

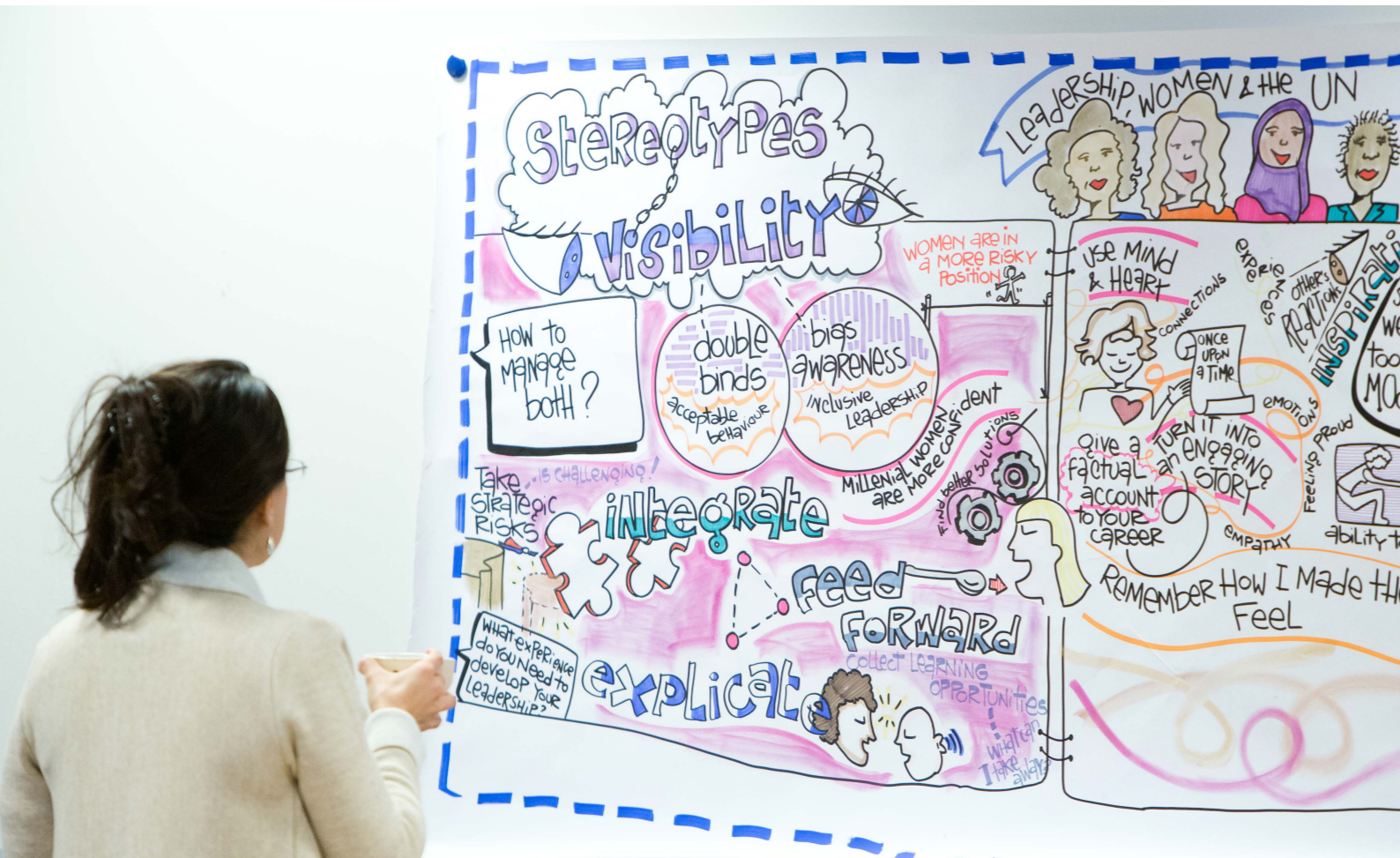
STORIES OF IMPACT

Leadership, Women and the UN Programme



UNITED NATIONS
SYSTEM STAFF COLLEGE





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“ Let us all pledge to do everything we can to overcome entrenched prejudice, support engagement and activism, and promote gender equality and women’s empowerment. ”

António Guterres

Our deep thanks go to **all the pioneers** who devoted their lives to advance gender equality as a universal human right, and all the **fellow colleagues** and **worldwide partners** committed to learning aimed at creating a truly inclusive culture. The vision of the programme is in constant conversation with your efforts.

We would also like to thank the **leadership scholars** for passionately furthering scientific knowledge on the gender aspects of leadership, and **practitioners** who have tested, applied and expanded on this research. We offer our special thanks to those who have joined the **faculty** of the programme and thoroughly infused its vision with the level of excellence intended.

The core of our gratitude stands with the **cherished community of alumnae** who, since 2015, have been applying and sharing the insights gained during the Leadership, Women and the UN Programme.

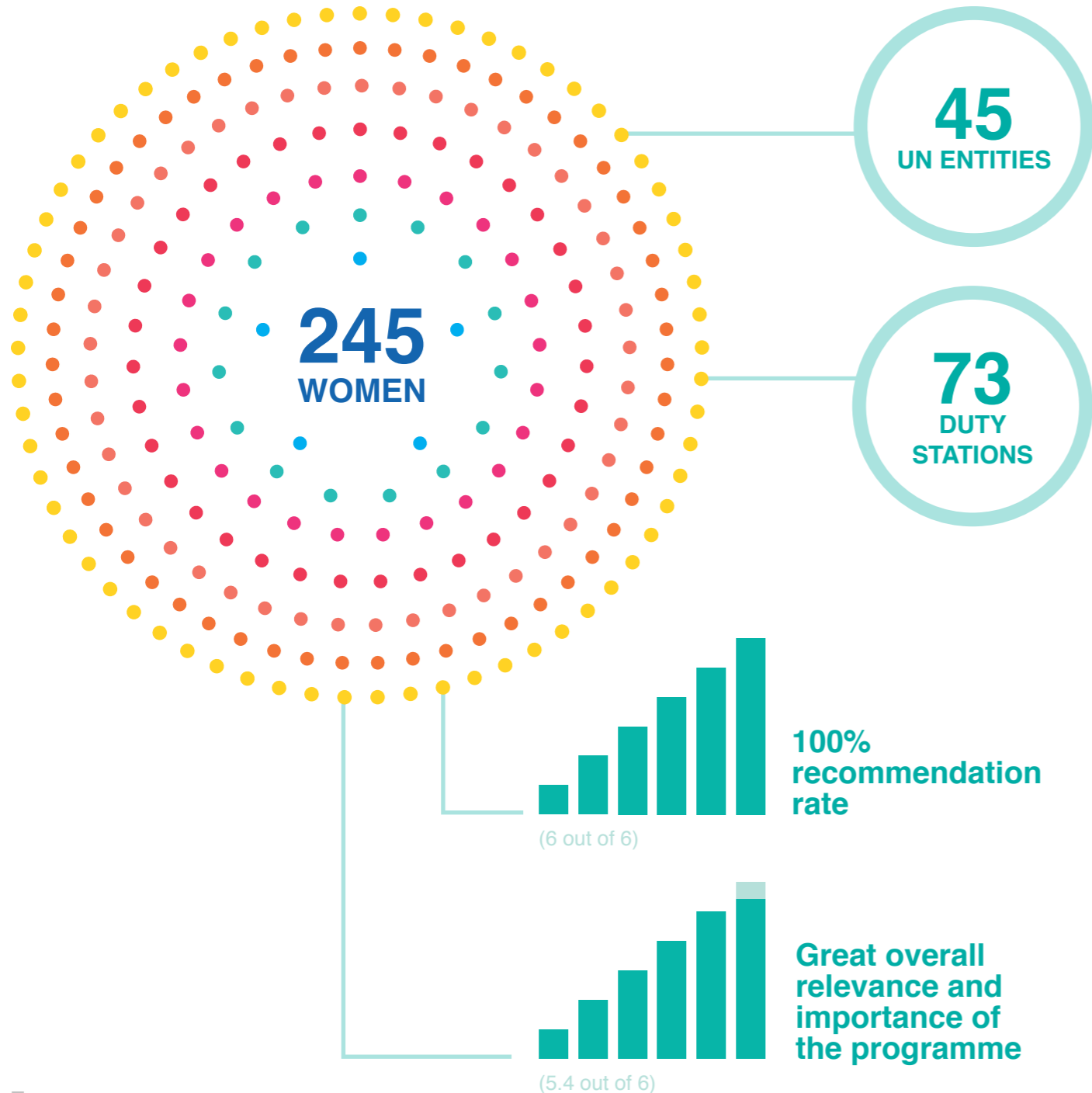
The publication of this booklet would not have been possible without the support demonstrated by **those of you who participated in the impact assessment study**. By doing so, you have bridged past and present and actively contributed to shape the future of the programme.

We are thankful to our **UN partnering entities** and all the representatives who have recognised the value and importance of the programme by sponsoring female staff to attend and refine their leadership competencies. We are proud to jointly promote an organizational culture that upholds the fundamental values of the UN.

The booklet is specifically dedicated to the fifteen women who shared their powerful stories of impact. We are tremendously grateful! Your personal stories are an extraordinary source of motivation for the work that we devote to the programme. We are confident that your voice will resonate and inspire others to reflect and deepen their leadership development with increased awareness and curiosity.

KCLM Team

Knowledge Centre for Leadership and Management



THE LEADERSHIP, WOMEN AND THE UN PROGRAMME AT A GLANCE

The Leadership, Women and the UN Programme is one of the flagship learning offerings of the United Nations System Staff College, a centre of excellence for learning and knowledge-sharing within the UN system.

From the first edition in early 2015 to the end of 2017, **245 women from 73 duty stations and 45 UN agencies and departments** joined this lively learning community. The alumnae of the programme unanimously reported a **100 per cent recommendation rate and great overall relevance and importance of the programme.**

Motivated by this success and in response to growing demand, the Staff College decided to expand the programme's geographical reach and increase the number of its yearly editions. The locations of the 4 editions of 2018 are Vienna, Turin, Geneva and Cairo. Participation has risen to over 100 participants annually.





WHY LEADERSHIP, WOMEN AND THE UN?

Ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making is a central objective of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. For the UN to remain a standard bearer of gender parity and equality, it became paramount to further establish and sustain the progress made within the organization by, inter alia, ensuring more women in senior leadership positions.

In 2014, when the Agenda was still being negotiated, UNSSC was working towards the same vision with the design of a tailor-made leadership programme for female UN staff. These efforts were consolidated **in early 2015 when the first interagency edition of the Leadership, Women and the UN Programme was launched.**

The aims underpinning the programme were **to promote the expansion and renewal of prevalent paradigms of leadership** and ensure a more gender-balanced workplace across the UN system. The urgency for this change has been recently reinforced by the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity and the UN reform agenda launched by the Secretary-General.

The Leadership Women and the UN Programme continues **to invest in the potential of female staff at the P4 and P5 level to lead transformational change.** We are committed to nourish a community that is prepared to thoughtfully address the challenges that the world currently faces and those that will shape our future. **We believe in the power of this community to tap into all potential opportunities for the creation of a peaceful and inclusive world.**

“ We must generate global consensus to accelerate the much needed end of all forms of discrimination against women. Because an injury to one is an injury to all. ”

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka

PROGRAMME LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The aim of the programme is to prepare a critical mass of female UN staff at the P4 and P5 level for assignments at the Director-level and for greater leadership exercise in their current roles.

The programme has evolved over the years to ensure that women across the UN system are provided with a unique opportunity to:

- Gain a better understanding of different approaches to leadership, as well as the gender aspects of **leadership and the challenges and opportunities** for women in UN leadership roles.
- Increase their self-awareness through a **360° leadership assessment**, personality profile and coaching.
- Develop a **set of skills and competencies in communication** for transformative and charismatic leadership, effective negotiation, influencing and change.
- Share their experiences as leadership agents in their work and **develop a lasting and supportive network**.

The faculty includes speakers from different sectors, ranging from international organizations, academic institutions, the non-for-profit environment and the private

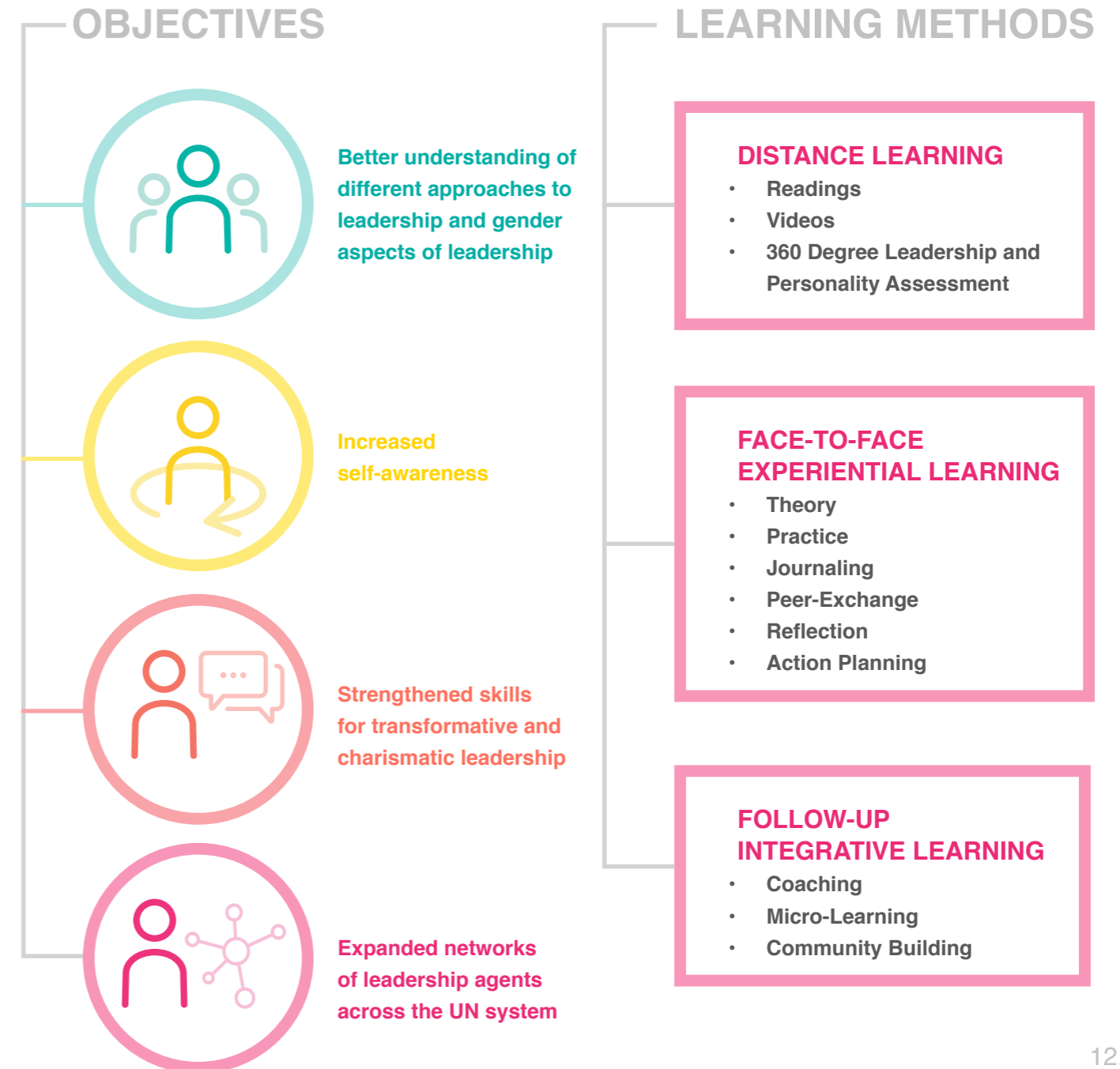
sector, to the art and culture community. In this manner, the Leadership, Women and the UN Programme encourages lateral thinking and cross-fertilization.

The programme consists of initial e-learning activities, such as pre-readings and a 360° degrees leadership and personality assessment, followed by a five-day face-to-face interaction that includes theoretical and practical sessions.

Peer-Exchange is seen as a key feature of the learning methodology as it allows for exchange of experiences, challenges and best practices to collaboratively work on solutions in a safe and stimulating environment.

Daily reflection and journaling are an integral part of the face-to-face programme to achieve internalization and application of what has been learned. The five-day learning experience culminates in the finalisation of action plans where the learning is consolidated and the roadmap for its application defined.

After this intensive core week, coaching sessions are offered to help participants to further align their leadership practice with their aspirations.



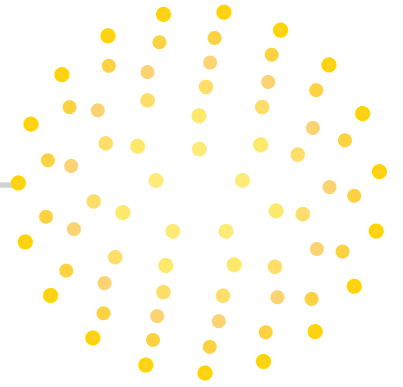


ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF THE PROGRAMME

In early 2018, the Staff College decided to investigate further the impact of the programme by designing and conducting a dedicated Impact Assessment. The findings and the stories presented in this publication have been gathered from alumnae who participated in the programme as well as from learning managers who sponsored their participation. **Alumnae and learning managers** were asked to participate in **anonymous online surveys**, followed by **in-depth interviews**.

A total of 72 alumnae from 16 UN entities completed the survey. In addition, 15 follow-up interviews were conducted with alumnae, based on which their stories were developed and validated. A total of 9 responses from partnering agencies and focal points were further collected through a separate anonymous online survey to learn about their experiences in sponsoring participants to the programme, with 4 follow-up interviews conducted.

The results from the impact assessment confirm that the programme meets its objectives by providing relevant and high quality learning experiences for participants, contributing to their **professional growth**, improving their **on-the-job performance**, and expanding their **inter-agency network**.



WHO?

72 ALUMNAE FROM 16 UN ENTITIES

HOW?

FOLLOW-UP IN DEPTH INTERVIEW
ANONYMOUS ONLINE SURVEY

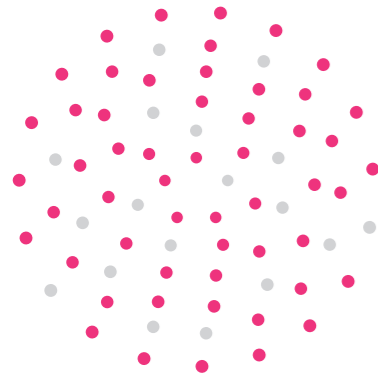
IMPACT ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

ALUMNAE PERSPECTIVE

CAREER CHANGE

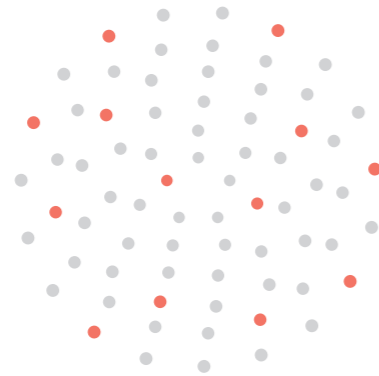
Amongst the responding alumnae who had participated in the programme at least two years ago, **76%** of responding alumnae **experienced career change**, with **19% reporting vertical progression** and **57% reporting horizontal change**.

Participants who reported career change saw a **link between the change and having applied what they learned in the programme to a good extent**.



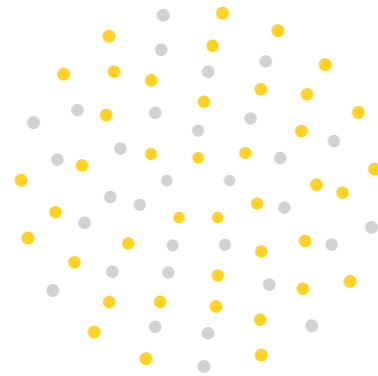
76%

**EXPERIENCED
CAREER CHANGE**



19%

**REPORTED
VERTICAL PROGRESSION**



57%

**REPORTED
HORIZONTAL CHANGE**

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND APPLICATION OF LEARNING

In general, the alumnae part of the impact survey strongly agreed that **participating in the Leadership, Women and the UN Programme was a good use of their time**.

On a scale from 1 to 6 (not at all - to a great extent) they further reported that **the programme contributed to their professional growth to a good extent** and that they had **successfully applied on the job what they learned in the programme**.

Alumnae reported seeing the greatest impact as they applied their learning in the following areas:

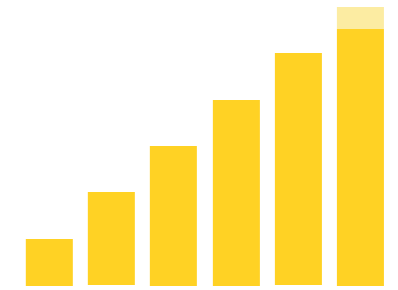
LEADERSHIP SELF-AWARENESS



PERSONAL CONFIDENCE

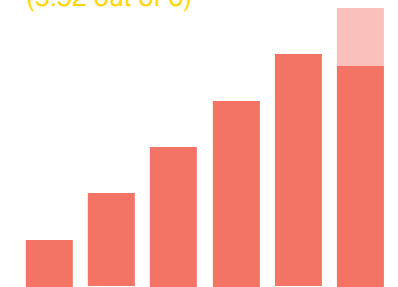


MANAGING AND LEADING DIVERSE TEAMS



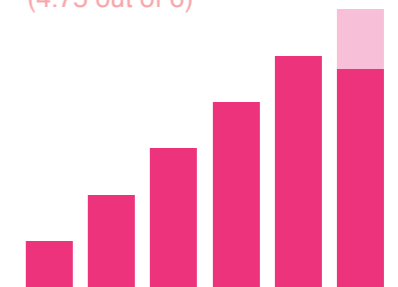
GOOD USE OF TIME

(5.52 out of 6)



PROGRAMME'S CONTRIBUTION TO PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

(4.75 out of 6)



LEARNING APPLIED ON THE JOB

(4.72 out of 6)

IMPACT ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

PARTNERS PERSPECTIVE

The study highlighted extremely positive findings also in reference to the partnering agencies. Learning Managers reported:

HIGH APPRECIATION OF THE PROGRAMME CONTENT



WILLINGNESS TO SPONSOR AGAIN PARTICIPATION OF STAFF



POSITIVE RETURN ON INVESTMENT



EXCELLENT PARTNERSHIP WITH UNSSC



HIGHLY APPRECIATED THE PROGRAMME STRUCTURE



“ I arranged the participation of four colleagues who were hand-picked by my organization in an open edition of the ‘Leadership, Women and the UN’ programme. Participants expressed that they learnt a lot and some managers have confirmed it, with one noting an immediate improvement in the work of one of the participants. ”

UN System Learning Manager

“ The content was relevant to organizational needs and offered state of the art updates on relevant topics... In terms of structure, the various trainers delivering different sessions made the workshop engaging, dynamic and interesting... The programme’s inter-agency nature was enriching not only in terms of networking but also in terms of offering to an opportunity to look beyond the perspective of a given organization. ”

UN System Learning Manager



MY PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY TO ADVANCE GENDER EQUALITY AND ROLE MODEL THE LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS WE STAND FOR

“ I developed an increased awareness on my personal responsibility as a woman leader in the UN to advance gender equality. ”

As a result of my participation in the Leadership, Women and the UN Programme, I developed an increased awareness on my personal responsibility as a woman leader in the UN to advance gender equality. I have followed through on this commitment with national colleagues and partners, working through our programmes to open space for women's voices. The most recent example being the event on "Women, Peace and Security" where several female leaders worked with us to tell their astounding stories.

We are now working on a campaign against sexual harassment, together with my male boss who feels strong on a zero tolerance approach to the issue. In this context, I have opened up to staff about the harassment that I have faced. **I think that people were surprised that a woman in a top position would speak out so openly about it but, I strongly believe in the role modelling function of leadership.** After this, three other colleagues contacted us confidentially to seek advice on similar situations that they were facing.

I participated in the programme during a time of transition between duty stations, and it provided me the opportunity to reflect on the management and leadership style that I wanted to adopt. Colleagues in my new duty station have reacted well to my new, more empathetic leadership style. The work environment had been affected by a difficult change management exercise. **I can now say with a lot of confidence that we have made a 360° change in the culture, and that the work environment is now very positive.** For me, the programme came at the perfect time. I am happy to share my story and encourage other women to participate.

*Monica Merino, UNDP, El Salvador
Leadership, Women and the UN Programme Alumna
Turin - October 2016*



“ I take my space when given the floor in a stronger manner though just as professionally and politely. ”

GROWING MY WINGS AND REDISCOVERING SELF-ESTEEM

Following my participation in the Leadership, Women and the UN Programme, my supervisor has informed me that she has observed a tangible difference in the way I execute my work. Notably, she indicated that I am more confident in the way I carry myself, my communication is sharper, I am firmer and more focused during meetings and I take my space when given the floor in a determined manner, though just as professionally and politely. Overall, I am less timid.

For example, ever since the training, if I have not finished my point in a meeting, I say, “If you don’t mind, please let me finish.” **I have become more effective in taking and giving space.**

In addition, I increasingly take charge of projects, put forth my own ideas, and pursue partnerships without fear of stepping on someone’s toes. I’m also braver in going out to other teams to share my ideas of how we can deliver for clients.

I previously worked for a national government and had become comfortable in that environment. **Moving to the UN clipped my wings for a moment, and I had to grow them all over again.** Now, after four years, I am more comfortable and brave enough to do what I need to do.

The programme was fantastic and did a lot for my self-esteem, making me realize that many of the challenges I face are common challenges shared by other women.

Leadership, Women and the UN Programme Alumna
Geneva - October 2017

WITH CALM AND CONFIDENCE, I LEAD MY TEAM TO SUCCESS

The Leadership, Women and the UN Programme gave me greater awareness of my role as a leader in applying people management skills to a diverse and dynamic team. Since my participation in the programme, I was asked to take on a new team leader role which included greater responsibility for a larger team and put my people management skills to task.

I recall a period in which my team was a bit stressed, with a heavy workload and tight deadlines. During that time, one of my colleagues told me: “Well, Janil, if you are stressed you don’t show it, and please don’t show it, because we depend on you keeping calm and taking control.”

In that moment, I realised that the team’s performance also depended on my ability to display a confidence and remain calm under pressure. **Since the programme, I am increasingly able to recognize when my management and leadership skills are more valuable than my knowledge of substantive aspects of my team’s work.**

*Janil Greenaway, UNDP, United States
Leadership, Women and the UN Programme Alumna
Turin - April 2015*

“ The programme gave me greater awareness of my role as a leader in applying people management skills to a diverse and dynamic team. ”

LEADERSHIP IS TO FOCUS ON STRENGTHS: MINE, MY TEAM'S AND EVEN THE ONES OF MY DIFFICULT COLLEAGUES

Thanks to the programme I have discovered coping strategies for dealing with a difficult colleague and have focused on minimising the impact of his behaviour on my team. I have also gained confidence in the added-value that I bring to the team. Now, I am more confident to ask my boss for recognition of the contributions I make to the team through the sound exercise of team leadership, conflict management and people management skills.

The coaching sessions envisioned by the programme were particularly valuable. The coaching helped me to focus on my specific strengths instead of trying to be everything to everyone – and **when I raised the issue of the difficult colleague, the coach also advised me to focus on his strengths.** Taking this advice has made my engagements with the difficult colleague less conflictual and more constructive.

I have advised my team members to do the same. I also learned to let go of stress about the situation, realizing that sometimes the problem is “theirs” and

you don't need to make it yours too. My supervisor has recognised how I have helped to alleviate the situation and openly expressed his appreciation. This recognition gave me the confidence to ask him to approve my participation in a course that is important for my progression to a senior management post. Having become braver in dealing with difficult issues, I thought he would respond well and so he did. I am going to attend this important course this summer.

The programme also made me aware of the importance of women networks. When you feel lost or frustrated within your workplace, you can rage at the machine and howl at the moon and get a couple of objective words of wisdom to point you back in the right direction. When working in a male-dominated part of the UN, these networks are particularly empowering and supportive.

Leadership, Women and the UN Programme Alumna
Turin - May 2016

“ I focus on my specific strengths instead of trying to be everything to everyone. ”

“ Working on self-efficacy and positive thinking, I am pushing myself in ways that I haven't before. ”



EXPRESSING THE COLOUR PALETTE OF MY LEADERSHIP

As a result of the programme, I give more attention to networking and I consciously make time to build relationships with colleagues I normally would not meet since we are not working together on an immediate deliverable. I also started mentoring someone and we meet regularly to help build her career. In my position as Chief of Staff, **I often use the coaching methods I learned to try to help people work through issues and find solutions.**

Working on self-efficacy and positive thinking, I am pushing myself in ways that I haven't before. For example, I am now more likely to express my views and ideas and the reception has been quite affirming. I've also been more aware of distinguishing between urgent and important. I make more time for in-depth reading to improve my knowledge of WHO's work and to make better decisions, as well as for personal enjoyment and learning.

Finally, during the programme I had set a goal to devote more attention to my communication skills and **I have since become more at ease in public speaking and more of a storyteller.**

*Erin Kenney, WHO, Switzerland
Leadership, Women and the UN Programme Alumna
Nairobi - November 2017*

STANDING MY GROUND

I work in the male-dominated world of peacekeeping. Having spent many years in hardship field duty stations, I am now deployed at the Global Service Centre (GSC) in Brindisi. Early in my new appointment at GSC, which was a new challenge for me as the only senior female, I was a bit shy about speaking up in meetings. Meeting other women colleagues from other agencies at the Leadership, Women and the UN Programme, made me realise that **“no, we have to speak up!”**.

As an example, once I was giving a briefing on an important subject, and a colleague commented that he had never seen me with a manicure done. I said, “Yes, I work all day, I don’t have time”. **As someone with strong and passionate blood, I used to take things personally: I would listen, but then immediately react.** Now I’ve learned to take my time to breathe, and not feel I need to respond immediately. Sometimes I read emails two or three times before replying. I have also started to prepare my meetings with precise notes and to use specific language. I continue to explore TED talks and online courses on communication to be ready to effectively address such provocations.

I believe that now my confidence in interacting with my male colleagues and supervisors is much stronger.

This has been reflected also in the respect and appreciation that some of my junior female colleagues have shown - even asking me for guidance and mentoring.


The programme gave me a lot and I’m still learning thanks to it. Every time I have a setback, I go back to my notes, I follow the tweets from the mentors and everything that is sent related to the programme. I’ve also kept in touch with some of the women in the group, and we continue to empower each other. When we pass through different duty stations, we write to ask who is around, so we can meet, and we’ve even had some trips together.

I believe this kind of programme should be mandatory for all women at P4 and P5 levels in the UN and that it should be part of the UN senior women talent pipeline programme. The coaching helped me enormously during my job interviews for senior positions. UN female staff are often competing with internal male candidates as well as men coming from the corporate world, thus, we need to prepare and sell ourselves in a better way.

*Cristina Gavazzo, UNGSC, Italy
Leadership, Women and the UN Programme Alumna
Turin - March 2017*

**“ I’ve learned to take my time to breathe,
and not feel I need to react immediately. ”**





“ The most significant change following my participation in the Leadership, Women and the UN Programme has been in the process of trying to balance authenticity with “faking it until you make it”. ”

FEELING MORE COMFORTABLE IN LEADING AND MANAGING CHANGE WITH AUTHENTICITY


The most significant change following my participation in the Leadership, Women and the UN Programme has been in the process of trying to balance authenticity with “faking it until you make it”. One of the speakers then talked about authenticity. **We learned that we can influence how we come across and how we market ourselves without compromising on feeling comfortable in our own skin.** Following the programme, as I settled into my new role, this theme strongly resonated. I wondered, “how do you do this in practice? Surely, when you take on a new leadership position you must take some distance and set boundaries, but how can I ensure I do not become completely another person?”.

At the beginning, indeed, I tended to be tough because I felt that I had to drive through a lot of change and this attitude was what was expected from me.

Now, I have come to understand change better. I feel more comfortable in leading and managing change and I have acknowledged better outcomes as a result. First of all, I am now convinced of the importance of keeping the engagement of staff high. The challenge here is not to be sucked in by work pressure and allow myself and my team to pause and reflect. **The team composition is also at nearly 50-50 gender parity and I think the diversity helps navigating change successfully.**

Lately, I have also been reflecting on how, people easily expect a woman to perform the role of “the mother”. These days I recalled the material presented during the programme. I am reading it again and it is indeed helping to give perspective and tips on how to deal with this issue.

Leadership, Women and the UN Programme Alumna
Turin - September 2015



“ Thanks to the programme, I have also become more confident to present a strong case of my performance and achievements. ”

UNDERSTANDING THE GENDER AND CULTURAL DIMENSIONS OF LEADERSHIP, REDISCOVERING EMPATHY, SELF-WORTHINESS AND PRACTICAL PERSUASION

I took the Leadership, Women and the UN Programme in parallel with the UNDP Leadership Development Pathways advanced leadership course. The UNSSC programme was a beneficial addition because of its focus on the gender and cultural dimensions of leadership. **It helped me tremendously in reflecting on how to best interact with male and female supervisors and direct reports, in the context of the culture of Saudi Arabia.**

As a result of both programmes, I have learned to temper my reactions. I tend to be extremely direct in how I word my opinions – so direct that I often overlooked how people may have felt when I spoke to them. **The results of my 360° assessment taught me to put myself in others' shoes.** Having recently undertaken another 360° in the context of the Deputy Country Director assessment, the beauty is that I can now compare and see the positive changes in my communication skills and the way I relate to people.

I learned not to say “I’m sorry”, just to state my opinion. My job requires me to provide advice to my Resident Representative and Deputy Resident Representative. However, I used to wait until they would ask me directly before sharing my opinion. Now, when I have an opinion that I know will benefit results, I offer it.

Similarly, **I learned that I do not need to ask permission to do a good job.** In my country office, I am knowledgeable on the cultural and political context and, in general, I know what national partners want. When I saw that a new strategy had not generated the desired results for over the course of a year, I trusted myself and decided to approach the partners with new ideas on what we could deliver on their strategy. This resulted in a 24 million-dollar programme paid for in full by the government which will help the office close the GLOC deficit gap.

Thanks to the programme, I have also become more confident to present a strong case of my performance and achievements.

*Mayssam Tamim, UNDP, Saudi Arabia
Leadership, Women and the UN Programme Alumna
Geneva - October 2017*

BEYOND SUPERWOMEN: A COMMUNITY MODELLING AUTHENTIC AND VALUES-BASED LEADERSHIP

I work in a technical, male-dominated field. It is challenging for anyone to rise to the senior management level, but it is especially hard for women to do so. I took part in the Leadership, Women and the UN Programme with a group of other female colleagues from the same agency, but from different departments.

The course uncovered realities that we were previously unaware of, such as the fact that there are certain gender dynamics that are specific to our environment. Each of us aspired to take on higher management responsibilities, and the programme helped us to realise that this would require a great deal of carefulness. Doing a good job was not going to be sufficient to get promoted. **We needed to be proactive and united, share information, support one another to gain greater visibility.**

Since then, one of us has risen to head of division, and we have all been shortlisted several times for higher positions. In addition to strengthening my peer network, following the programme, I found a mentor from outside of my organization. She is very well-respected and holds a senior position in her organization. She has also been serving as a role model and our inspiring exchange has since continued strengthening my leadership reflections.

Another important take-away from the programme was the advice to follow our own career path and ambitions. It was refreshing to learn that **we do not need to follow the footsteps of others if these diverge from our own, self-defined best interests.** Furthermore, we should reflect more often on the fact that we do not need to be “superwomen” and should not pretend this from ourselves.

I am currently facing a transitional period, and thanks to the content to which I was exposed during the programme, I have gained more confidence in my ability to manage change, and to chart my path toward progress and evolution. Last but not least, the programme has positively reinforced my ability to always stick to my values, the values of the UN, and not to ever compromise when it comes to maintaining a high level of ethics.

Leadership, Women and the UN Programme Alumna
Turin - September 2015

“ The programme has positively reinforced my ability to always stick to my values, the values of the UN, and not to ever compromise when it comes to maintaining a high level of ethics. ”

BRIDGING HEADQUARTERS AND FIELD OFFICES FOR WOMEN'S PROFESSIONAL EMPOWERMENT

The programme gave me greater knowledge and awareness on issues related to women in the UN, including the systemic limitations that we experience. After eight years at my duty station, I made major progress in my career. Acting as a P5 I demonstrated capacities that have not always been recognised. Similarly, I have always been an active person, but I did question if I was too much of an activist. With regard to both self-doubts, **the programme helped me realise I was not alone in how I felt, and in many other challenges I have been facing as a woman.** This was very empowering and a turning point for me.

I am a passionate advocate for women's professional empowerment. When observing regional offices in my agency, I can notice even more how I am the only woman at my seniority level. My role in the regional office has become that of a gender champion, a bridge between country offices and headquarters, able to collect the voices of women in the field to advance normative positions.


For example, after the programme, **I set up a women's-only group on the UN Habitat Facebook Workplace platform and shared valuable material on women and leadership that I collected during the programme.** The group is now widely used to exchange links and documents on career development and to engage in interesting discussions. Furthermore, I have been acting as an informal sponsor and mentor to junior staff and am hoping that the system will be formalised within the agency soon. In addition, I am now supported by a coach myself after discovering the opportunity in my agency, and not hesitating to ask for it.

I believe that many women colleagues in country operations that are project-funded would benefit greatly from the programme, or alternatively, from related concise agency-specific briefings or discussions.

*Katja Schäfer, UN-Habitat, Egypt
Leadership, Women and the UN Programme Alumna
Nairobi - November 2017*

“ I am a passionate advocate for women's professional empowerment. ”





“ I started to prioritize again my own life and found a better work-life balance. ”

NURTURING KINDNESS TOWARDS MYSELF AND COMMITMENT TOWARDS MY PROFESSIONAL PASSION

As a result of my participation in the Leadership, Women and the UN Programme, I have become more self-aware as I now take things less personally than I used to. **The 360° assessment made me aware that I was too harsh on myself** and also led me to challenge the idea of having to immediately react and take action on everything without taking the time to reflect on things. **I also handle pressure much better than I used to and I navigate office politics with much more ease and sense of perspective.**

Following my participation in the programme, I joined a mentoring programme within my own agency. This further helped me to make best use of management and leadership skills in a different cultural context. On a personal level, I started to prioritise again my own life and found a better work-life balance. At the same time, I took the conscious decision to pursue my true professional passion and, as a result, I have moved to a different role where my leadership skills have flourished.

Leadership, Women and the UN Programme Alumna
Turin - September 2015

TO ME, LEADERSHIP IS A SOCIAL EXERCISE WHERE SHARED MOTIVATION AND TRUST-BASED RELATIONSHIPS PLAY A PIVOTAL ROLE

I have applied what I learned in the Leadership, Women and the UN Programme to the management of my small team. Although at times it is far from easy, I am committed to motivate my team members by making them feel that we are all working to achieve the same goal.


One means of motivation I use is informal rewards.

For instance, I support my team members by providing them with enabling opportunities to advance their career, whether through travel, engagement at a higher level, team and department representation on occasion to gain recognition and exposure, or being a part of partnerships that help them see the global security environment from a multidimensional perspective.


At the same time, I am working on forming trust-based relationships,

as I have learned that this is very important. There are many creative ways to do it, including through informal gatherings, though I find that it is more challenging in New York than in the field where it happens more organically.

*Suchada Kulawat, UN, United States
Leadership, Women and the UN Programme Alumna
Turin - March 2017*



“ I am committed to motivate my team members by making them feel that we are all working to achieve the same goal. ”

A portrait of Mary Mugambi, a woman with dark curly hair, wearing a black blazer over a patterned top. She is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera.

“ Being able to lead as opposed to manage in reaction has allowed me to be proactive in many areas, and my director has recognised this. ”

LEADING AS OPPOSED TO REACTING

I am passionate about leadership and empowering people, and every year I take a leadership course. As a result, I have shifted from “doing” to “managing and leading”. Now, I can sit back and reflect more.

The personal commitments I have set during the Leadership, Women and the UN Programme have been a great reminder of what I sought to achieve. I hung them on my wall so that every morning I can see what I promised to do. One of my goals was to set aside one or two hours a week to reflect on ways I could innovate and strategically think through solutions, and I have started implementing that.

In the 3 functional units that I am responsible for, I have noticed that coaching is much more appreciated as it leads to lasting empowerment of staff. Coaching requires purposely dedicating time to teach and provide guidance. This has been a big change. **Instead of being reactive and constantly giving solutions for everything, I listen more to understand the root cause of the problem** and organise weekly one-on-one sessions to coach and empower supervised staff.

I no longer fix things myself, saying “it will be faster for me to do it”. Instead, I represent the task to my supervisees even if I have to send it back ten times. The next time, it will only be five times, and afterwards, it will be perfect the first time. Being able to lead as opposed to manage in reaction has allowed me to be proactive in many areas, and my director has recognised this.

*Mary Mugambi, ILO, Cote D'Ivoire
Leadership, Women and the UN Programme Alumna
Nairobi - November 2017*

MY PROGRAMME COMMITMENTS IN ACTION AND THE IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN'S PROFESSIONAL ALLIANCES AND UNITY

Participating in the programme gave me an energy boost and made me feel bold. After the programme, I was tasked to organize a large conference. Although resources were limited, I successfully lobbied for the support required from my upper boss to put a team together. The conference turned out to be an excellent success. Afterwards I sent a thank you message to all those who had contributed, and copied my upper boss. She came back with her own response, thanking everyone and specifically recognizing my leadership and commitment. This became a good example of the support that women can give to one another in the workplace.

Lately, **I have begun to deliver on one of my commitments from the programme: to put together a peer group of women to advance our professional objectives.** I have drafted the ToR, invited a group of female colleagues to participate in peer-to-peer exchanges. I've also continued mentoring younger female peers as part of my ongoing commitment to women's economic empowerment.

Last year, I participated in another women's leadership training affiliated with a prominent university. When I compare the two courses, as a technical professional working on gender related issues, I consider the UNSSC training programme to be better. The organisers found the right balance between theory and practice. I hope there will be opportunities to bring the programme to Asia and the Pacific and have suggested this to ESCAP and to the Thematic Working Group on gender equality and empowerment of women.

In conclusion, I feel strongly about the importance and benefit of being strong allies among women – and the Leadership Women and the UN Programme is effective in reinforcing this message.

*Joni Simpson, ILO, Thailand
Leadership, Women and the UN Programme Alumna
Geneva - October 2017*

“ I feel strongly about the importance and benefit of being strong allies among women. ”



MY LIGHT BULB MOMENT: AS A WOMAN I CAN CHOOSE TO BE AMBITIOUS AND ASSERTIVE

After attending the programme, I became more confident and assertive as regards to my career needs. **I have been working deliberately towards achieving my goals without expecting to be noticed and feeling like I need to wait for a recognition.** For example, when I wanted to move from being a Deputy Representative to becoming a Representative, I not only clearly stated my intentions, but I also worked relentlessly to achieve this objective. Contrary to what I would have done in the past, I did not wait for anyone to give me the permission to pursue this goal, nor I felt like I was being “pushy”. **I succeeded, and today I am a Representative.**

The programme enabled the realisation that being ambitious and assertive as a woman has the same value that it has for a man, although these characteristics are too often perceived less favorably in women’s behaviour. **It was truly a “light bulb moment” and since then I have not allowed anyone to measure me with different criteria.**

*Dennia Yneth Gayle Steele, UNFPA, Namibia
Leadership, Women and the UN Programme Alumna
Turin - April 2015*

“ Being ambitious and assertive as a woman has the same value that it has for a man. ”



PROACTIVITY IN COACHING, MENTORING &
SPONSORING OTHER WOMEN

DISTINCTION BETWEEN
'URGENT' AND 'IMPORTANT'

**INCREASED
CONFIDENCE**

BECOMING MORE ROOTED IN VALUES

NEGOTIATION

AMBITION TO AIM FOR A
SENIOR LEADERSHIP POST

BETTER
DELEGATION

GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK

GREATER AUTHENTICITY

NETWORKING

SAYING SORRY
LESS OFTEN

PEOPLE

GREATER LEADERSHIP

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT

SELF-AWARENESS

HOW TO MITIGATE

COMMUNICATION

GENDER AND CULTURE BIAS



ABOUT THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM STAFF COLLEGE

Established on 1 January 2002, the United Nations System Staff College is the learning organization of the United Nations system. We design and deliver learning programmes for UN staff and their partners. Our mission is to contribute to a more effective, results-oriented and agile United Nations through learning and knowledge dissemination.

Through our learning opportunities, we help foster a common leadership and management culture across the system. Our vision is to provide the skills and knowledge to empower the most valuable resource of the UN system: our people.

UNSSC offers residential courses on its campuses, e-learning opportunities, as well as “at the door” offerings in more than 50 countries. Each year, we provide approximately 100 learning events with over 8,000 beneficiaries on average.

Our headquarters are in Turin, Italy. The Turin office hosts the Directorate, the Operations Unit, the Knowledge Centre for Leadership and Management and the Peace and Security Team. In 2016, we launched our Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development in Bonn, Germany.

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