

# **GUIDANCE NOTE AND TEMPLATE: Gender Parity Action Plans for United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs)**

**SUGGESTED APPROACHES AND MEASURES IN SUPPORT OF  
UNCT-SWAP PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 4.3 ON GENDER  
PARITY IN STAFFING**

Office of the Focal  
Point for Women  
in the UN System



The Office of the Focal Point for Women in the UN System provides strategic leadership, technical guidance, and accountability to advance gender equality across the UN System. Grounded in the UN Charter and reinforced by the Beijing Declaration, General Assembly resolutions, and the Secretary General's Strategy on Gender Parity (2017), the Office supports the goal of 50:50 gender parity at all levels. It monitors and reports on progress, supports enabling work environments, coordinates a system-wide network of over 550 Gender Focal Points, and serves as a key partner in preventing and responding to sexual harassment.

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Produced by the Office of the Focal Point for Women in the UN System - UN System Coordination Division (UNSCD). New York, August 2026.

Please cite this publication as: *UN Women. 2026. Guidance Note and Template: Gender Parity Action Plans for United Nations Country Teams. New York.*

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**SUGGESTED APPROACHES AND MEASURES IN SUPPORT OF  
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**Office of the Focal Point for Women in the UN System  
UN System Coordination Division (UNSCD)  
UN Women  
August, 2026**



## PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDANCE

Gender equality is a core United Nations commitment and essential for effective multilateral action. As the UN advances the 2030 Agenda, humanitarian response and peace and security, translating commitments into measurable progress remains vital. Gender parity is a key pillar of the UN's gender equality efforts and accelerates institutional change.

UN Women plays a central role in advancing gender parity and gender equality across the United Nations system, providing strategic leadership, technical guidance, and accountability support to implement its gender equality commitments. Through its coordination mandate, UN Women supports entities in translating parity commitments into concrete action in alignment with system-wide standards.

In line with the [System-wide Strategy for Gender Parity](#), this guidance note is designed support United Nation Country Teams (UNCT) in meeting the minimum requirement under the United Nations Country Team System-wide Action Plan (UNCT-SWAP) Gender Scorecard criterion a. of performance indicator (PI) 4.3, which calls for a system-wide plan to be in place for the UNCT to achieve gender parity. It complements the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG) [UNCT-SWAP Gender](#)

[Scorecard Framework and Technical Guidance](#) by providing a step by step process, along with practical examples, and a template to support the development of a UNCT-wide action plan on gender parity. Improved performance also supports the implementation of key global commitments, including the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and relevant General Assembly resolutions (e.g., [A/RES/80/186](#)).

## WHAT IS GENDER PARITY AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Gender parity is the equal representation of men and women at all levels of the United Nations, including in leadership and management positions. The commitment to gender parity has been reaffirmed through the UN Charter, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, General Assembly resolutions and the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity (2017). All agencies are requested to develop an entity-specific action plan on gender parity in alignment with the System-wide Strategy. While gender parity is designed as 50/50 representation of women and men, the System-wide Strategy recognizes a margin of 47-53 per cent to account for normal fluctuations in staffing, particularly in small entities and at

4 Leadership & organizational culture

4.3. Gender Parity in Staffing is Achieved

INDICATOR 4.3

| Approaches Minimum Requirements                                          | Meeting Minimum Requirements                                                                         | Exceeds Minimum Requirements                                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| a) A system-wide plan is in place for the UNCT to achieve gender parity. | Approaches minimum requirements and                                                                  | Meets minimum requirements and                                                                                                                                                       |
|                                                                          | b) At least one Gender Focal Point is appointed (as per SGB/2023/3)                                  | d) The UNCT can demonstrate positive trends towards achieving gender parity.                                                                                                         |
|                                                                          | c) The UNCT can demonstrate progress in the implementation of the system-wide plan on gender parity. | e) The Business Operations Strategy (BOS) includes gender-specific actions and indicators in at least one Business Operation Area to foster gender equality and women's empowerment. |

specific levels, where achieving an exact 50:50 split at any given time may not be statistically feasible. Further, gender parity measures are a remedial tool grounded in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). They exist to overcome the historical and structural discrimination and underrepresentation of women, and do not include reciprocal measures activated by the underrepresentation of men.<sup>1</sup>

But gender parity is about much more than meeting a numerical target. It is also about building a United Nations that reflects the people it serves and is therefore better equipped to deliver on its mandates. In this sense, gender parity should be understood not just as a gender equality commitment, but also as a driver of institutional effectiveness, innovation and organizational transformation across the wider UN reform agenda. A more representative workforce strengthens the UN's credibility, enriches decision-making, and helps ensure that policies and programmes are shaped by a broader range of experiences and perspectives.

Achieving gender parity requires transforming institutional culture in order to access and capitalize on the UN's full potential, according to the Secretary-General. Sustaining equal representation, and translating parity into better institutional performance, requires reforms that model inclusion and actively prevent harmful bias, stereotypes, and discrimination in decision-making and everyday practice. Gender parity is not only about who is in the room, but whether every voice in that room can be heard, respected and is able to influence outcomes on equal footing. In the context of growing global backlash against gender equality, a strong and sustained focus on gender parity is therefore more critical than ever to ensure the UN System leads by example and credibly advances its commitments.

Organizational culture is shaped by standards, policies and practices that govern how institutions operate. Persistent unconscious biases, gender stereotypes, and structural barriers continue to impact recruitment, retention, and career progression, limiting the ability of institutions to fully benefit from the diversity of their workforce. These gains can only be realized when workplace norms, policies, and practices evolve to remove systemic obstacles and enable equal participation. For this reason, organizational culture serves as a critical lever, not only for achieving gender parity, but also for sustaining it over time.

The Secretary-General has stated that achieving gender parity is essential to the United Nations' efficiency, impact and credibility. This view is amplified by the United Nations System-wide [Gender Equality Acceleration Plan \(GEAP\)](#), which seeks to strengthen system-wide commitment and enhance delivery for women and girls. According to the GEAP, progress on parity enhances leadership, accountability, and organizational effectiveness. In this context, gender parity drives accountability and reform, strengthening decision-making and the UN's credibility worldwide. Advancing gender parity is a key component of gender equality and reinforces the UN's capacity to achieve the 2030 Agenda and exemplify the transformative change it promotes. These action plans can also contribute to internal power analysis of the systems, structures and hierarchies and formal and informal decision-making, and change those that constitute barriers to gender equality and equity called for in the GEAP.

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1. As per CEDAW Article 4(1), General Recommendation No. 25 and Temporary Special Measures for the Achievement of Gender Parity (ST/AI/2020/5).

# STEP 1: LEADERSHIP SUPPORT AND STRUCTURAL SET UP

## Who is responsible?

In line with General Assembly resolution [A/RES/80/186](#)<sup>2</sup>, which calls upon United Nations entities, in collaboration with Resident Coordinators and heads of agencies, to significantly accelerate efforts towards achieving gender parity across all locations. The Resident Coordinator has a clear leadership and accountability role at country level. As the designated leader of the UNCT, the Resident Coordinator is responsible and accountable for ensuring that this work is carried forward and that gender parity actions are integrated into broader UNCT governance mechanisms, including annual workplans, Business Operations Strategy (BOS) implementation (needed to meet criterion e in PI 4.3), UNCT-SWAP follow-up plans, and annual performance reviews.

Furthermore, Secretary-General's Bulletin ([ST/SGB/2023/3](#)) affirms that the head of entity<sup>3</sup>, including Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (DSRSG), Resident Coordinator

(RC), Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and Head of Agency (HoA), has the overall responsibility for the achievement of gender balance in the entity concerned, including the responsibility for ensuring that the entity or country team has a Gender Focal Point and at least one alternate.

## How to form an inter-agency team or task force

Developing a UNCT-wide action plan is an inter-agency effort. It relies on strong coordination and leadership to bring together all entities, fostering collective ownership, and driving the development and implementation of a coherent, system-wide plan that advances progress towards gender parity.

Members of the inter-agency team typically include representatives from existing coordination mechanisms such as the Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO), the Operations Management Team (OMT), Gender Theme Group (GTG), Leave No One Behind

2. Relevant paragraph from A/RES/80/186. 34. "Commends the Secretary-General for his continued leadership and efforts towards creating an enabling working environment and accelerating progress towards the goal of 50/50 gender balance at all levels throughout the United Nations system, including the goal of reaching parity at all levels throughout the United Nations system by 2028, as set out in his system-wide strategy on gender parity, and in this regard calls upon the entities of the United Nations system, in collaboration with resident coordinators and heads of agencies and missions, to significantly increase their efforts towards achieving this goal in all locations, with the advice of gender focal points, UN-Women and other bodies, and to provide sufficient financial and human resources for organizational change and for overcoming identified impediments to progress on gender balance;"

3. "Head of entity" means the head of a department or an office, including an office away from Headquarters; the head of a special political or peacekeeping mission; the head of a regional commission; a resident or regional coordinator; or the head of any other unit tasked with programmed activities.

(LNOB) group, Human Resources Working Group (HRWG), and Human Rights, Gender and Disability Groups depending on the structures and capacities within each UNCT.

It is important to engage a focused core group of stakeholders from the outset, while ensuring representation across relevant functions, as effective implementation will ultimately require coordinated efforts from all entities.

Furthermore, UN Women, through its UN System Coordination Division and specifically the Office of the Focal Point for Women in the UN System is mandated to support the entire UN system in implementing the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity. It is therefore advisable to engage with the Office at the early stages of any development process and seek context-specific guidance. Contact the Office on [focalpoint.forwomen@unwomen.org](mailto:focalpoint.forwomen@unwomen.org).

## UNCT IN FOCUS ETHIOPIA

To operationalize the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity in Ethiopia and meet UNCT-SWAP Gender Scorecard PI 4.3, the UNCT secured strong leadership buy in from the Resident Coordinator, who convened HoAs to nominate senior focal points and endorsed the deployment of a UN Women expert and a four month external consultancy to lead a dedicated gender parity exercise. An inter agency team with broad representation from the GTG, the OMT, HR, and LNOB groups, oversaw a mixed methods assessment that combined analysis of staffing data and organizational culture survey results with in depth interviews across entities to diagnose structural and cultural barriers to parity, including in hardship and field settings.

The process underscored the added value of UN savvy expertise to navigate data access and internal dynamics, the need to balance additional survey questions with response rates and complementary qualitative methods. It also highlighted the importance of sustained engagement by UN Women and the GTG to support cooperation across entities but also the central role of the OMT in owning the gender parity action plan, in alignment with the BOS and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF).



**MENU OF RESOURCES AND SUPPORT SERVICES IN ADVANCING GENDER PARITY**  
Available to Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams to advance gender parity and foster the creation of enabling working environments

**1. Key resources for advancing Gender Parity:**

- UN System-wide Dashboard on Gender Parity: (consolidates the data on the representation of women and men by entity and grade within each UNCT)
- Secretary-General's report on the improvement in the status of women in the UN system (2023) and the related General Assembly resolution A/RES/78/262
- Guidance on developing a Gender Parity Strategy and Action Plan
- Infographics: Visual Representation of women's representation in the UN system
- Summary Product: How to improve the representation of women at the UN
- Enabling Environment Guidelines (2019) and Field-specific Enabling Environment Guidelines (2021) (available in English/French/Arabic)
- Booklet on How can we reach gender parity at the UN by 2028? (2024) featuring best practice examples from the UN system
- UN System-wide Knowledge Hub on Addressing Sexual Harassment
- Peer-to-peer learning publications: To prevent and eliminate sexual harassment in the UN System and beyond, including Making zero tolerance a reality and Enhancing cooperation
- Gender Inclusion Practice Note: Designated Lactation Spaces for Nursing Parents
- Why Gender Parity?
- Gender parity resources webpage, available on [www.unwomen.org](http://www.unwomen.org)

**2. Support services:**

The Office offers UNCT-specific webinars and workshops on how to promote enabling working environments and advance gender parity. For example, the Office has offered the sessions to various UNCTs (e.g., townhall meeting, HR network, OMT/GTO meetings) related to:

- How can we craft an inclusive vacancy announcement?
- How can we create an enabling working environment? A walk-through webinar to the Field-specific Enabling Environment Guidelines.
- How can we leverage the UN System-wide Dashboard on Gender Parity?
- A demonstration of the UN System-wide Knowledge Hub on Addressing Sexual Harassment.

**3. Leadership's commitment:**

The Office supports Resident Coordinators to join video series 'Making Parity a Reality at the UN'. Over 20 UN Leaders have advocated for gender parity through participating in this series.

**4. How does the Office work with Gender Focal Points?**

The Office leads and coordinates the system-wide network of over 550 UN Gender Focal Points and offers capacity building sessions regularly, providing coordinated knowledge and tools to Gender Focal Points. The Office also facilitates inter-agency knowledge sharing by promoting to exchange best practices and supports Gender Focal Points to advance gender parity with your leadership.

Please feel free to get in touch with us if you're interested in collaborating further: [kajia.pehrman@unwomen.org](mailto:kajia.pehrman@unwomen.org) and [shinobu.sasaki@unwomen.org](mailto:shinobu.sasaki@unwomen.org)

\* As per GS/2023/17, The head of entity has the overall responsibility for the achievement of gender balance in the entity concerned, including the responsibility for ensuring that the entity has a Gender Focal Point and at least one alternate. See Annex for more details.

**UN WOMEN**

## STEP 2: COLLECT THE DATA

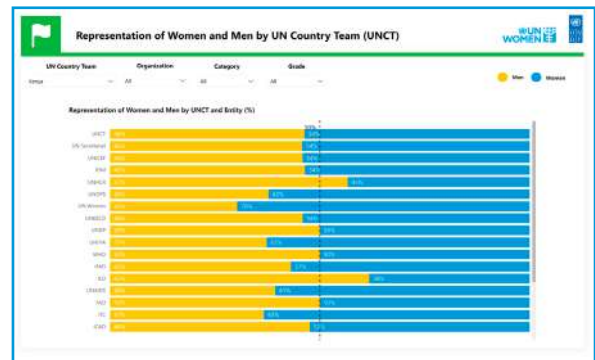
Every good strategy and workplan starts with the numbers. Make sure you're taking advantage of the resources already available to you. Go beyond headline figures to understand who is—and is not—progressing through the system.

## Existing assessments and analysis

- Start from the most recent UNCT-SWAP Gender Scorecard report. Use existing findings and recommendations as a baseline and starting point.
- Where a [Country Gender Equality Profile](#) is available, draw on it to situate workforce parity and organizational culture issues within the wider national gender equality context and to bring in an intersectional lens.

## Dashboards and tracking systems

- [UN System-wide Dashboard on Gender Parity](#) has the gender breakdown of each UNCT. You can drill down further by entity, category, and grade. It's updated quarterly.
- [UN Secretariat Gender Parity Dashboard](#): For Secretariat entities, including missions, use this dashboard to drill down on parity trends by office, department and duty station and to flag where targeted action is needed.
- You may need to look to internal tracking systems, including UNDSS personnel database, to review parity status by level, contract



type, etc. and conduct a meaningful assessment of parity at all levels and types of personnel. Not all groups or categories will require targeted action and energy should be focused on areas with the biggest gaps.

## Tips to keep in mind

Don't wait until you have perfect data!

Use the best available information, note the main gaps, and include actions in the workplan to improve data collection and analysis over time.

# What areas of the enabling environment guidelines have you prioritized in the last year?

28  
Family friendly policies

45  
Working arrangements

45  
Recruitment/talent management

31  
Well-being

Photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown

## Tips to keep in mind

When collecting data, look beyond headline numbers. Don't just review women and men overall. Make sure to look at the breakdown by entity, by grade level, contract type, and functional area or job family, duty station classification (including field and hardship duty stations).

- It's also important to track gender parity among country representatives, through the Information Management System (IMS) and identify where disparities persist between agencies or progress has slowed.
- Parity challenges often emerge well before recruitment decisions. In addition to staff composition, try to collect how personnel move through the organization over time through talent pipelines, promotions, acting assignments, leadership development opportunities and succession planning.

## Gender and organizational culture survey

Leverage the anonymous gender and organizational culture survey that UNCTs must apply to assess or re-assess [UNCT-SWAP Gender Scorecard Performance Indicator 4.2](#) to understand the enabling environment, workplace culture, and uptake of supportive policies. A number of UNCTs use this survey to help them understand the numbers and what may be driving them. Additional questions can be added, and the Office of the Focal Point for Women is available to help you develop them. The findings from this survey can inform internal power analyses undertaken as part of the GEAP.

### Example of additional questions that can be added to the survey upon request:

11. My head of Agency or senior manager has spoken positively about and/or promoted flexible working arrangements in the past 12 months. Yes/No
12. I have taken advantage of flexible working arrangements in the past 12 months. Yes/No
13. I have experienced or witnessed sexual harassment in the workplace in the past 12 months. Yes/No
14. If yes, I reported the sexual harassment within my agency's established reporting mechanism. Yes/No

## UNCT IN FOCUS

### BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

In addition to the standardized questions, Bosnia and Herzegovina added five additional questions, taking advantage of the opportunity to gather more specifics about the organizational culture of the UNCT.

The survey results showed key gaps: only about one-third of staff felt entitlements supported adequate work–life balance, women reported less support for flexible work and work–life balance than men, and only 32 per cent of respondents felt men and women were consistently treated equally in career advancement.

Based on these findings, the UNCT made the culture survey a central tool in its gender parity strategy, committing to repeat it with tailored questions, hold bi-annual meetings with staff and gender focal points to discuss results, and run regular awareness campaigns on gender equality, inclusion and fair career opportunities.

Questions added to organizational culture survey:

1. I am familiar with the key priorities set out in the UN Secretary-General's Gender Equality Acceleration Plan (GEAP)
2. How often do you feel your gender has influenced how your opinions or ideas are valued in decision-making processes?
3. My organization provides clear information on how and where to report instances of gender-based harassment, bias and inequality.
4. My immediate manager has spoken positively about and/or promoted flexible working arrangements in the past 12 months.
5. Are you concerned that taking advantage of flexible work arrangements will negatively affect your career?

## Focus groups, interviews, & consultations

Complement quantitative data with focus groups with personnel, or to hear directly from personnel about barriers to recruiting, retaining and promoting women, and about factors undermining an inclusive working environment.

You can ask questions like:

- Are we reaching widely enough when we advertise vacancies (for example, across agencies, women's networks, universities, CSOs)?
- Are our selection panels and shortlists regularly gender balanced? If not, what gets in the way?
- Are women and men participating equitably in leadership development, training and mentoring opportunities?
- How are workplace culture, flexibility, safety and security, or other aspects of the enabling environment affecting retention and progression for women and men?
- Are there specific conditions in certain duty stations or field locations that make recruitment or retention, especially of women, more difficult? If yes, which measures are put in place to support women?
- Are gender disparities concentrated in particular entities, grades, job families or sectors, and what might explain those patterns?
- How is women's career development supported by the organization? In particular in non-family duty stations?
- How can the Hardship countries be accessible to talented women, who wants to continue serving the UN system, while taking care of their dependents?

# STEP 3:

## ANALYZE THE DATA

Once the data is collected, identify the main bottlenecks along the talent pipeline. The aim is not just to describe the numbers, but to understand where progress is slow, what may be causing these bottlenecks, and what actions the UNCT can take to move the needle.

Start by asking where the gaps are most visible. Use gender and organizational culture survey to interpret patterns. Differences in how women and men report workplace experiences can point to institutional and structural barriers that may not be visible in staffing figures alone. The findings can help identify issues such as perceptions of fairness, discrimination, flexibility, work-life balance, and inclusion.

### Example questions might include:

- Are women underrepresented overall, or mainly at specific grades?
- Are gaps concentrated at senior levels, in certain entities, in particular contract types, or in hardship and non-family duty stations?
- Do patterns in applicants, short-lists, promotions, acting assignments, and leadership development suggest recruitment barriers, promotion bottlenecks or unequal access to leadership pipelines?
- Are there occupational areas where women are consistently underrepresented?
- Are there signs that parity is improving in some areas but stagnating or regressing in others?
- What does the gender and organizational culture survey suggest about the enabling environment?
- Which issues can be addressed through UNCT level action, and which require primarily entity level or headquarters engagement?

- What 2–3 priority areas should the action plan address first?

### Tips to keep in mind

You can use a root cause analysis to distinguish between different challenges, such as recruitment barriers, retention issues, promotion bottlenecks, workplace culture problems, or external constraints.

Start with a clear problem statement (for example, “Women are underrepresented in national officer leadership roles across the UNCT”).

Ask “why?” several times, drilling down until you reach specific, structural causes (for example, how roles are advertised, how acting assignments are allocated, or how flexible work is managed), rather than individual women’s choices or motivation.

Use the list of root causes to decide which actions belong in your plan and who is best placed (UNCT, entities, or headquarters) to address each one.

# STEP 4: DEVELOPING THE ACTION PLAN

Once you have analyzed the data and identified the primary gaps, prioritize a focused set of key areas for action. These template lays out key areas to focus on:

1. Setting Targets & Measuring Progress
2. Leadership and Accountability
3. Recruitment, Retention, and Talent Management
4. Enabling Environment and Organizational Culture
5. Mission, Field, and Hardship Duty Settings

This guidance includes a plethora of concrete examples that you can select or adapt and enter them directly into the UNCT Gender Parity Action Plan Template at the bottom of this document.

The measures listed are drawn from real UNCT strategies and action plans; they are not exhaustive—nor are you meant to implement all of them all at once! They are intended to inspire you and illustrate the diverse, practical ways UNCTs are advancing gender parity.

## Tips for filling out the Gender Parity Action Plan Template

- Start from your data: take screenshots from the [UN System-wide Gender Parity Dashboard](#) to show an overall snapshot. Then record gender parity by staff category and level as your baseline before you set any targets at the

beginning of the template. Some UNCTs find it useful to also include gender parity by agency/level, especially if there are major disparities across entities or areas.

- Set a specific, time-bound target for each measure and for each category that has not reached parity (such as, “increase women’s representation in NOC–NOD posts from 35 per cent to 45 per cent by 2028” or “report annually on organizational culture”).
- Assign clear accountability by specifying which UNCT structure leads (e.g. OMT/HRWG, GTG, RCO, UN Women) and when they will report back (e.g. annually to UNCT, during UNCT-SWAP Gender Scorecard reporting).
- Avoid overloading the template; it is better to have a small number of well-defined actions with good data than a long list that cannot be monitored.

| Gender Parity Tracking: UNCT |                 |               |            |
|------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------|
| Staff Category               | Number of Women | Number of Men | % of Women |
| D2/P7                        |                 |               |            |
| D1/P6                        |                 |               |            |
| P5                           |                 |               |            |
| P4                           |                 |               |            |
| P3                           |                 |               |            |
| P2                           |                 |               |            |
| P1                           |                 |               |            |
| NOE                          |                 |               |            |
| NOD                          |                 |               |            |
| NOC                          |                 |               |            |
| NOB                          |                 |               |            |
| NOA                          |                 |               |            |
| G7                           |                 |               |            |
| G6                           |                 |               |            |
| G5                           |                 |               |            |
| G4                           |                 |               |            |
| G3                           |                 |               |            |
| G2                           |                 |               |            |
| G1                           |                 |               |            |
| Total                        |                 |               |            |

| Action                                                                                                                                  | Responsible Entity/<br>Group                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Estimated Budget                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Time Frame                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Monitoring/Tracking/<br>Indicator                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A concise description of the specific measure the UNCT will implement to advance gender parity. What does your UNCT want to accomplish? | The UN role or coordination mechanism accountable for delivering the action and reporting on progress, such as the Resident Coordinator, UNCT, OMT Chair, agency heads, HR network, or the Gender Focal Point. You can also list stakeholders and other groups who will support the action. | An indicative estimate of the financial and in-kind resources required to implement the action (e.g. none, staff time, P4 salary, consultancy), used to support planning, resourcing, and, where relevant, integration into the BOS and agency budgets. | The planned implementation period for the action, including start and end dates or an indication that it is ongoing, and the intended frequency (one-off, annual, or continuous) to enable sequencing and realistic monitoring. | The qualitative or quantitative measure that will be used to track implementation and results of the action (e.g. percentage of women in specific grades, number of actions completed, staff perceptions on inclusion, fairness, leadership support, and workplace culture, training feedback), including how often it will be reviewed and which data source will be used (HR systems, UNCT meeting minutes, surveys, or BOS monitoring). |

Photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown



# 1.

## SETTING TARGETS & MEASURING PROGRESS



### Take the first step: set realistic targets

- Establish gender parity targets at system and agency levels, including UNCT-wide gender parity targets at all contract levels that fall furthest from parity.
- Set quantitative annual targets for women's representation at specific grades or functional groups (for example, P4/NOC and above), and review progress against these targets each year using consolidated UNCT workforce data.
- Use data from the [UN System-wide Dashboard on Gender Parity](#) and internal HR systems to identify bottlenecks (by grade, contract type, job family, and duty station) and agree at least two corrective measures per year at UNCT level.
- Establish a standard set of indicators to be monitored UNCT-wide (e.g. women overall, women in leadership, women recruited, retention rate women vs men, staff trained on PSEA), and report on these annually to the UNCT.

### Go further: organize and share data

- Compile relevant data of all staff by sex, grade, contract type and duty station regularly from the System-wide Dashboard on Gender Parity to present at UNCT-wide meetings.
- Conduct all-staff UNCT-SWAP Gender Scorecard Gender and Organizational Culture Survey, in accordance with the [standardized template of PI 4.2](#) each year, add additional questions if needed, to further unpack issues such as work-life balance and family-friendly policies.
- Meet with agency gender focal points and staff representatives to discuss survey results and agree 2–3 follow up actions.

- Create a basic gender parity “dashboard” (for example, a shared spreadsheet or slide) showing key numbers by sex, grade, contract type and location. Track quarterly numbers against numerical targets to keep up with progress or identify lags.
- Include one or two gender parity indicators (for example, share of women by grade or in field offices) in UNCT-SWAP Gender Scorecard and BOS reporting.

### Keep momentum: use evidence for decisions

- Present gender parity and survey results to the UNCT and record at least one decision or corrective action in the minutes.
- HR and hiring managers to attach a one page gender parity snapshot to their annual recruitment or workforce report.

### Institutionalize change: standardize how data are tracked

- Agree on one common template for annual gender parity reporting across agencies (same columns, same definitions).
- Ask each agency to fill in this template every year and send it to the HR Working Group for consolidation.
- Require annual review by UNCT with findings informing subsequent UNCT-SWAP Gender Scorecard reporting.

#### UNCT IN FOCUS: BANGLADESH

UNCT Bangladesh’s 2021 UNCT-SWAP Gender Scorecard assessment showed that only 35 per cent of personnel were women, with particularly low representation in General Service and senior professional posts. There was also significant variation across agencies and contract types. In response, the UNCT agreed on a phased target to increase women’s overall representation by five percentage points every two years to reach 50 per cent by 2028, and to track parity by contract type, grade, and duty station so that under-performing categories can be addressed through targeted measures.

#### UNCT IN FOCUS: LAO PDR

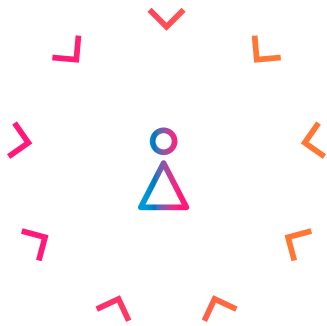
##### Building a shared picture of parity

A staffing review in Lao PDR showed that women and men were unevenly represented across grades and contract types, and that the UNCT lacked a common mechanism to monitor gender parity trends over time.

In response, the UNCT agreed to create a simple gender parity dashboard, managed jointly by the HR Working Group and the Gender Theme Group, providing regular sex disaggregated data by grade, contract type and agency for discussion in UNCT meetings.

This gave senior leaders a shared evidence base for identifying bottlenecks, setting realistic targets and tracking whether their actions were closing parity gaps.

## 2. LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY



### UNCT IN FOCUS: UGANDA Strengthening leadership and accountability

Organizational culture surveys and staff consultations highlighted the need for clearer accountability for gender parity and more visible leadership signaling.

The UNCT responded by integrating parity into annual workplans, asking entities to set agency specific targets, and tasking the HR Working Group to produce an annual report on progress and good practices; the Resident Coordinator also introduced an annual award to recognize individuals and agencies that champion gender parity.

These measures helped make parity a standing item in leadership discussions and encouraged agencies to treat it as a shared responsibility rather than a separate project.

### Take the first step: Get people talking!

- Include gender parity as an agenda item in at least one UNCT meeting or townhall.
- RCs/HCs/DSRSGs and Heads of Agencies to mention gender parity in at least one public forum per year.
- Consider participating in the Manel Pledge. Check out this [Guidance for Avoiding All Male Panels](#) by UNCT Indonesia!
- Heads of Agencies to report one concrete step they took to promote gender parity at the end of the year (e.g. mentoring a woman staff member, using gender neutral language in job posting, using social media or nontraditional avenues to advertise job postings).
- Commit managers to speak positively and consistently about flexible work arrangements to set a supportive tone for the work environment.
- Consider sharing a short paragraph in the UNCT annual report or a UNCT-wide email summarizing how UNCT leadership pushed gender parity forward.

### Harmonize leadership and accountability efforts across agencies.

- Include at least one gender parity KPI in the performance reviews of relevant senior managers (RC, Heads of Agencies, deputies, operations and HR/programme managers) and review it annually.
- RC to send a yearly memo to HoAs outlining their responsibility to promote gender parity and accountability for meeting targets and reporting on progress.
- Resident Coordinators to actively contribute to the selection of UNCT heads by providing clear, context-specific input to regional

directors on the leadership profile, competencies and experience required for the country, in line with the role outlined in the [Management and Accountability Framework](#).

- Heads of Agencies to set and champion agency-specific gender parity targets across grades and field offices.
- Use the UNCT gender-parity dashboard to identify agencies that consistently underperform against agreed targets and discuss bottlenecks and remedial actions in UNCT and OMT meetings.
- Agree on targeted follow-up measures for lagging agencies (such as time-bound improvement plans, tailored HR support, or peer-learning with higher-performing agencies) and request that HoAs report back to the UNCT on progress within an agreed timeframe.
- Require HoAs to report on implementation progress regularly, review gender parity data annually, and endorse two or more corrective actions.
- Regularly share data on parity among country representatives with relevant regional or global directors in charge of hiring.
- Require semi-annual review by regional directors of UNCTs where in-country women representatives are below parity, where progress is stagnant, or where agency or entity disparities are the most pronounced to document decisions, corrective actions, and follow-up responsibilities. Submit these reviews onwards to UNSDG or GEAP Steering Committee for annual review.

### Keep momentum: highlight successes!

- Establish an annual award by the RC to recognize achievement of gender parity targets and gender champions for (1) HOAs and senior management and (2) UN programme and operations staff.

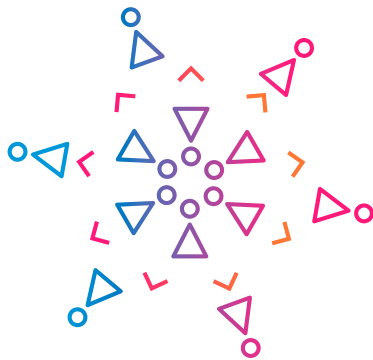
- Share a short paragraph in the UNCT-wide communications periodically with summarizing how UNCT leadership pushed gender parity forward.
- RC to deliver brief annual statement on progress towards gender parity as part of broader UNCT accountability and leadership communication.

### Institutionalize Progress: integrate parity into operations

- Ensure that agreed parity measures are costed and reflected into the BOS (needed to meet criteria e in PI 4.3) and agency workplans, so that changes in recruitment, outreach, training, premises, and security arrangements have identified resource lines rather than relying on ad hoc funding.
- When developing or updating the BOS, the OMT and HR Working Group should identify which gender parity actions require common services or joint investments (e.g. shared outreach platforms, joint training, safety upgrades in compounds) and include them in BOS annual workplans and budgets.
- UN entities should follow UN system guidance on financing gender equality by costing gender parity measures and allocating dedicated budgets in their country and regional workplans, rather than approving gender parity plans without implementation resources.

### 3.

## RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND PROGRESSION



#### Take the first step: make recruitment more inclusive

- Distribute UN Women's [Guidance on Creating Inclusive Vacancy Announcements](#) to OMT members, HR Working Group and agency HR offices, and encourage them to integrate the key practices. Also consider organizing an inter agency training on the Guidance, in collaboration with Office of the Focal Point for Women in the UN System at UN Women.
- Standardize 2–3 gender-related questions to include in interview guides or matrices (for example, working in diverse teams, preventing harassment, supporting inclusive workplaces).
- Ensure hiring panels are gender mixed whenever possible and document when this is not feasible.
- Reopen vacancies that do not attract sufficient applications from the underrepresented gender, where operationally feasible.
- Develop a simple inter agency roster of staff with gender expertise who can serve on recruitment panels. Keep it as a basic spreadsheet (name, agency, contact details, role, sector, gender competence) and update it periodically so entities can quickly identify gender sensitive panel members.

#### Go further: widen the talent pool

- Collaborate with women's networks, senior talent pipelines, rosters, and databases and create a database of women, qualified in the relevant area of work, to conduct targeted outreach during recruitment process. Here's a UN Women guide on [Ensuring Equal Representation Through Recruitment](#) that identifies practical good practices.

## TEMPORARY SPECIAL MEASURES

### Addressing entrenched inequalities

Temporary special measures for the achievement of gender parity (ST/AI/2020/5) are targeted, time bound actions designed to accelerate progress towards gender parity and substantive equality only where women are underrepresented (i.e. below 50%). They are not exceptions to merit, but tools to correct the persistent effects of unequal systems so that equal treatment in practice becomes possible. They are remedial tools designed to overcome the historical and structural discrimination and underrepresentation of women, and do not include reciprocal measures activated by underrepresentation of men. Measures include:

- Apply temporary special measures in any entity and level where gender parity has not been reached, for all relevant posts until parity is achieved.
- Before posting such vacancies, proactively identify qualified women—internally and externally—through early outreach, advertisements and special searches, especially for foreseeable vacancies.
- In selections at under parity levels, give preference to qualified women (prioritizing suitable internal women where appropriate), select the woman when candidates are equally/ comparably qualified, and assess potential as well as past experience.
- Where both gender parity and geographical representation targets apply, strive to advance both; if they cannot both be met, apply the temporary special measures for gender parity as set out in the instruction.
- When a man is chosen over an equally or more qualified woman at an under parity level, the head of entity must provide a written, reasoned justification, and managers are held accountable for applying these measures and completing required gender-related learning.

- Strengthen outreach communications to attract more women applicants by partnering with Member States, national universities and specialized networks, especially in traditionally male dominated job families (such as logistics, IT and security).
- Advertise vacancies well ahead of time and share them systematically with other UN entities and inter agency networks.
- Circulate vacancies to local and global women's organizations, women's professional associations and civil society partners.
- Actively participate in and leverage the UN Talent Community, developed by OHR and UN Women.
- Organize outreach initiatives—such as HR Open Days—to attract diverse women and other underrepresented groups to UN careers.
- Encourage recruitment of women in non traditional roles (for example, women drivers), provided minimum job requirements are met.
- Develop strategies and targets for recruitment of women in occupations with the highest gaps in gender parity (for example, security, logistics and transport) and in field offices.

### Strengthen practice: conversations and careers

- Encourage women personnel to participate in leadership development programs, organized by HQ or regional offices, that include gender parity scenarios and learning modules.
- Introduce “UN Career Speed Dating” events where aspiring staff—especially women and underrepresented groups—can have brief, structured conversations with UN personnel and senior managers about career paths and progression.

- Organize “Career Day” events featuring diverse speakers who highlight different routes from national to international roles and showcase women’s trajectories across sectors.
- Develop a mentorship programme (or strengthen existing ones) to support staff’s professional development, with a particular focus on women and national staff. Use UN Women’s resource on [mentorship and the critical role it plays in fostering an enabling environment](#).
- Dedicated training, mentoring and sponsorship programmes for women staff to prepare them for UNCT leadership, head of office roles and other decision making positions.
- Temporary adjustments to eligibility and experience requirements, mobility patterns or posting policies that remove structural barriers for women (e.g. recognizing diverse experience, designing field rotation schemes that enable women’s deployment).

### Address historical barriers: Temporary Special Measures

- Ensure Temporary Special Measures are applied consistently, integrated with relevant HR policies and procedures, and supported through strong accountability mechanisms.
- Issue a regular memo to all Heads of Agencies, OMT/HR Working Group advising them on special measures and the requirements regarding selection/appointment for vacancies in the Professional category and above, where gender parity has not been reached.
- Temporary preferential selection of qualified women for UNCT and agency posts or promotions where women are underrepresented (e.g. at specific grades, in missions or hardship duty stations).
- Time bound parity targets or quotas for women’s representation in UNCT leadership, senior management groups and key coordination mechanisms (e.g. Results Groups, OMT, GTG).
- Targeted recruitment and talent pipeline measures for women (outreach for UNV/ NO/entry level P posts, internships, rosters and return to work schemes linked to UNCT staffing plans).
- Application through the standard P11 form is not required when applying temporary special measures; UN entities may use streamlined expressions of interest, existing rosters or other equivalent formats, provided that candidates meet the minimum qualifications and that transparency and fairness are maintained.
- Ensure continued awareness and adherence to policy initiatives as they are adopted, such as the administrative instruction on the staff selection system ([ST/AI/2025/2](#)) and the administrative instruction on downsizing or restructuring ([ST/AI/2023/1](#)).

### Keep momentum: monitor, adjust and retain talent

- Offer exit interviews to all departing personnel (including interns, volunteers, and short- or fixed-term consultants) to record the reasons for leaving and as a confidential space for feedback. Use UN Women’s [Template for Exit Surveys](#) as a helpful guide to develop one that speaks to the needs of your UNCT.
- Use findings from exit interviews and staff surveys to agree on 2–3 concrete retention measures per year (e.g. flexible work arrangements, support for caregivers, clear rotation planning, addressing toxic teams).

- Regularly share examples and good practices on special measures implemented, women staff retention measures and career progression opportunities within agencies at UNCT-wide meetings.
- Undertake further consultation to identify existing good gender parity practices at agency level that could be scaled up across the UNCT.
- Review retention data annually (resignations, non renewals, early contract terminations) by sex, grade, duty station type and contract modality to identify where women are leaving at higher rates and why.
- Introduce an annual “talent review” at UNCT level to identify women staff (by grade and contract type) who are ready or near ready for promotion, and agree on concrete follow up steps (stretch assignments, acting roles, learning plans).
- Ask each agency to set indicative targets for women’s promotion rates at key grades (e.g. NOA–NOB, P2–P3, P4–P5) and to monitor whether women are progressing at least at the same rate as men over the Cooperation Framework period.
- Encourage temporary developmental assignments and acting up opportunities for women in leadership roles (e.g. OIC/Head of Office, programme manager, operations manager) and recognize these formally in performance appraisals.
- Ensure performance management guidance explicitly requires supervisors to discuss career progression and promotion pathways annually with women staff and to document agreed development actions.

## Institutionalize change: align systems and procedures across agencies

- Coordinate incorporation of agreed special measures on gender responsive recruitment, retention and advancement into existing HR procedures and guidance.
- Coordinate capacity building for the HR Working Group and OMT on gender mainstreaming in recruitment, retention and advancement, with a focus on eliminating gender bias (linked to the Gender Capacity Building Plan).
- Develop country-specific sample language for gender sensitive vacancy announcements and coordinate its systematic use by all agencies.

### UNCT IN FOCUS: BANGLADESH Making recruitment more gender responsive

The UNCT’s assessment found that recruitment processes did not consistently use gender sensitive language, outreach or panels, and that there was no common approach to temporary special measures for women and other underrepresented groups.

To address this, the HRWG and OMT ran a joint workshop on gender responsive recruitment, developed a simple summary of special measures, organized HR Open Days targeted at women and young professionals, and launched an inter agency mentorship programme.

These steps helped standardize practices across agencies, improve understanding of bias in recruitment, and expand the pool of women interested in UN careers in Bangladesh.

## 4. ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT



### Leverage UN Women's resources for more information and good practice examples!

- [Enabling Environment Guidelines for the United Nations System](#) and [Supplementary Guidance](#).
- [Make Parity a Reality: Field-specific Enabling Environment Guidelines](#), the [Guidelines in Brief](#), Summary of Key Recommendations for [Managers](#), [Personnel](#), and [Organizations](#).
- [How can we reach gender parity at the UN by 2028?](#) A collection of good practices to mark five years of the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity.
- [Gender Inclusion Practice Note: Designated Lactation Spaces for Nursing Parents](#)
- [Intersectionality and the Enabling Environment](#)

### Take the first step: Designate one or more Gender Focal Points

- Designate Gender Focal Points with adequate levels of seniority and responsibility, preferably at the P-4 level or above (or equivalent levels depending on the size and makeup of the UNCT) with written terms of reference and at least 20 per cent of their time allocated to focal point functions, as per [ST/SGB/2023/3](#).
- Large UN Country Teams should have multiple GFPs or Focal Points for Women. Where the designated GFP is a female, the deputy is recommended to be a male, or vice versa.
- Provide GFPs with access to staff selection and representation statistics and actively include them in workforce planning, selection processes, and outreach efforts.
- Ensure RC/HC/DSRSG and Heads of Agencies' active and visible commitment to collaborating with GFPs.
- Notify the Office of the Focal Point for Women that a new GFP has been appointed so they can join the global network of gender focal points by sending an email to [focalpoint.forwomen@unwomen.org](mailto:focalpoint.forwomen@unwomen.org).

### Improve day-to-day workplace culture

- Disseminate this guide from UN Women on [Flexible Working Arrangements and Why it Makes Sense](#) to help develop a policy that works for personnel and managers.
- Hold informal staff–manager dialogue session per year (for example, a brown-bag lunch, or a small roundtable) to discuss workload, work–life balance, inclusion and career support.
- Organize a workshop on how to promote an enabling environment in support of gender parity with the Office of the Focal Point for Women, like:
  - » How can we create an enabling environment?

- » How can we leverage the [UN System-wide Dashboard on Gender Parity](#)?
- » A demonstration of the [UN System-wide Knowledge Hub on Addressing Sexual Harassment](#) developed by UN Women.
- Add a short paragraph on gender equality, work–life balance, flexible work and zero tolerance for misconduct to UNCT or agency onboarding materials.

### Address broader issues of inclusion, including LGBTQI persons with disabilities, race, class, etc. using an intersectional approach

- Review workforce data and staff survey findings using an intersectional lens (e.g. examining patterns by sex, disability status, contract type, grade, duty station and, where feasible and appropriate, other diversity markers), and discuss findings regularly in the UNCT/OMT.
- Engage staff representing diverse groups (including LGBTQI staff, persons with disabilities, staff from different racial, ethnic, or socio economic backgrounds) in safe space consultations or focus groups to identify specific barriers, and use the findings to inform UNCT parity and inclusion actions.
- Ensure that anti discrimination, harassment, and misconduct policies, trainings and communications explicitly address intersectional forms of discrimination (e.g. against LGBTQI persons with disabilities or women from marginalized communities) and provide clear reporting and support pathways.
- Integrate intersectionality into recruitment, promotion and talent management practices by reviewing vacancy language, outreach channels and panel composition to avoid bias and broaden access for underrepresented groups.

### Join the Network for Gender Focal Points!

- **Membership connects GFPs** across headquarters, regions, and country offices into a shared community of practice working toward common gender parity objectives.
- Participation in the Network involves active engagement in **peer learning, knowledge exchange, and system-wide coordination**.
- **GFPs contribute good practices**, remain informed on evolving guidance and standards, and help ensure alignment between system-wide commitments and country level implementation.

### The Office of the Focal Point for Women provides dedicated support to GFPs and UN Country Teams, including:

- **Capacity building opportunities** on gender parity, enabling environments, and field-specific challenges;
- **Technical support** to develop, implement, and monitor UNCT and entity level gender parity strategies and action plans;
- **Access to system-wide tools and guidance**, including dashboards, enabling environment guidelines, and knowledge resources on preventing sexual harassment;
- **A secure extranet** platform enabling continuous access to resources, peer exchange, and up to date system-wide information.

- Include at least one intersectionality focused action and indicator in UNCT workplans and relevant working group TORs, with clear responsibilities and timelines.
- Regularly review qualitative feedback (from staff surveys, exit interviews, ombuds and ethics mechanisms) for intersectional concerns and agree on follow up measures to address recurring issues affecting specific groups.

## UNCT IN FOCUS: TÜRKİYE

### Disability inclusion as part of creating enabling environments

Disability inclusion is an essential part of creating enabling environments. UNCT Türkiye's Gender Parity and Disability Inclusion Strategy brings together implementation of the Secretary-General's Gender Parity Strategy and the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy, recognizing that gender equality intersects with disability and other forms of diversity. Using a common guidance document, agencies provide workforce data disaggregated by sex, contract modality, grade and, where available, disability status, allowing the UNCT to identify overlapping barriers faced by women with disabilities and other underrepresented groups. Priority actions include strengthening disability data collection and staff awareness on self-identification, promoting accessible and inclusive workplaces, and ensuring that accessibility and disability-inclusive procurement are progressively integrated into Operations Management Team workplans and common premises planning.

### Go further: make flexible work real and usable

- Commit Heads of Agencies and senior managers to talk positively about flexible working arrangements where operationally feasible and provide practical guidance to managers.
- Develop and circulate a simple one-page note for personnel and managers explaining available flexible working arrangements and how to request them.
- Promote working hours etiquette across the UNCT, such as respecting core hours, avoiding routine meetings outside working hours, and not expecting responses during leave.

### Support families: strengthen low-cost practical measures

- Map existing family-friendly measures across agencies, including parental leave, breastfeeding breaks, teleworking options and childcare-related support, and share a short summary with personnel.
- Where feasible, friendly improvements in common premises, such as child-friendly waiting space, better signage, or safer access to care-related facilities.
- Share one short example per year of a practical enabling-environment measure adopted by an agency or office (for example, flexible work guidance, breastfeeding space, wellbeing initiative, or staff dialogue mechanism) so other entities can replicate it.

### Keep momentum: strengthen safety, trust and accountability

- Distribute the [United Nations System Code of Conduct: To Prevent Harassment, Including Sexual Harassment](#), at UN System Events to attendees at every UNCT event. Print out hard copies to have available to hand out at the door or start of every event
- Ensure all Heads of offices, completed the Prohibited Conduct and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Prevention and Response Year-End Certification.
- Ensure all personnel, including interns, consultants and volunteers where applicable, receive mandatory onboarding or refresher information on sexual harassment, exploitation, abuse of authority and available reporting channels.
- Hold a periodic townhall or webinar to provide a refresh in standards of conduct policies, reporting mechanisms, and responsibilities.

- Create and share a simple list of trained focal points, counsellors or referral contacts across agencies so staff know where to seek confidential support.
- Provide confidential support services (e.g., Ombudsman and Respectful Workplace Facilitators).
- Create safe spaces and peer-support networks for staff to share experiences and concerns.
- All leaders will stay vigilant and take action against sexual harassment and everyday sexism

### **Institutionalize change: align minimum standards across agencies**

- Conduct a light inter-agency mapping of enabling environment policies and practices to identify a minimum package of measures that all agencies should promote.
- OMT/HR Working Group to review gaps in flexible work, family-friendly policies and staff welfare measures and each agency to propose 2–3 realistic inter-agency priorities each year.
- Include enabling environment actions and indicators in the UNCT-SWAP Gender Scorecard follow up or related action plans, to ensure they are monitored alongside parity targets.

#### **UNCT IN FOCUS: BHUTAN**

### **Creating an enabling and inclusive workplace**

Staff survey results indicated a generally positive organizational culture, especially on preventing harassment and ensuring safety, but highlighted persistent concerns about work–life balance, flexible working arrangements and the responsiveness of entitlements to women’s needs.

To respond, the UNCT introduced a common childcare facility with a lactation room, joint well being and inclusion activities, informal dialogue sessions between staff and senior managers, and a shared recognition space to highlight positive examples of work–life balance and inclusive practice.

These steps helped make corporate policies on flexible work and care more visible, created safe spaces for staff voice, and signaled leadership commitment to a healthier, more inclusive work environment.

## 5.

# MISSION, FIELD, AND HARDSHIP DUTY SETTINGS



### Security, safety and living conditions

- Systematically assess and address gender specific security risks in mission and field locations, using staff surveys and safety audits to identify priority issues for women staff.
- Improve working and living conditions in compounds and guest houses (lighting, locks, sanitation, privacy, and safe transport to/from compounds) to provide a safe, supportive environment for all staff.
- Ensure women staff are included in all field visit teams and security briefings, and that incident reporting mechanisms are survivor centred and protect against retaliation.

### Work-life balance, family, and mobility

- Adopt family friendly policies tailored to non family and hardship duty stations, including additional leave or remote working options, and, where feasible, possibilities for families to be based in near safer duty stations.
- Communicate mobility decisions and reassignments in good time (e.g. at least six months in advance) to allow staff, especially those with care responsibilities, to plan schooling and family arrangements.
- Consider spousal employment options or referrals, and factor access to health care, schooling and recreation into decisions on designating or reviewing family/non family duty stations.

### Recruitment, retention and mobility in missions

- Use field specific outreach (including local women's networks and professional associations) to recruit women into mission and camp based roles, especially in non traditional job families such as security, logistics and engineering.

- Re examine restrictive requirements (e.g. years of prior field experience) for selected posts to widen the pool of qualified women willing to serve in hardship locations.
- Use anticipated vacancies and rotations in missions for strategic workforce and succession planning that advances women into field leadership roles.
- Encourage entities to pilot retention incentives in hardship/non family duty stations (such as predictable rotation cycles, remote working periods between deployments, or targeted R&R arrangements) that respond to barriers disproportionately affecting women.

### Flexible work, connectivity and tools

- Equip staff in field locations with the technology, connectivity and secure systems needed to work remotely when security, travel, or care responsibilities require it.
- Monitor use of flexible working arrangements in missions (by sex, grade, contract type, and location) and share findings with senior leadership to address unequal access.

### Psychosocial Support

- Provide accessible mental health and psychosocial support tailored to the stresses of field and mission environments, with explicit attention to women's experiences.
- Ensure staff in high risk or isolated locations can access medical care, counselling and confidential reporting lines without fear of stigma or professional repercussions.

### UNCT IN FOCUS: KENYA

#### Gender parity in field settings

- UNDSS and all UN agencies often work together to regularly identify and address gender-based security concerns, and gender-related risks are included in the assessments and virtual information sharing platforms.
- Gender-targeted recruitment of women and youth has been made for security guards and interpreters in the refugee camps.
- 50 per cent of the travel by air ticket is provided to staff during conflict and climatic emergencies that make public road transport unsafe.
- There are special measures for family-friendly relocation and evacuation plans for staff working in the refugee camps to UN field-level compounds in humanitarian disasters, including floods and conflicts.
- Gender-related training on-the-job mentoring, and support for security awareness have been provided for handling incident reporting and women's security concerns in the field.
- There are necessary support options for internet access, necessary equipment for satellite communications, and other technology solutions to enable regular and emergency teleworking and safety in refugee camps.
- The UN Compounds in the field have provided and regularly improved the accommodation facilities for staff and personnel.
- UN Compounds also has recreation facilities for sports and entertainment, a gym, jogging tracks, and other facilities for mental health support, work-life integration, and informal group gender chats and networking.

# AVAILABLE RESOURCES

## **Monitoring & Reporting**

[UN System-wide Dashboard on Gender Parity](#)

[UN Secretariat Gender Parity Dashboard](#)

[Secretary-General's Report on the Improvement in the status of women in the United Nations System \(2025\)](#)

[Infographics: visual representation of women in the UN System \(2025\)](#)

## **Leadership, Accountability, & Commitment**

Advocacy video series by UN Leaders: [Making Parity a Reality at the UN](#)

[Why Gender Parity?](#)

[How can we reach gender parity at the UN by 2028?](#) A collection of good practices to mark five years of the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity.

[Guidance on Developing an Entity-specific Gender Parity Implementation/Action Plan: Suggested Measures](#)

[How to improve the representation of women at the UN \(2022\)](#)

[Gender Equality Acceleration Plan \(GEAP\)](#)

## **Recruitment, Retention, & Talent Management**

[Ensuring Equal Representation Through Recruitment](#)

[Guidance on Creating Inclusive Vacancy Announcements](#)

[Template for Exit Surveys](#)

[Mentoring as part of creating an enabling environment](#)

## **Enabling Environment & Organizational Culture**

[Enabling Environment Guidelines for the United Nations System \(2019\)](#) and [Supplementary Guidance](#).

[Make Parity a Reality: Field-specific Enabling Environment Guidelines \(2021\)](#), the [Guidelines in Brief](#), [Summary of Key Recommendations for Managers, Personnel](#), and [Organizations](#).

[Flexible Working Arrangements and Why it Makes Sense](#)

[Gender Inclusion Practice Note: Designated Lactation Spaces for Nursing Parents](#)

[Intersectionality and the Enabling Environment](#)

## **UN Women Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment Resources**

[United Nations System Code of Conduct: To Prevent Harassment, Including Sexual Harassment](#)

[UN System-wide Knowledge Hub on Addressing Sexual Harassment](#)

## **UNCT-SWAP Gender Scorecard**

UNSDG [UNCT-SWAP Gender Scorecard Framework and Technical Guidance](#)

[Asia and the Pacific Virtual Toolkit](#)

# UNCT GENDER PARITY ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE

## Suggested Approaches and Measures

Gender Parity snapshot of UNCT by entity from [UN System-wide Gender Parity Dashboard](#).

Insert screenshot/image(s)

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

Fill out UNCT-wide gender parity data by staff category/level using [UN System-wide Gender Parity Dashboard](#), UNDSS personnel database, or by reaching out to each entity.

#### Gender Parity by Category and Level

| Staff Category | Number of Women | Number of Men | % of Women |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|------------|
| D2/P7          |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| D1/P6          |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| P5             |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| P4             |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| P3             |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| P2             |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| P1             |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| NOE            |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| NOD            |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| NOC            |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| NOB            |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| NOA            |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| G7             |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| G6             |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| G5             |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| G4             |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| G3             |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| G2             |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| G1             |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| <b>Total</b>   |                 |               | 0.00%      |

#### Gender Parity by Category and Level

| Non-Staff Category          | Number of Women | Number of Men | % of Women |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------|
| <b>NPSA</b>                 |                 |               |            |
| NPSA-11                     |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| NPSA-10                     |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| NPSA-9                      |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| NPSA-8                      |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| NPSA-7                      |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| NPSA-6                      |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| NPSA-5                      |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| NPSA-4                      |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| NPSA-3                      |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| NPSA-2                      |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| NPSA-1                      |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| <b>Total</b>                |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| <b>IPSA</b>                 |                 |               |            |
| IPSA 13 lead - 14 exp./lead |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| IPSA 12-13 expert           |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| IPSA 10-11                  |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| IPSA 8-9                    |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| IPSA 1-7                    |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| <b>Total</b>                |                 |               | 0.00%      |

#### Gender Parity by Category and Level

| Other consultancy formats      | Number of Women | Number of Men | % of Women |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------|
| SSA                            |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| OIC                            |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| (others to be added as needed) |                 |               | 0.00%      |
|                                |                 |               | 0.00%      |
|                                |                 |               | 0.00%      |
|                                |                 |               | 0.00%      |
|                                |                 |               | 0.00%      |
|                                |                 |               | 0.00%      |
|                                |                 |               | 0.00%      |
|                                |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| <b>Total</b>                   |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| <b>UN Volunteers</b>           |                 |               |            |
| Expert UNV (national)          |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| Expert UNV (international)     |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| Specialist UNV (national)      |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| Specialist UNV (international) |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| Associate UNV (national)       |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| Associate UNV (international)  |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| Community UNV (national)       |                 |               | 0.00%      |
| <b>Total</b>                   |                 |               | 0.00%      |

# 1. Setting Targets & Measuring Progress

**Notes/Observations/Goals/Justifications:**

For example:

- Our main gap is women’s representation in mid level national posts and in field duty stations; this section focuses on a small set of measurable targets in those areas.
- Targets are intentionally modest (3–5 percentage point increases over three years) to reflect current staffing size and expected turnover.
- Baselines are drawn from the 2024 UNCT-SWAP Gender Scorecard assessment; figures will be updated annually using the HR parity sheet and dashboard.
- Some entities already meet or exceed parity; UNCT level targets therefore focus on lagging job families rather than overall headcount.

| Action                                                                                                                                            | Responsible Entity/Group                                                                                                                                          | Estimated Budget                                                                                       | Time Frame                                                                  | Monitoring/Tracking/Indicator                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| For example: Increase the share of women in mid level national posts (NOA–NOB / P2–P3) from 40 per cent to 45 per cent by 2028.                   | HR Working Group (data and monitoring), with Heads of Agencies and hiring managers responsible for implementing agency specific measures.                         | Staff time (HR and managers); small additional budget for outreach and mentoring activities, if needed | 2025–2028 (baseline in 2024, mid term check in 2026, final review in 2028). | Percentage of women in NOA–NOB / P2–P3 posts, tracked annually using the UNCT gender parity dashboard and reported through UNCT-SWAP Gender Scorecard PI 4.3 and UNCT meeting minutes. |
| For example: Once a year, compile a simple table of all staff by sex, grade, contract type and duty station, coordinated by the HR Working Group. | OMT, HR Working Group                                                                                                                                             | Staff time                                                                                             | Annually                                                                    | Updated parity table; annexed to UNCT-SWAP Gender Scorecard PI 4.3                                                                                                                     |
| For example: Annual tracking and reporting on the status and actions for gender parity (disaggregated by gender, grade, function)                 | OMT/HR Working Group secretariat to compile data, with input from agencies<br><br>OMT to present annual data at UNCT meeting to track progress and issue guidance |                                                                                                        | Annually                                                                    | Annual UNCT-SWAP Gender Scorecard reporting, UNCT meeting minutes                                                                                                                      |
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## 2. Leadership and Accountability

### Notes/Observations/Goals/Justifications:

For example:

- The objective is to keep gender parity visible in leadership forums and to clarify who is accountable for progress.
- Including parity in UNCT agendas and KPIs is meant to reinforce existing commitments rather than create new reporting burdens.
- Differences in perception between women and men in the culture survey underline the need for more visible leadership signalling and follow-through.
- These measures build on practices already piloted by a few agencies, such as leadership awards or parity briefings, and extend them across the UNCT.

| Action                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Responsible Entity/Group                                                                                                                                                                    | Estimated Budget | Time Frame | Monitoring/Tracking/Indicator             |
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| For example: Include gender parity as an agenda item in at least one UNCT meeting or town hall                                                                                                             | RC to lead UNCT agenda, with support and input from OMT                                                                                                                                     | Staff time       | Annually   | Meeting minutes                           |
| For example: Include at least one gender parity KPI in the performance reviews of relevant senior managers (RC, Heads of Agencies, deputies, operations and HR/programme managers) and review it annually. | RC to ensure KPIs of HOAs<br><br>OMT to facilitate conversation with respective agency's senior management to ensure KPIs are in place and regularly reviewed<br><br>Agency/entity-specific | Staff time       | Annually   | PMDs for HoAs, Operations and HR Managers |
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### 3. Recruitment, Retention, and Talent Management

#### Notes/Observations/Goals/Justifications:

For example:

- Recruitment measures focus on low-cost changes to language, outreach and panel composition that can be applied across agencies without changing corporate HR policies.
- The aim is to widen the pool of qualified women, especially in under-represented job families such as logistics, IT, security and subnational duty stations.
- HR Open Days and mentoring are intended to complement, not replace, existing corporate pipelines and rosters.
- Data on applicants and shortlists by sex will be used to assess whether inclusive vacancy announcements and outreach efforts are translating into more women applicants.

| Action                                                                                                                                                                           | Responsible Entity/Group                  | Estimated Budget                                          | Time Frame | Monitoring/Tracking/Indicator                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| For example: Distribute UN guidance on inclusive vacancy announcements and develop a short "gender lens" checklist for vacancy notices and TORs, to be used across all agencies. | OMT-HRWG (lead), with GTG technical input | Staff time                                                | Yearly     | Checklist adopted by agencies; spot check of vacancy announcements for inclusive language and encouragement of under represented groups |
| For example: Organize at least one inter agency HR Open Day per year to attract women and other under represented groups to UN careers and explain recruitment processes.        | OMT-HRWG, with GTG support                | Staff time and minor event costs (refreshments, printing) | Annually   | Number and profile of participants; feedback forms; subsequent changes in female applicants for targeted job families or duty stations  |
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## 4. Enabling Environment and Organizational Culture

### Notes/Observations/Goals/Justifications:

For example:

- Survey findings showed concerns about work–life balance, flexible work and perceived fairness in career opportunities; the actions in this section respond directly to those issues.
- Most measures are deliberately low-cost, such as HR over Coffee, one-page guidance notes, or designating a breastfeeding room, so that smaller entities can participate.
- Dialogue sessions and recognition of good practice are meant to normalize conversations about culture and surface issues early, before they escalate.
- The same questions will be repeated in future gender and organizational culture surveys to track whether these measures are improving staff perceptions over time.

| Action                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Responsible Entity/Group                                      | Estimated Budget                  | Time Frame                                     | Monitoring/Tracking/Indicator                                                            |
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| For example: Hold at least one informal staff–manager dialogue session per year (for example, "HR over Coffee" or brown bag lunch) to discuss workload, work–life balance, inclusion and career support. | GTG and staff welfare committee, with support from HoAs / RCO | staff time and light refreshments | Annually                                       | Number of sessions held; key issues and agreed follow up actions recorded in short notes |
| For example: Develop and circulate a one page note on flexible working arrangements explaining available options and how staff can request them.                                                         | OMT–HRWG (drafting), cleared by UNCT                          | Staff time                        | One-off with yearly updates as policies change | Note disseminated to all personnel; references in induction/orientation materials        |
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## 5. Mission, Field, and Hardship Duty Settings

### Notes/Observations/Goals/Justification

For example:

- Women are under represented in hardship, non family and mission duty stations, particularly in security, logistics and engineering roles, and cite security and family related barriers to accepting such postings.
- Staff surveys and global UN reviews highlight safety, accommodation conditions and access to psychosocial support as decisive factors for women's willingness to deploy and remain in field locations.
- UN mobility and hardship frameworks already provide differentiated entitlements; this section focuses on leveraging these, alongside low cost enabling environment measures, to improve women's representation and retention in missions.

| Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Responsible Entity/Group                                                                                                                     | Estimated Budget                                                                                                                            | Time Frame                                                                         | Monitoring/Tracking/Indicator                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
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| For example: By 2027, complete annual gender responsive security and safety audits for all mission and field duty stations, with at least 50 per cent women's participation in staff consultations and focus groups.                                                       | Security Management Team, DSS/UNDSS Focal Point, HR Working Group, with participation of Staff Association and Gender Theme Group.           | Staff time; small operational budget for field visits, survey tools and minor safety improvements (e.g. lighting, locks, privacy measures). | 2025–2027 (baseline assessment in 2025, follow up audits in 2026 and 2027).        | Number and percentage of mission and field duty stations with completed gender responsive safety audits and documented action plans, reported annually through the UNCT gender parity dashboard and UNCT-SWAP action plan updates. |
| For example: By end 2027, ensure that all compounds and guest houses in hardship duty stations meet agreed minimum standards on lighting, locks, sanitation, privacy and safe transport to/from compounds, prioritizing locations with high concentrations of women staff. | OMT / Facilities Management, Security Management Team, with input from Resident Coordinator Office and entity specific administrative units. | Reallocation within existing premises and security budgets; additional resources only where major upgrades are required.                    | 2026–2027 (standards agreed in 2026, upgrades completed and verified by end 2027). | Percentage of compounds and guest houses in hardship and non family duty stations that meet minimum safety and living conditions standards, verified through audit reports and staff perception surveys.                           |
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# UN WOMEN EXISTS TO ADVANCE WOMEN'S RIGHTS, GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS.

As the lead United Nations entity on gender equality and secretariat of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, we shift laws, institutions, social norms and services to close the gender gap and build an equal world for all women and girls. Our partnerships with governments, women's movements and the private sector, coupled with our coordination of the broader United Nations, deliver lasting changes. We make strides in four areas: leadership, economic empowerment, freedom from violence, and peace, security and humanitarian action.

UN Women keeps the rights of women and girls at the centre of global progress – always, everywhere. Because gender equality is not just what we do. It is who we are.



220 East 42nd Street  
New York, New York 10017, USA

[focalpoint.forwomen@unwomen.org](mailto:focalpoint.forwomen@unwomen.org)  
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