




**PERFORMANCE INDICATOR  
08**

**GENDER-RESPONSIVE PERFORMANCE  
MANAGEMENT**



08. Performance Indicator: Gender-responsive Performance Management

 <b>Approaches requirements</b>	 <b>Meets requirements</b>	 <b>Exceeds requirements</b>
<p>8ai. System in place to hold entity senior leadership accountable for entity performance against the gender equality policies or equivalent</p> <p><b>and</b></p> <p>8aii. Knowledge or experience in gender equality is embedded as a desirable competency in new Job Descriptions/ Terms of Reference and recruitment processes as relevant</p> <p><b>and</b></p> <p>8aiii. A requirement for a proven track record in gender equality and the empowerment of women is included in senior appointments</p>	<p>8bi. Entity senior leadership are held accountable for entity performance against the gender equality policies or equivalent</p> <p><b>and</b></p> <p>8bii. Knowledge or experience in gender equality is embedded as a desirable competency in new Job Descriptions/ Terms of Reference and recruitment processes as relevant</p> <p><b>and</b></p> <p>8biii. A requirement for a proven track record in gender equality and the empowerment of women is included in senior appointments</p> <p><b>and</b></p> <p>8biv. System of recognition rewards excellent work promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women</p>	<p>8ci. Entity senior leadership are held accountable for entity performance against the gender equality policies or equivalent</p> <p><b>and</b></p> <p>8cii. Knowledge or experience in gender equality is embedded as a desirable competency in new Job Descriptions/ Terms of Reference and recruitment processes as relevant</p> <p><b>and</b></p> <p>8ciii. Senior appointments will include a requirement for a track record in gender equality</p> <p><b>and</b></p> <p>8civ. System of recognition rewards excellent work promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women</p> <p><b>and</b></p> <p>8cv. Senior leadership acts on feedback on their gender-responsive leadership through recurring and confidential staff surveys and/or 360-degree feedback mechanisms or equivalent</p>



**Gender-responsive Performance Management**

**What is the Gender-responsive Performance Management indicator?**

Gender-responsive Performance Management within the United Nations is an approach that integrates gender equality and the empowerment of women into performance management, monitoring, and reporting processes. This strategy ensures that gender-related issues are consistently addressed in the

design, implementation, and evaluation of programs and initiatives, while fostering a work environment that promotes gender equality at all levels of the organization. It also strives to ensure the equal representation of staff, particularly women, across all organizational levels. In this context, effective leadership at all levels is crucial to the UN's success. Engaged leadership not only drives the UN system forward but also positively influences others, especially during periods of change or transition. Moreover, it plays a pivotal role in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. By cultivating an inclusive environment, UN leaders can inspire and empower individuals to actively contribute to gender equality initiatives, ensuring that diverse perspectives are reflected in decision-making processes, policies, and activities. Ultimately, this type of leadership is essential for embedding gender-responsive practices within the organization and achieving tangible outcomes in gender equality across the UN system.

Clear accountability mechanisms are essential to ignite and sustain progress on gender equality. Accountability is most effective when it extends beyond senior leaders to include all staff. This can be achieved by integrating specific gender equality objectives into the performance plans and reviews of both senior leaders and staff members. By ensuring that gender equality is a shared responsibility at all levels of the organization, these mechanisms foster a culture of collective accountability and drive sustained progress toward gender equality. An intersectional approach should be integrated alongside gender equality, considering factors such as age, diversity, and geographical representation. This aligns fully with the principles of intersectional gender equality.

The UN-SWAP recognizes that positive performance results from a combination of accountability mechanisms, feedback loops for continuous improvement, and rewards and incentives. These elements work together to create an environment where gender equality is prioritized, progress is continuously monitored, and individuals are motivated to achieve and exceed gender-related objectives. By aligning accountability with constructive feedback and recognizing contributions, the UN-SWAP fosters a culture of continuous improvement and sustained commitment to gender equality across the UN system.

#### **Performance management for the UN Secretariat**

Performance management is a centralized function within the Secretariat, with entities required to report based on data provided by the Department of Management Strategy, Policy, and Compliance (DMSPC). To ensure consistency and alignment, UN Women will share the relevant DMSPC input with all UN-SWAP Focal Points in the Secretariat ahead of the reporting period. Entities are encouraged to report on initiatives at the entity level, offering detailed information on their gender equality efforts, progress, and outcomes. This approach ensures a more comprehensive understanding of how gender-responsive performance management is being implemented both at the system-wide level and across individual Secretariat entities.

#### **Who is the Business Owner for this indicator?**

Ensuring that leadership is accountable for promoting and achieving gender equality is primarily the responsibility of the head of the entity and the entity's senior management team, with the support of the Human Resources Department/Section as well as the head of the Gender Department/Unit. All staff are also responsible for contributing to a culture that promotes gender equality by integrating gender considerations into their daily work and performance, supporting relevant initiatives, and holding themselves and others accountable for progress in achieving institutional gender-related goals.

### Elements derived from the Gender Equality Acceleration Plan (GEAP)

- ✓ Minimum knowledge of gender equality will become a **core competency within all staff and leaders' terms of reference**, and relevant questions asked on gender equality in all interviews including at the senior most level.
- ✓ **Integrate/ mandate 'smart' gender equality, diversity, and inclusion actions and goals/objectives** in all managers' terms of reference, workplans and performance evaluations.
- ✓ Leaders get feedback on their gender responsive leadership via recurring and confidential **all-staff surveys and stronger 360-degree feedback mechanisms**.
- ✓ Senior appointments will include a requirement of a **proven track record on gender equality** as called for in the Executive Committee decision. This will be consistently applied and upheld by accountability.



### Evidence base

Examples of documents to attach to substantiate reporting:

- Core values and competencies
- Entity competency framework
- Senior leadership compacts or equivalent
- System of recognition or award system
- Results and reports of staff surveys
- Learning Plan
- Job Descriptions/ Terms of Reference

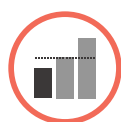
Note: Please identify a self-explanatory title for the documents uploaded onto the platform, particularly for those shared to the UN-SWAP Knowledge Hub.

### What are the specific requirements for this indicator?

There are **five key requirements** for this indicator that entities are asked to progressively achieve progress on during the UN-SWAP 3.0 period:

- Requirement 1:** **Entity holds senior leadership accountable** for entity performance against the gender equality policies or equivalent.
- Requirement 2:** Knowledge or experience in **gender equality is embedded as a desirable competency** in new Job Descriptions/ Terms of Reference and recruitment processes as relevant.
- Requirement 3:** A requirement for a **proven track record in gender equality and the empowerment of women** is included in senior appointments.
- Requirement 4:** System of **recognition rewards excellent work** promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- Requirement 5:** Senior leadership acts on feedback on their **gender-responsive leadership through recurring and confidential staff surveys and/or 360-degree feedback mechanisms** or equivalent.

A more in-depth explanation of each requirement is provided below, clearly indicating what is required to select each rating. These explanations are accompanied by additional sections containing **useful resources, examples** and a **step-by-step checklist** to support you to determine your entity's rating. The checklist includes information on the **reporting questions for each rating** you will encounter in the UN-SWAP 3.0 reporting platform, as well as suggestions of the **types of documents that can be uploaded** to support your rating. Finally, you will find the **template for the indicator action plan** following the checklist for ease of reference to complete.



## Requirement 1 - Senior Leadership held Accountable

<b>Approaches requirements</b>	<b>8ai. System in place to hold entity senior leadership accountable</b> for entity performance against the gender equality policies or equivalent
<b>Meets requirements</b>	<b>8bi. Entity senior leadership are held accountable for entity performance</b> against the gender equality policies or equivalent.
<b>Exceeds requirements</b>	<b>8ci. Entity senior leadership are held accountable for entity performance</b> against the gender equality policies or equivalent.

This requirement calls for entities to establish a **robust system of accountability and transparency, including compacts with the UN Secretary-General or similar accountability mechanisms which would provide the entity senior leadership with a framework** to define their objectives and articulate their vision for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment within their programs. These compacts are crucial for evaluating senior managers on their effective use of resources, integration of gender-related sustainable development practices, and implementation of UN system-wide and institutional goals for gender equality. By signing these compacts, senior managers reaffirm their commitment to driving reforms, complying with the Organization's legal and ethical standards, and upholding the United Nations standards of conduct in promoting gender equality and empowering women.

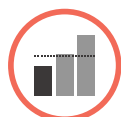


## Requirement 2 - Gender Equality as a Desirable Competency

<b>Approaches requirements</b>	<b>8a.ii. Knowledge or experience in gender equality is embedded as a desirable competency</b> in new Job Descriptions/ Terms of Reference and recruitment processes as relevant
<b>Meets requirements</b>	<b>8b.ii. Knowledge or experience in gender equality is embedded as a desirable competency</b> in new Job Descriptions/ Terms of Reference and recruitment processes as relevant
<b>Exceeds requirements</b>	<b>8c.ii. Knowledge or experience in gender equality is embedded as a desirable competency</b> in new Job Descriptions/ Terms of Reference and recruitment processes as relevant

The United Nations typically **integrates knowledge of gender equality as a key competency in job descriptions, terms of reference, and recruitment processes through various strategic actions**. This involves embedding specific gender equality competencies in job descriptions, utilizing competency frameworks to emphasize these skills, and implementing targeted recruitment strategies to attract candidates with expertise in gender issues. Senior leadership and staff involved in recruitment receive training on gender sensitivity and unconscious bias, while diverse hiring panels effectively

assess candidates' qualifications. In other cases, knowledge of gender equality is incorporated into performance evaluations and staff development programs, supported by regular reviews and data collection to monitor and enhance the effectiveness of these initiatives. This systematic approach aims to cultivate a workforce dedicated to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment at all levels of the organization, including senior leadership.



### Requirement 3 - A Proven Track Record in GEWE

<b>Approaches requirements</b>	<b>8aiii.</b> A requirement for a proven track record in gender equality and the empowerment of women is included in senior appointments
<b>Meets requirements</b>	<b>8biii.</b> A requirement for a proven track record in gender equality and the empowerment of women is included in senior appointments
<b>Exceeds requirements</b>	<b>8ciii.</b> Senior appointments will include a requirement for a track record in gender equality

Advancing a truly transformative gender equality agenda, requires demonstrated leadership and accountability from a cadre of leaders across the UN System—across every pillar—and every organization, and at every level.

Senior appointments will include a requirement for “a track record in gender equality” implies that individuals being considered for senior positions within the organization must have demonstrable experience, achievements, or a proven commitment to promoting and advancing gender equality. This requirement ensures that leaders are not only skilled in their areas of expertise but also have a history of actively supporting gender-inclusive as well as targeted practices, policies, and initiatives. This has been called for in the Executive Committee decision.

In practical terms, this could mean that candidates for senior leadership roles<sup>17</sup> are expected to:

- ✓ **Have demonstrated experience in gender equality work:** This could include leading or managing gender-related/targeted initiatives, integrating gender considerations into policies, or working on programs that promote gender equality and women’s empowerment.
- ✓ **Demonstrate a commitment to gender equality:** This could be shown through a track record of advocating for or implementing gender-sensitive policies, supporting diversity and inclusion efforts, or advancing women’s leadership and empowerment in previous roles.
- ✓ **Promote an inclusive work culture:** Senior leaders are expected to foster an organizational culture that prioritizes gender equality, effectively addresses all forms of discrimination and abuse in the workplace, and ensures that personnel from all backgrounds can participate fully and thrive.
- ✓ **Lead by example:** Senior appointments must demonstrably serve as role models who can drive and sustain progress on gender equality, both system-wide and at the entity level. These leaders should exemplify a commitment to gender equality through their actions, decisions, and leadership style, setting a strong example for others to follow.

In relation to equal representation of women and men, the basic requirement is that respect for diversity is built into the corporate competencies and ethical standards of all job descriptions and vacancy

<sup>17</sup> For the purposes of this indicator, it is defined as professional staff at the D1 level and above.

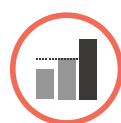
announcements. It is expected that **responsibility for the achievement of equal representation of women and men is specified through clear and measurable targets outlined in competencies associated with senior managers and/or human resource managers**, which are then measured and enforced through related accountability mechanisms, such as gender parity strategies, and/ or manager compacts and scorecards.



#### Requirement 4 - System of recognition for excellence

<b>Approaches requirements</b>	<u>N/A</u>
<b>Meets requirements</b>	<b>8biv.</b> System of recognition rewards excellent work promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women
<b>Exceeds requirements</b>	<b>8civ.</b> System of recognition rewards excellent work promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women

Each entity needs to have a system in place for recognizing excellent performance in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women, for example a gender equality award or allocation of additional resources to units which display excellent performance. In its Resolution 63/251, the General Assembly requested the International Civil Service Commission to identify means of rewarding performance. While few performance rewards exist in the UN system, they can be introduced to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women.



#### Requirement 5 - Feedback Mechanisms

In order to exceed the requirements for this indicator, entities must ensure that **senior leadership receives feedback on their gender-responsive leadership** through staff surveys, 360-degree feedback mechanisms, or equivalent tools.

For the UN system to genuinely "walk its talk" on gender equality, a significant cultural shift is necessary, along with a transformation in the underlying beliefs about this work. Creating an environment where feedback and performance discussions are regularly and constructively shared among staff at all levels of authority is crucial. This involves not only the use of all-staff surveys and improved feedback mechanisms but also the establishment of formal spaces to discuss and reflect on the outcomes of independent evaluations of the UN's gender-related initiatives.

To support this, **performance objectives related to gender equality should be integrated into regular performance reviews and assessments for all staff, including senior-level personnel.** Fostering a culture that emphasizes frequent and constructive feedback on performance requires ongoing dialogue across all levels of authority. This can be achieved through recurring, confidential all-staff surveys, the results of which should be transparently shared with management.

**For senior leaders throughout the UN system, it is essential that each performance evaluation includes at least 1-2 specific goals focused on gender equality.** Furthermore, enhancing **360-degree feedback mechanisms for leaders** at all levels will further support this effort



## Example: Meeting Requirements

### Senior Leadership held Accountable

Gender equality and the empowerment of women have been embedded within the **UNAIDS** Competency Framework under the value of 'Respect for Diversity,' which outlines specific behaviors to support gender equality:

“Upholding **RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY** means:

- Demonstrating inclusive behavior and a willingness to work impartially with all individuals and groups, regardless of gender, nationality, sexual orientation, HIV status, or any other characteristic.
- Examining our own biases and behaviors, taking steps to become more sensitive and inclusive.
- Promoting and adhering to organizational policies that strengthen diversity and inclusion.
- Not tolerating stereotypes, prejudice, or discrimination in the workplace or with external partners.
- Ensuring that our communication and interactions reflect consideration and respect for our diverse and multicultural workforce.”

The alignment of performance management with gender equality and women’s empowerment (GEWE) principles and requirements has been progressively incorporated over the years to enhance managerial and staff accountability. The integration of GEWE within the three key elements assessed during UNAIDS performance reviews—work objectives, competencies, and learning objectives—has been an iterative process, further strengthened by the findings of the UNAIDS Global Staff Survey (GSS).

### System of recognition rewards excellent work promoting GEWE

The **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** is implementing a programme designed to certify and recognize the performance of Country Offices/Units and its managers in advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women. The UNDP Gender Equality Seal is a capacity building and quality assurance mechanism which evaluates both accountability and the development of gender equality and the empowerment of women initiatives. It is a corporate certification process that recognizes good performance of UNDP offices/units to deliver gender equality results. It offers three levels of certification: Gold, Silver, and Bronze. The Gender Equality Seal initiative aims to accelerate gender equality in the workplace and generate data and evidence to improve and demonstrate efficiency and results. In 2022, 83 Country Offices continued on their Gender Seal journey in the 2021-2023 round of the programme. In 2024, 18 Public Institutions were awarded the first ever UNDP Gender Equality Seal, recognizing their outstanding achievements in implementing public administration reforms towards gender equality, and advancing gender responsive policies between the period of 2021-2023.

The **United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)** considers the contribution to gender equality when choosing the winners of UNOPS annual awards. UNOPS established two awards with links to gender equality: (1) The PEOPLE LEADERSHIP Award for team leaders and supervisors who have inspired others to succeed and demonstrated the mind-set and skills of great people leadership and shown commitment to the achievement of gender equality and knowledge sharing. (2) The VALUES AND PRINCIPLES Award for individuals or teams who have advanced and embody the UN Values of Integrity, Professionalism and Respect for Diversity.



In the **Department of Peace Operations (DPO)** has three annual awards to recognize performance on the implementation of gender and WPS within uniformed personnel (police, military and justice and corrections). 1) The Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award which was initiated in 2016 and recognizes the dedication and effort of an individual peacekeeper in promoting the principles contained within the UN Security Council's resolution 1325, aimed at drawing attention to women in armed conflict and their role in peacekeeping and security. 2) The International Female Police Peacekeeper Award was also introduced to recognize an outstanding female police peacekeeper serving in a UN peace operation. The award highlights the roles and contributions made by female police officers, serves to encourage representation of women in police contingents, and to promote an understanding of policing in peace operations. 3) The first United Nations Trailblazer Award for Women Justice and Corrections Officers was launched in 2022. It recognizes the outstanding contribution of government-provided personnel in United Nations peace operations by highlighting the powerful stories of women who blaze the trail in areas and roles typically dominated by men. These collective awards contribute to improved advocacy for the role of gender parity and equality for UN peace operations.

As part of the **UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS)** Recognition Programme, the Department gives a specific award (Gender Champion Award) that recognizes individuals who have made outstanding or significant contributions in championing and promoting gender equality and implementing UNDSS Strategy on Gender Equality. In 2022, nominations were assessed by a diverse inter-divisional Technical Committee, which included the Assistant Gender Adviser. The Department also has a Gender Equality and Inclusivity Award to recognise field offices succeeding in exemplary implementation of the "Enabling Environment Guidelines" towards gender equality and inclusion. Staff members and field teams submitted nominations for these awards in 2022. In 2023, as part of the UNDSS Recognition Programme, the Department introduced the Gender Equality and Inclusivity Challenge Award, which recognizes UNDSS field offices that promote and advance gender equality in line with the principles and objectives of the UNDSS Strategy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (2015-2021) and the Provisional UNDSS Gender Parity Strategy Implementation Plan (2023-2024).

The first **United Nations Office in Vienna / United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNOV/UNODC)** Gender Award was presented for the first time in 2022, recognizing the outstanding efforts of personnel towards the implementation of the UNOV/UNODC Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. Three nominations were reviewed by a panel of six independent jurors, who created a shortlist of 30 teams for UNOV/UNODC personnel to vote on and select the award winners. The 2022 Gender Award was presented on 25 April 2022 to five winners, chosen by 522 votes. The Executive Director presented certificates in two categories: "Promoting an Enabling Working Environment in UNOV/UNODC" and "Strengthening Gender Inclusivity in UNODC Mandate Areas." In 2023, the second iteration of the UNOV/UNODC Gender Award was launched, and the winners were recognized for implementing high-impact projects, policies, programs, strategies, and practices at Headquarters and in the Field Offices. The selected winners demonstrated innovative approaches, such as addressing the intersection of gender with other factors like disability, tackling gender-related issues through capacity building, awareness-raising activities, and the creation of women's networks, and implementing long-lasting solutions to address the root causes of gender inequality and discrimination.



## Example: Exceeding Requirements

**Senior leadership acts on feedback on their gender-responsive leadership through recurring and confidential staff surveys and/or 360-degree feedback mechanisms or equivalent**

The purpose of the **UN Secretariat Staff Engagement Survey** is to gather feedback from Secretariat personnel on their experiences, job satisfaction, and engagement within the organization. The survey aims to assess key factors such as communication, leadership, workplace culture, well-being, and professional development opportunities. By capturing staff perspectives, the survey helps identify areas for improvement, informs decision-making, and supports the development of strategies to enhance staff engagement, productivity, and overall organizational effectiveness, ensuring that the UN Secretariat remains a supportive and inclusive workplace. **Staff engagement is an integral part of the UN Reform**, as highly engaged staff are correlated with higher levels of performance and productivity, which in turn enhance an organization's ability to achieve its objectives