multiple UN entities Risk rating: High	Clear mandate set at the outset, with front-loaded mandate-protection provisions.
	Coordination and partnerships	Medium term (3-4 years)	- One higher-profile counterpart for governments, donors and partners - Consolidates UN Women's system-wide coordination with UNFPA's sector role - Benefits depend on successful integration of governance, systems, accountability frameworks and organizational cultures	- Relies on RCs and UNCTs to deliver at scale - Funding risks. Risk rating: Medium	Preserve UN Women's coordination mandate (res. 64/289) and UNFPA's sector role; keep RC and UNCT relationships intact
	Delivery and results	Long term (4+ years)	- Integrated planning, reporting and resource allocation across mandates - Combined presence extends reach where one agency is thinly present	- Redesign of country programmes and operating models - Integrating two organizations carries transition and change-management costs. - Continuity of programming and service delivery during transition Risk rating: Medium-high	Phased sequencing by country typology; deliberate retention of mandate-specific capacity throughout transition
	Resources and feasibility	Long term (4+ years)	- One funding platform and a single donor case - Stronger basis to engage the private sector over time - Combined scale does not by itself unlock new funding	- Scale alone does not unlock new funding (CERF evaluation) - Host-country agreement discussions Risk rating: High	- Anticipate host-country discussions early - Dedicated transition and change-management programme across governance, workforce, systems and presence

Key implications:

- Funding is the key uncertainty: scale alone does not expand the funding base.
- Coordination can be improved without a merger; both agencies still rely on RCs and UNCTs to deliver at scale.
- Feasibility varies by model: absorption preserves more continuity; a new entity requires new legal and host-country arrangements throughout.
- CSOs stress mandate protection needs legal and institutional safeguards set before any General Assembly process.

Alternative options: implications across levels

		Speed of implementation	Potential benefits & efficiency opportunities	Implementation risks (and mitigation)	Enabling conditions of success
Criteria	Strategic positioning	Short to medium term (1–3 years) Timing dependent on agreement	- Preserves institutional arrangements while enabling joint action in areas of common interest - Strengthens the link between norms and country results. - Can be implemented progressively without institutional restructuring	- Does not create a single external voice or institutional platform across gender equality, women's rights, SRHR and population - Constraints are institutional and political, not legal - Collaboration can stay voluntary and personality-dependent without clear direction - Gender-related mandates remain distributed across multiple UN entities Risk rating: Low-Medium	Leadership commitment, revised incentives and clear accountability, supported by RC engagement and host-government ownership
	Coordination and partnerships	Medium term (3–4 years)	- Deepens coordination through RCs, UNCTs, UNSDCF's and regional platforms. - Recognises delivery depends on the wider UN system - Can improve alignment and shared accountability in agreed areas of collaboration	- Some options rely heavily on sustained leadership and follow-through - Risk of added coordination layers if not integrated into existing mechanisms - Wider UN-system gender coordination remains dependent on collaboration across multiple UN entities Risk rating: Medium	Anchor arrangements in UN80 and RC reform; for EVAWG/GBV, the proposed Joint Strategic EVAWG/GBV Framework with an HQ Director-level mechanism for guidance and disputes
	Delivery and results	Short to medium term (1–3 years)	- Gains concentrated in areas of common interest (EVAWG/GBV, SDG5 data) - Joint planning and coordinated financing improve coherence and evidence, subject to clear division of responsibilities	- Joint engagement remains dependent on coordination across two institutions rather than a unified country presence; it can be transaction-heavy and with limited cost savings - Benefits may not translate equally across all mandates, countries or contexts - Benefits are strongest in areas of common interest and more limited where mandates, accountability frameworks and delivery models differ Risk rating: Medium	Phased implementation focused on highest areas of common interest, adapted to country typology and grounded in evidence
	Resources and feasibility	Short to medium term (1–3 years)	- No large-scale transition costs; can be phased. - Coordinated resource mobilisation strengthens the joint funding case - Benefits depend on institutional alignment, adequate capacity and continued investment in shared systems	- The availability of adequate, dedicated transition financing is a condition of success. Transition costs should not be financed by diverting core resources or reducing Programme delivery and on-the-ground support for women and girls. - Savings are execution-dependent Risk rating: Medium	Aligned programme financing (not joint financial management), additional to each agency's own mobilisation; alignment with UN80 work packages (WP5, WP6, WP14)

Key implications:

- Taken as a package, the alternatives could strengthen collaboration, accountability and effectiveness, but package-level outcomes have not been demonstrated and depend on sustained institutional agreement, financing, coordination capacity, aligned incentives and country-level execution.
- The alternative options could be mutually reinforcing, compounding into greater coherence and efficiency and a stronger shared platform for SDG5 but combined implementation may also compound coordination, governance and financing risks. Package-level benefits and risks have not yet been tested.
- Savings are limited and execution-dependent, while many benefits depend on sustained coordination and alignment across two separate institutions.
- The Executive Boards can reinforce these arrangements through their existing authority, without a joint Board.

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Annex 1: Assessment criteria and evidence base : Structural Merger

The merger and alternative options are assessed against eight criteria, grouped in four clusters. The criteria are grounded in the agencies' mandates and strategic planning framework. Findings against them are corroborated through targeted interviews and validated with designated focal points from both organizations.

Cluster	Criterion	Grounded in key documentation	Grounded in key stakeholder interaction
A. Strategic positioning and mandate	1. Vision, mandate and strategic positioning- including comparative advantage, results leadership, institutional authority and culture)	UN Women SP 2026-2029; UNFPA SP 2026-2029; GA Res. 64/289; ICPD PoA	- Strategic leadership: Chiefs of Staff, Deputy Executive Directors, strategy/planning/resource-effectiveness leadership and external relations leadership from both entities. - Governance/legal: Executive Board secretariats/focal points and legal offices from both entities. - Regional/country leadership: regional directors and country representatives/heads of office from both entities. - Civil society consultations
	2. Normative and policy influence- including responsiveness to national priorities and implications for CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action, CSW and ICPD commitments	Both SPs; CEDAW; Beijing Platform for Action; CSW; ICPD	
B. Coordination and partnerships	3. UN-system coordination and convening- including system-wide gender coordination and intergovernmental engagement	GA Res. 64/289; UN-SWAP; QCPR	- UN-system coordination: UN Women UN System Coordination Division and Resident Coordinator/RCO perspectives. - Governance: Executive Board secretariats/focal points and intergovernmental affairs stakeholders from both entities. - Partnerships: strategic partnerships, external relations, private sector/civil society engagement and civil society consultations. - Regional leadership: regional directors from both entities.
	4. Partnerships and stakeholder engagement- including governments, donors, UN entities, civil society and women's rights organizations	Both SPs; Funding Compact	
C. Delivery and results	5. Programme effectiveness and results- including capacity to deliver, data, evidence, innovation and learning	Both SP integrated results frameworks; QCPR	- Programme leadership: programme divisions from both entities, including GBV/EVAWG, SRHR, population and development, and data/analytics functions. - Humanitarian leadership: humanitarian action/response leadership and humanitarian GBV expertise. - Regional and country leadership: regional directors, country representatives and heads of office from both entities. - CSO and WRO consultations.
	6. Service reach and country-level delivery- including implications for field presence, regional support, humanitarian delivery and mandate-specific services	Both SP country-programming frameworks; UNSDCF	
D. Resources and feasibility	7. Resources and financial sustainability- including funding platform, donor behavior, resource mobilization and cost implications	Both SP resources frameworks; Funding Compact	- Corporate functions: finance/management services, HR/workforce planning, ICT/systems, procurement/supply chain and evaluation offices. - Legal/governance: legal offices and Executive Board focal points. - Strategic leadership: senior leadership and strategy/planning/resource-effectiveness leadership from both entities.
	8. Feasibility, transition and speed of implementation- including legal, HR, IT, procurement, host-country and governance requirements	EB decisions 2026/2 and 2026/16; GA Res. 64/289; UN80 work packages	

Criteria are grounded in the two agencies' Strategic Plans 2026-2029, GA Resolution 64/289, the UN-SWAP framework, the Funding Compact and the QCPR. Findings are corroborated through targeted interviews and validated with designated focal points from both organizations. Where specific findings draw on independent assessments or joint evaluations, these are referenced in the assessment.

Annex 1: Assessment criteria and evidence base : Option 1- Integrated Country Delivery

Cluster	Criterion	Grounded in key documentation	Grounded in key stakeholder interaction
A. Strategic positioning and mandate	1. Vision, mandate and strategic positioning- preservation and strategic coherence, including joint action in areas of complementarity while preserving separate mandates and legal status	UN Women Strategic Plan 2026-2029; UNFPA Strategic Plan 2026-2029; GA Res. 64/289; QCPR A/RES/79/226	- Strategic planning: strategy/planning/resource-effectiveness leadership and Executive Board teams from both entities. - Programme leadership: programme divisions, regional directors and country representatives/heads of office from both entities. - UN-system coordination: UN Women UN System Coordination Division and Resident Coordinator/RCO perspectives. - Civil society consultations
	2. Normative and policy influence and engagement at national level	GA Res. 64/289; ICPD Programme of Action; UN Women and UNFPA Strategic Plans; CPD / Strategic Note materials	
B. Coordination and partnerships	3. UN-system coordination and convening- SN/CPD, CCA and UNSDCF alignment, including government and UNCT demand and avoidance of parallel coordination layers	UNSDCF Guidance; CPD / Strategic Note alignment note; QCPR A/RES/79/226	- Country and regional leadership: regional directors, country representatives and heads of office from both entities. - UN-system coordination: Resident Coordinator/RCO perspectives and UN Women UN System Coordination Division. - Partnerships/civil society: strategic partnerships, civil society division/private sector and CSO/WRO consultations. - Legal/governance: legal offices where representation or delegation arrangements are implicated.
	4. Partnerships and stakeholder engagement- including RC/UNCT, regional and civil society partnerships, including non-resident coverage, NRA/GEC awareness and partner access to dialogue/funding	RC system / DCO materials; UNSDCF guidance; UN-SWAP / UNCT-SWAP materials; civil society submissions	
C. Delivery and results	5. Programme effectiveness and results (incl. capacity to deliver; data, evidence and learning)- Joint planning and coordinated delivery in areas of demonstrated complementarity, especially EVAWG/GBV, SDG5 data and selected policy engagement priorities	CPDs, Strategic Notes and UNSDCF documents reviewed for D4; Strategic Plans; programme evidence used in D4	- Programme leadership: programme divisions, GBV/EVAWG, SRHR, population and development, and data/analytics functions from both entities. - Regional and country leadership: regional directors, country representatives and heads of office from both entities. - Humanitarian leadership: humanitarian action/response and humanitarian GBV expertise where delivery implications arise. - Civil society and WRO consultations.
	6. Service reach and country-level delivery- Country presence, non-resident coverage and regional backstopping, including phased rollout where both agencies are present and safeguards for mandate-specific delivery	D4 footprint and organizational data; CPDs/Strategic Notes; UNSDCF / CPD alignment guidance; UN80 regional reset materials	
D. Resources and feasibility	7. Resources and operational efficiency- including coordinated resource mobilization, common premises and regional capacity where feasible	Funding Compact 2.0; UNSDCF / CPD alignment guidance; D4 footprint and premises data; organizational finance inputs	- Corporate functions: finance, HR/workforce planning, operations, procurement/supply chain and ICT/systems stakeholders. - Legal/governance: legal offices and Executive Board focal points where representation or hosting is discussed. - Regional/country leadership: regional directors, country representatives and RCO perspectives. - Civil society: CSO/WRO consultations on access, accountability and funding implications.
	8. Feasibility, transition and speed of implementation- including safeguards for representation models, including legal authority, fiduciary accountability, safeguarding, technical backstopping and reversibility	RC system documentation; legal and operational inputs reviewed for D4; UN80 regional reset materials	

Annex 1: Assessment criteria and evidence base : Option 2- Joint UNFPA–UN Women EAWG/GBV Framework

Cluster	Criterion	Grounded in key documentation	Grounded in key stakeholder interaction
A. Strategic positioning and mandate	1. Vision, mandate and strategic positioning- preservation and strategic coherence, including joint action in areas of complementarity while preserving separate mandates and legal status	UN Women Strategic Plan 2026-2029; UNFPA Strategic Plan 2026-2029; GA Resolution 64/289; GBV AoR / Global Protection Cluster materials.	• Programme leadership: EAWG/GBV specialists, programme division leadership and regional programme leadership from both entities. • Humanitarian leadership: humanitarian action/response leadership and humanitarian GBV expertise. • Strategic leadership: senior leadership and strategy/planning stakeholders from both entities. • Civil society and WRO consultations.
	2. Normative and policy influence and engagement at national level	UN Women Strategic Plan; UNFPA Strategic Plan; GBV AoR / Global Protection Cluster materials; UN-SWAP 3.0.	
B. Coordination and partnerships	3. UN-system coordination and convening- SN/CPD, CCA and UNSDCF alignment, including government and UNCT demand and avoidance of parallel coordination layers	UN-SWAP / UN-SWAP 3.0; GBV AoR / Global Protection Cluster materials; QCPR; IANWGE / system coordination references reviewed for D4.	• UN-system coordination: UN Women UN System Coordination Division and Resident Coordinator/RCO perspectives. • Humanitarian coordination: humanitarian response/action leadership and humanitarian GBV coordination expertise. • Partnerships/civil society: strategic partnerships, civil society/private sector engagement and CSO/WRO consultations. • Regional leadership: regional directors and regional programme leadership from both entities.
	4. Partnerships and stakeholder engagement- including RC/UNCT, regional and civil society partnerships, including non-resident coverage, NRA/GEC awareness and partner access to dialogue/funding	Civil society submissions; Spotlight / joint programme and GBV evaluation evidence reviewed for D4; Funding Compact 2.0.	
C. Delivery and results	5. Programme effectiveness and results (incl. capacity to deliver; data, evidence and learning)- Joint planning and coordinated delivery in areas of demonstrated complementarity, especially EAWG/GBV, SDG5 data and selected policy engagement priorities	UN Women and UNFPA Strategic Plans; GBV AoR / Global Protection Cluster materials; CERF / GBV evaluation evidence; joint programme evidence.	• Programme leadership: GBV/EAWG, SRHR, population/data and programme division leadership from both entities. • Humanitarian leadership: humanitarian action/response leadership and GBV in emergencies expertise. • Country/regional leadership: country representatives, heads of office and regional directors from both entities. • Civil society and WRO consultations.
	6. Service reach and country-level delivery- Country presence, non-resident coverage and regional backstopping, including phased rollout where both agencies are present and safeguards for mandate-specific delivery	UN-SWAP 3.0; Executive Board documentation; CERF / GBV evaluation evidence; D4 stakeholder consultation evidence.	
D. Resources and feasibility	7. Resources and operational efficiency- including coordinated resource mobilization, common premises and regional capacity where feasible	Funding Compact 2.0; civil society financing inputs; GBV evaluation evidence; organizational finance inputs reviewed for D4.	• Finance/partnerships: public funding, financing and strategic partnerships stakeholders from both entities. • Governance/accountability: Executive Board focal points, senior leadership and reporting/accountability stakeholders. • Programme leadership: EAWG/GBV and programme division leadership from both entities. • Civil society: CSO/WRO consultations on funding, access and accountability.
	8. Feasibility, transition and speed of implementation- including safeguards for representation models, including legal authority, fiduciary accountability, safeguarding, technical backstopping and reversibility	Executive Board decisions 2026/2 and 2026/16; UN80 materials; Strategic Plans; D4 consultation evidence.	

Annex 1: Assessment criteria and evidence base : Option 3- Data, Analytics, Evaluation and Foresight

Cluster	Criterion	Grounded in key documentation	Grounded in key stakeholder interaction
A. Strategic positioning and mandate	1. Vision, mandate and strategic positioning- preservation and strategic coherence, including joint action in areas of complementarity while preserving separate mandates and legal status	UN Women Strategic Plan 2026-2029; UNFPA Strategic Plan 2026-2029; UN Women Women Count / Data Hub; UNFPA population data and census evidence.	- Data and evidence leadership: research/data, data & analytics, population and development, and evaluation leadership from both entities. - Strategic planning/programme leadership: strategy/planning and programme division leadership from both entities. - Regional/country leadership: regional directors and country representatives/heads of office where data use and country demand were discussed.
	2. Normative and policy influence and engagement at national level	UN Women Women Count; UNFPA Strategic Plan; UN Women Strategic Plan; UNFPA census evaluation / population data evidence.	
B. Coordination and partnerships	3. UN-system coordination and convening- SN/CPD, CCA and UNSDCF alignment, including government and UNCT demand and avoidance of parallel coordination layers	UNSDCF guidance; QCPR A/RES/79/226; UN Women Women Count materials; UNFPA census / population data evidence.	- ICT and systems: joint UNFPA/UN Women systems and technology consultation. - Data/evaluation leadership: data & analytics, research/data and evaluation office consultations. - UN-system coordination: Resident Coordinator/RCO perspectives and UNCT-related consultations. - Regional/country leadership: regional directors and country representatives /heads of office.
	4. Partnerships and stakeholder engagement- including RC/UNCT, regional and civil society partnerships, including non-resident coverage, NRA/GEC awareness and partner access to dialogue/funding	UN-SWAP / UN-SWAP 3.0; UNSDCF guidance; UN Women Women Count; Funding Compact 2.0.	
C. Delivery and results	5. Programme effectiveness and results (incl. capacity to deliver; data, evidence and learning)- Joint planning and coordinated delivery in areas of demonstrated complementarity, especially EVAWG/GBV, SDG5 data and selected policy engagement priorities	UN Women Women Count; UNFPA Strategic Plan; UNFPA census evaluation; CPD / Strategic Note alignment materials; organizational data package.	- UN Women Women Count; UNFPA Strategic Plan; UNFPA census evaluation; CPD / Strategic Note alignment materials; organizational data package. - Data and analytics leadership: UNFPA data & analytics, population and development, and UN Women research/data functions. - Evaluation offices: independent evaluation office consultations from relevant entities. - Programme leadership: programme divisions, regional directors and country representatives from both entities. - Civil society: CSO consultations where data, accountability and evidence use were discussed.
	6. Service reach and country-level delivery- Country presence, non-resident coverage and regional backstopping, including phased rollout where both agencies are present and safeguards for mandate-specific delivery	UNSDCF guidance; UN Women Data Hub / Women Count; UNFPA population data evidence; CPD / Strategic Note alignment materials.	
D. Resources and feasibility	7. Resources and and operational efficiency- including coordinated resource mobilization, common premises and regional capacity where feasible	UN-SWAP 3.0; UN Women Women Count; UNFPA census / data evidence; organizational ICT/data inputs reviewed for D4.	- ICT/systems: joint IT/systems leadership consultation. - Corporate functions: finance/resource planning, data governance-related corporate stakeholders and evaluation offices. - Data and programme leadership: data & analytics, research/data, population and development and programme division leadership. - Regional/country leadership: regional directors and country representatives/heads of office as users of data/evidence.
	8. Feasibility, transition and speed of implementation- including safeguards for representation models, including legal authority, fiduciary accountability, safeguarding, technical backstopping and reversibility	Funding Compact 2.0; UNFPA census evaluation; UN Women Data Hub / Women Count; organizational data and ICT inputs.	

Annex 2: Programmatic alignment matrix

Theme	UNFPA	UN Women	Alignment
GBV / EVAWG	Survivor services, protection, prevention, humanitarian GBV response	Prevention and response programming; survivor support and services through partners; access to justice; legal and policy reform; institutional accountability; support to women's rights organizations and service providers; humanitarian EVAWG programming; and the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women.	Strong opportunity for joint action
Data & Evidence	Population, demographic and census data	Gender statistics, gender analysis and accountability	Strong opportunity for joint action
Humanitarian Action	Life-saving SRHR, maternal health and GBV services	Gender-responsive crisis programming; women's leadership and participation in humanitarian decision-making; protection, access to justice, recovery and resilience; prevention and response to VAWG; and operational support through women's organizations, service providers and national partners.	Shared operating context
Gender Equality	Bodily autonomy, SRHR and rights-based development	Gender norms, institutions, leadership and empowerment	Complementary contributions
Youth & Adolescents	Core thematic pillar and delivery area	Cross-cutting beneficiary group	Complementary contributions
Women's Leadership & Economic Empowerment	Limited engagement	Core thematic focus	Distinct mandate area
SRHR & Family Planning	Core mandate and delivery platform	Indirect link through gender equality outcomes	Distinct mandate area
Maternal & Newborn Health	Core mandate	Limited engagement	Distinct mandate area
Population Dynamics & Demographic Change	Core mandate and strategic outcome	Limited engagement	Distinct mandate area
UN System Gender Coordination	Participating entity	Formal system-wide mandate	Distinct mandate area

Areas of alignment: Deep-dive

Shared Objective / Areas of Alignment	UNFPA Programme Approach	UN Women Programme Approach
Reduce GBV/ EVAWG	Survivor services, prevention and humanitarian response	Prevention, access to justice, legal reform, policy reform and institutional accountability
Data - Distinct but complementary roles	Population data, census and demographic analysis	Gender statistics, accountability and policy use
Humanitarian work - shared operating context in which both agencies contribute through distinct but complementary roles	Health, protection and SRHR services	Women's leadership, access to justice, protection and resilience
Advance gender equality - Complementary contributions to shared outcomes	SRHR, bodily autonomy, demographic inclusion	Rights, institutions, leadership and accountability

Annex 3: Largest 20 shared country footprints by combined expenditure

Rank	Country	Combined country exp. \$M	UN Women country exp. \$M	UN Women share of country exp. (% share of global country total \$380M)	UNFPA country exp. \$M	UNFPA share of country exp. (% share of global country total \$1098M)
1	Afghanistan	140.4	46.0	12.1%	94.5	8.6%
2	Ukraine	70.2	19.1	5.0%	51.1	4.7%
3	Yemen	54.7	2.0	0.5%	52.7	4.8%
4	Ethiopia	46.6	7.2	1.9%	39.4	3.6%
5	Bangladesh	46.5	5.5	1.4%	41.0	3.7%
6	DRC	39.8	7.0	1.8%	32.8	3.0%
7	Sudan	37.4	4.8	1.3%	32.6	3.0%
8	Palestine	32.7	8.0	2.1%	24.7	2.3%
9	South Sudan	31.9	8.4	2.2%	23.5	2.1%
10	Mali	29.2	11.1	2.9%	18.1	1.6%
11	Pakistan	29.0	7.2	1.9%	21.9	2.0%
12	Nigeria	27.6	7.5	2.0%	20.1	1.8%
13	Uganda	27.4	8.7	2.3%	18.6	1.7%
14	Turkey	26.7	6.0	1.6%	20.8	1.9%
15	Kenya	25.7	7.9	2.1%	17.8	1.6%
16	Mozambique	24.1	4.2	1.1%	19.9	1.8%
17	Iraq	23.6	8.1	2.1%	15.5	1.4%
18	Cameroon	23.3	3.6	1.0%	19.6	1.8%
19	Rep. Moldova	22.5	6.2	1.6%	16.4	1.5%
20	Tanzania	22.1	7.2	1.9%	14.9	1.4%
Total	Top 20 common countries	787.3	185.7	48.9%	595.9	54.3%
Country expenditure denominator	All countries	1,477.9	380.0	100.0%	1,097.9	100.0%
Top 20 common-country share	Top 20 / all country expenditure	53.2%	-	-	-	-

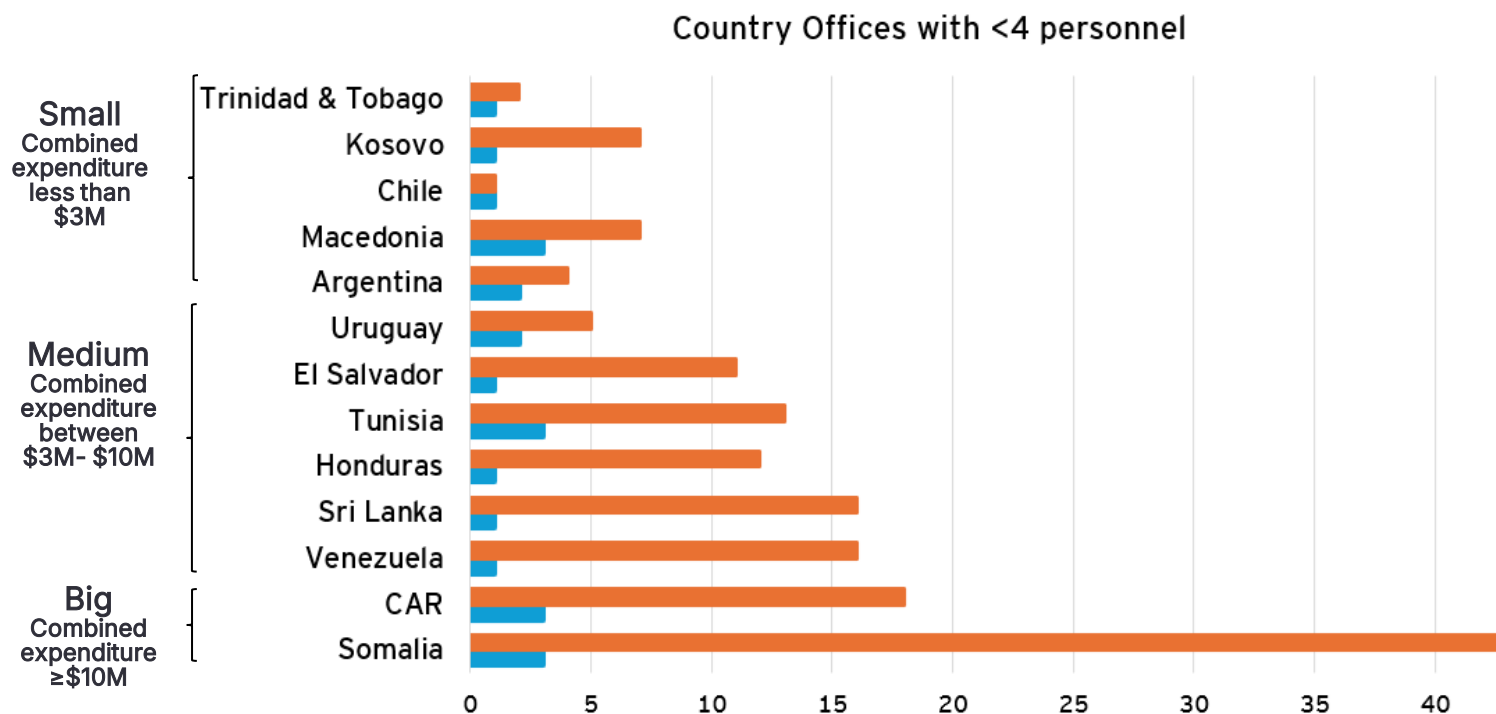
1. Only country-level expenditure was considered in the analysis, i.e. no HQ expenditure, 2. Only countries where both UNFPA & UN Women are present were considered (i.e., Largest 20 common countries by combined expenditure). As a result, Syria was excluded due to only UNFPA being present there, 3. Combined total expenditure for UNFPA & UN Women is \$2.1B (Global, Regional & Country), 4. Countries are ranked on combined expenditure basis, 5. UNFPA country expenditure is \$1,098M & UN Women country expenditure is \$380M (combined \$1478M) | Source: CEB 2024 Expenditure and Personnel Data by Geography, 2025 CEB data was not available at the time of performing this analysis.

Annex 4: Smallest 20 shared country footprints by combined expenditure

Rank	Country / territory	Combined country exp. \$M	UN Women exp. \$M	UN Women share of country exp. (% share of global country total \$380M)	UNFPA exp. \$M	UNFPA share of country exp. (% share of global country total \$1098M)
1	Trinidad and Tobago	0.1	<0.1	<0.1%	<0.1	<0.1%
2	Kosovo	2.2	1.1	0.30%	1.1	0.10%
3	Chile	2.3	2.1	0.60%	0.2	<0.1%
4	Rep. Macedonia	2.5	1.3	0.30%	1.2	0.10%
5	Argentina	2.8	1.5	0.40%	1.3	0.10%
6	Peru	2.9	<0.1	<0.1%	2.9	0.30%
7	Thailand	2.9	1	0.30%	1.9	0.20%
8	Serbia	3	1.6	0.40%	1.5	0.10%
9	Tajikistan	3.1	1.2	0.30%	1.9	0.20%
10	Kazakhstan	3.4	1.5	0.40%	1.9	0.20%
11	Kyrgyzstan	3.8	1.4	0.40%	2.4	0.20%
12	Tunisia	3.9	2.2	0.60%	1.7	0.20%
13	Uruguay	4.2	0.6	0.20%	3.7	0.30%
14	Albania	4.3	3	0.80%	1.3	0.10%
15	Bosnia and Herzegovina	5.1	2.3	0.60%	2.7	0.20%
16	Libya	5.3	0.9	0.20%	4.3	0.40%
17	El Salvador	6	2.2	0.60%	3.8	0.30%
18	China	6.6	3	0.80%	3.6	0.30%
19	South Africa	6.6	3.8	1.00%	2.8	0.30%
20	Philippines	7	0.9	0.20%	6.1	0.60%
Total	Smallest 20 common countries	~78.0	~31.7	~8.3%	~46.4	~4.2%
Total country expenditure denominator	All countries	1,477.90	380	100.00%	1,097.90	100.00%
Smallest 20 share of combined country expenditure	Smallest 20 / all countries	~5.3%	-	-	-	-

1. Only country-level expenditure was considered in the analysis, i.e. no HQ expenditure, 2. Only countries where both UNFPA & UN Women are present were considered (i.e. Smallest 20 common countries by combined expenditure), 3. Combined total expenditure for UNFPA & UN Women is \$2.1B (Global, Regional & Country), 4. Countries are ranked on combined expenditure basis, 5. UNFPA country expenditure is \$1,098M & UN Women country expenditure is \$380M (combined \$1478M) | Source: CEB 2024 Expenditure and Personnel Data by Geography, 2025 CEB data was not available at the time of performing this analysis.

Annex 5: Thin-presence countries



- Several countries already operate with a very limited in-country footprint for one agency, often 1-3 personnel, indicating that mandate coverage is already being delivered through a combination of country presence, regional expertise and wider UN system support
- Option 1.3 would formalize these arrangements through common rules and procedures, providing a more consistent framework for country coverage.

Category	Country	UN Women personnel	UNFPA personnel
Big	Somalia	15	43
Big	CAR	25	18
Medium	Venezuela	4	16
Medium	Sri Lanka	28	16
Medium	Honduras	17	12
Medium	Tunisia	21	13
Medium	El Salvador	21	11
Medium	Uruguay	13	5
Small	Argentina	33	4
Small	Macedonia	9	7
Small	Chile	25	1
Small	Kosovo	7	7
Small	Trinidad & Tobago	4	2

Annex 6: Survey response insight mapping

Survey Focus: 4. COUNTRY, REGIONAL AND PROGRAMMATIC IMPACT	Key Survey Insight	Section Title	Slide(s)
4.1. What country-specific considerations should be taken into account regarding programme delivery, results, mandate protection and critical areas of work in your context, including normative and policy influence, emergency response, peace and security, EAWG/GBV programming, SRHR services and protection-related work? Please distinguish, where relevant, between the merger scenario and alternative non-structural options	Respondents identify possible efficiencies from avoiding duplication of physical presence.	1.3 Supporting non-resident countries extends each agency's reach through the RC system and regional support, with results dependent on country context and existing UNCT arrangements	Slide 20
	Merger-related considerations focus on mandate protection, continuity and implementation feasibility.	A structural merger offers a single institutional platform, with benefits dependent on transition and host-country discussions	Slides 14, 30
	Need to maintain each agency's mandate and manage implications for separate strategic plans and leadership arrangements.	Structural merger; 1.4 Country-level representation and leadership	Slides 14, 21, 30
	UNFPA's existing in-country presence is relevant for operational access and continuity.	1.3 Support to countries where either UNFPA or UN Women is	Slide 20
	Shared physical space, reduced fragmentation and integrated interaction with common counterparts.	1.1 Integrated country-level delivery and impact	Slides 17-18
4.2. What existing or potential synergies, collaboration models or joint working arrangements between UNFPA and UN Women should be formalized or deepened, and what country-specific government, Resident Coordinator, UN and other development partners, other civil society or women's rights organization perspectives should inform implementation planning?	Coordination, joint planning and joint programming rather than full merger.	1.1 Integrated country-level delivery and impact; 2. Joint Strategic UNFPA-UN Women EAWG/GBV Framework; Comparative assessment of merger and non-merger options	Slides 18, 22-26, 31
	Joint frameworks on Gender, GBV and EAW.	2. Joint Strategic UNFPA-UN Women EAWG/GBV Framework	Slides 22-26
	Joint humanitarian response.	State of Play; 2.1 Joint Strategic Framework; 2.2 Joint Programming and Coordinated Delivery	Slides 11, 23-24
	Joint evidence and gender analysis.	3. Enhanced SDG5 Data, Analytics, Evaluation and Foresight Collaboration	Slides 27-28
	Collaboration with women-led organisations and CSOs while preserving mandate clarity.	CSO perspectives; 1.1 Integrated country-level delivery; Structural merger	Slides 7, 14, 18
	EAWG/GBV among the most cited areas for formalization.	State of Play; 2. Joint Strategic UNFPA-UN Women EAWG/GBV Framework	Slides 11, 22-26
	WPS/YPS among the most cited areas for formalization.	2.1 Joint Strategic Framework; 2.2 Joint Programming and Coordinated Delivery	Slides 23-24
	joint policy engagement.	1.1 Integrated country-level delivery; 2. Joint EAWG/GBV Framework	Slides 18, 22-26

Annex 6: Survey response insight mapping

Survey findings reflect stakeholder perspectives and do not constitute agreement by either organization. Proposed models -including a division of labor, joint knowledge hub or integrated arrangements- remain subject to joint institutional review and agreement.

Survey Focus: 4. COUNTRY, REGIONAL AND PROGRAMMATIC IMPACT	Key Survey Insight	Slide(s)
4.2. What existing or potential synergies, collaboration models or joint working arrangements between UNFPA and UN Women should be formalized or deepened, and what country-specific government, Resident Coordinator, UN and other development partners, other civil society or women's rights organization perspectives should inform implementation planning?	Coordinated resource mobilization.	Slide 25
	Joint work with RC/HC, UNCTs, governments and donors.	Slides 18-20
	Joint EVAW/GBV Strategic Framework with a clear division of labour.	Slides 22-23
	Joint global knowledge hub on gender.	Slides 24, 27-28
	Protect mandates, specialised expertise, accountability, trusted partnerships and service delivery models.	Slides 14, 30
	Risks of disrupting relationships with governments, women's rights organisations, donors and rights holders.	Slides 7, 14, 30
	Leverage UNFPA field presence and UN Women's regional, normative and technical support.	Slide 20
	Expand the inter-agency gender working group.	Slide 20
	Joint consultations on GBV and EVAWG.	Slides 22-24
4.3. What implementation would be required to achieve the expected benefits in your context and what country-specific challenges or considerations should be managed to support continuity of operations and Programme delivery during the period of uncertainty	Cost-shared embedded gender expertise.	Slides 19-20
	Phased implementation, clear governance, delegated authority, change management and business continuity measures.	Slides 14, 30-31
	Avoid disruption to humanitarian response, EVAWG/GBV programming, SRHR services, supply chains and donor agreements.	Slides 14, 30

Annex 6: Survey response insight mapping

Survey Focus: 4. COUNTRY, REGIONAL AND PROGRAMMATIC IMPACT	Key Survey Insight	Slide(s)
4.3. What implementation would be required to achieve the expected benefits in your context and what country-specific challenges or considerations should be managed to support continuity of operations and Programme delivery during the period of uncertainty	Legal, financial, staffing, system and accountability transition plans with safeguards.	Slides 14, 30
	Clear division of responsibilities, joint planning, shared accountability, operational interoperability, coordinated resource mobilization and shared services.	Slides 18, 25-26
	Clear coordination mechanisms and shared accountability.	Slide 26
	joint policy engagement and communications supporting joint planning and programming.	Slides 18, 24
	Continuity over the pace of structural change.	Slides 15, 30-31
4.4. Specific questions by typology (based on presence configuration) Joint-presence countries What country-specific considerations should be taken into account regarding collaboration, programme coherence and collective results?	Preserving distinct mandates while coordinating around shared results.	Slides 11, 18
	Joint programming, joint planning, shared evidence and analytics, coordinated advocacy, shared services and clearer division of labour.	Slides 18, 22-28
	Risks to mandate clarity, accountability, technical leadership and programme continuity.	Slides 14, 30
	Programme coherence tied to country context, national priorities, UNCT/UNHCT and Cooperation Framework mechanisms.	Slide 18
4.4. Specific questions by typology (based on presence configuration) UNFPA resident agency / UN Women non-resident agency What country-specific considerations should be taken into account regarding access to expertise, technical support and representation?	How UN Women can be represented and supported where absent.	Slides 20-21
	Whether UNFPA or the RC should represent UN Women and how reporting and monitoring are incorporated.	Slides 20-21
	Strengthen collaboration through EVAWG/GBV programming, regional office support and hosted focal points.	Slides 20, 22-26
	Coordinate policy engagement, programming, monitoring and resource mobilization without a merger.	Slides 20, 25-28

Annex 6: Survey response insight mapping

Survey Focus: 4. COUNTRY, REGIONAL AND PROGRAMMATIC IMPACT	Key Survey Insight	Slide(s)
4.4. Specific questions by typology (based on presence configuration) MCO, clustered office or regional coverage What country-specific or regional considerations should be taken into account regarding support across multiple countries and regional coordination?	Balance country ownership with regional expertise, coordination and surge capacity.	Slide 19
	Preserve regional policy, normative and technical capacity.	Slide 19
	Shared regional technical advisory teams, integrated surge capacity and joint centres of expertise.	Slides 19, 24
	Shared gender data and analytics.	Slides 27-28
	Regional shared EVAWG/GBV expertise.	Slides 19, 24
	Regional coordination should support, not replace, country engagement.	Slide 19

Annex 7: UN80 intersections and interdependencies

The reform options do not operate in isolation. Their feasibility, speed and risk depend on UN80 work packages already reshaping the operating environment.

UN80 work package	Relevance to the merger and alternative options
WP4 UNFPA / UN Women	The direct reform track. This assessment provides the country, regional and programmatic evidence on the merger and the alternative options.
WP5 UNCT reconfiguration	Shapes country presence, representation models, role clarity and the ability to right-size support by country typology. Directly relevant to Option 1.
WP6 / WP12 Regional Reset and Regional Platforms for Integration	Shape regional technical cells, pooled expertise and regional support to countries. Relevant to Option 1.2 and to avoiding additional coordination layers.
WP8 Expertise-on-Demand	Enables faster access to technical expertise in countries without full in-country capacity. Relevant to Options 1.2, 1.3 and 3.
WP14 Unified Services Roadmap	Governs shared services, common back offices, procurement, ICT, HR, finance and cost transparency. Relevant to operational interoperability,
WP15 Technology	Governs shared core technology, common tools and digital interoperability.
WP16 Data	Relevant to shared data platforms, SDG5 analytics and joint evidence products. Directly relevant to Option 3.
WP18 Funding Mechanisms	Relevant to pooled funding, resource mobilization and the financial sustainability of any non-structural arrangement. Relevant to Option 2.3.

Implication for this assessment: options that build on existing UN80 tracks may avoid creating parallel structures and may reduce certain legal or structural requirements. Their overall feasibility, implementation time and risk nevertheless depend on inter-organizational agreement, governance, accountability, financing, dedicated capacity and country-level execution. The assessment does not establish that the alternatives are overall faster, less disruptive or lower risk than the merger.

Annex 8: Stakeholder Interactions

Stakeholder Group	Engagement
UNFPA Headquarters	Directors and senior management from management services, strategic resource planning and related headquarters functions
UN Women Headquarters	Deputy Chief of Staff, Deputy Executive Director, Chief Financial Officer and other headquarters-based leaders consulted during the assessment
Regional Offices	Regional Directors and regional leadership representatives from UNFPA and UN Women regional offices
Country Offices	UNFPA and UN Women Country Representatives and country-level perspectives gathered through country consultations (semi-structured interviews and online-survey)
Civil Society Organisations	Participants in dedicated consultation processes and written submissions during the assessment Specific working session as part of this assignment.
Member State Perspectives	Perspectives reviewed through Executive Board discussions, formal statements and UN80 consultation processes
Project Governance	Steering Committee discussions with UNFPA and UN Women throughout the assessment process

Annex 9: Bibliography

Author	Year	Document
ICPD	1994	ICPD Programme of Action (foundational mandate)
UNFPA	2025	UNFPA Strategic Plan 2026-2029 (DP/FPA/2025/9)
UNFPA	2024	UNFPA Annual Report 2024
United Nations General Assembly	2010	Resolution 64/289 establishing UN Women
UN Women	2022	UN Women Strategic Plan 2022-2025
UN Women	2025	UN Women Strategic Plan 2026-2029 (UNW/2025/7)
UN Women	2024	UN Women Executive Director Annual Report 2024 (UNW/2024/2)
UN Women	2025	UN Women Executive Director Annual Report 2025 (UNW/2025/2)
Executive Board of the UNDP, UNFPA and the United Nations Office for Project Service	2026	Report of the annual session 2026
United Nations	2025	UN80 Initiative: <i>Shifting Paradigms, United to Deliver</i>
United Nations	2025-2026	UN80 Initiative Workstream Reports: Country Team Reconfiguration and Regional Reset
United Nations General Assembly	2024	Resolution 79/258 on the Resident Coordinator System
United Nations	2024	Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) resolutions and implementation reports (A/RES/79/226)
UN Women	2024	UN System Coordination and Gender Mainstreaming Frameworks (including UN-SWAP 3.0 (2024) and UNCT-SWAP)
United Nations	1995	Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

Annex 9: Bibliography

Author	Year	Document
United Nations	1979	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
United Nations	2017	Repositioning the United Nations Development System to Deliver on the 2030 Agenda
United Nations	2006	Delivering as One: Report of the High-Level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence
UNFPA	2022	Formative Evaluation of UNFPA Engagement in UN Development System Reform
UNFPA, UN Women & CERF	2023	Final Evaluation of the UNFPA–UN Women Gender-Based Violence (GBV) 2-Year Emergency Response Fund (CERF) Block Grant
United Nations	2024	UN INFO Country Presence and UN Country Team Data
UN Women	2022-2026	Country Strategic Notes for selected countries included in the assessment
UN Women	2022-2026	Regional Strategic Notes and Regional Programme Documents
UNFPA	2022-2026	Country Programme Documents (CPDs) for sampled countries
Feminist Cross-Coalition (FCC) UN80 Working Group	2026	Response to the Strategic Merger Assessment of UNFPA and UN Women
Feminist Cross-Coalition (FCC) UN80 Working Group	2026	Response to the UNFPA–UN Women Alternative Options Paper
Feminist Cross-Coalition (FCC) UN80 Working Group	2026	Reform Without a Merger: Options for Enhancing Coherence, Efficiency, and Country-Level Impact
Fòs Feminista	2026	Getting UN80 Right: Protecting Mandates While Improving Coordination
Soroptimist International & Alliance of NGOs on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice	2026	Consolidated Findings: The UN Liquidity Crisis, UN80 Reform and the UNFPA–UN Women Merger

Annex 9: Bibliography

Author	Year	Document
Soroptimist International & Alliance of NGOs on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice	2026	Executive Summary: Findings at a Glance: The UN Liquidity Crisis and the UN80 Reform / UNFPA–UN Women Merger
United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB)	2025	CEB Financial Statistics Database – Expenditure and Personnel Data by Geography (2024 reporting year)
United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB)	2025	CEB Personnel Statistics Database (2021–2025)
UNFPA & UN Women	2025	Data shared on footprint (Country Regional & HQ), office typology, programmes as a part of the data package
MOPAN	2025	Assessment Report: UNFPA
MOPAN	2025	Assessment Report: UN Women
UNSDG System-Wide Evaluation Office	2024	Spotlight Initiative Final Evaluation
UN Women / UNDP / UNICEF / UNFPA	2013–2014	Joint Evaluation of Joint Programmes on Gender Equality in the United Nations System
UNFPA & UNICEF	2025	Joint Programme on the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Annual Report
United Nations	2024	Funding Compact 2.0
United Nations	2019	United Nations Funding Compact

Annex 9: Bibliography

Author	Year	Document
Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS	2026	Decision 2026/2
Executive Board of UN Women	2026	Decision 2026/16