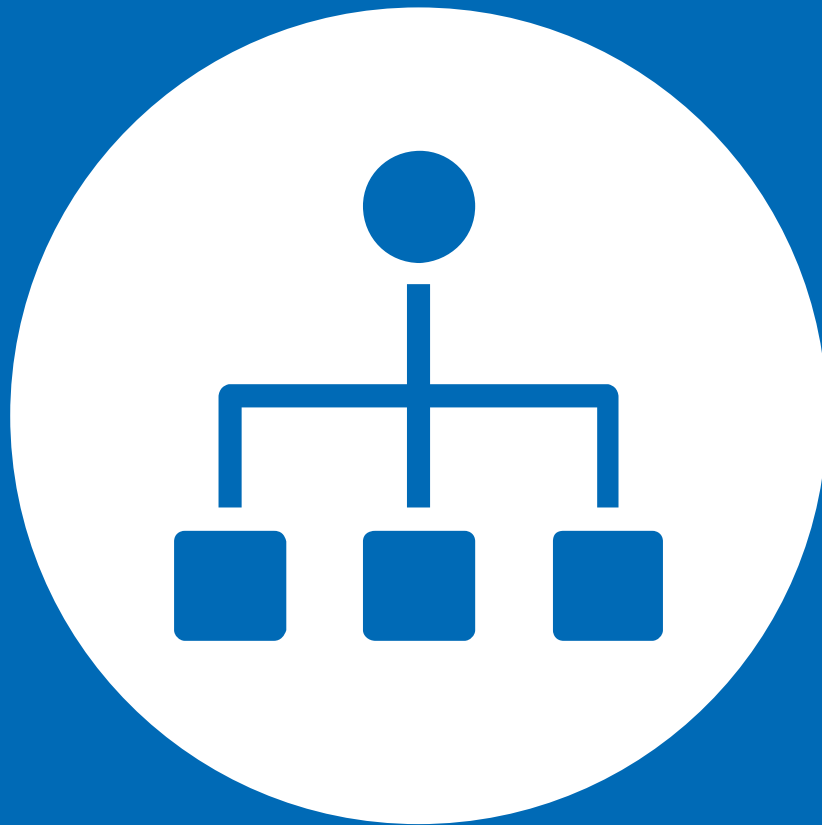



**PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
11**

GENDER ARCHITECTURE



11. Performance Indicator: Gender Architecture

 Approaches requirements	 Meets requirements	 Exceeds requirements
<p>11a. Gender focal points or equivalent at at HQ, regional and/or country levels are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. appointed from Professional staff level P4 and above or equivalent National Professional Officers b. have written terms of reference c. capacitated with adequate gender expertise d. at least 20 percent of their time is allocated to gender focal point functions 	<p>11bi. Gender focal points or equivalent at HQ, regional and/or country levels are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. appointed from Professional staff level P4 and above or equivalent National Professional Officers b. have written terms of reference c. capacitated with adequate gender expertise d. at least 20 percent of their time is allocated to gender focal point functions <p>and</p> <p>11bii. Staffing standards, training and deployment preparation needed for supporting the implementation of the entity's gender equality goals are established</p> <p>and</p> <p>11biii. Gender department/unit is fully funded according to an agreed funding formula, based on staffing standards/ according to the entity mandate</p>	<p>11ci. Gender focal points or equivalent at HQ, regional and/or country levels are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. appointed from Professional staff level P5 and above or equivalent National Professional Officers b. have written terms of reference c. capacitated with adequate gender expertise d. at least 20 percent of their time is allocated to gender focal point functions e. specific funds are allocated to support the gender architecture and gender focal point networking <p>and</p> <p>11cii. Staffing standards, training and deployment preparation needed for supporting the implementation of the entity's gender equality goals are implemented</p> <p>and</p> <p>11ciii. Gender department/unit is fully funded according to an agreed funding formula, based on staffing standards/ according to the entity mandate</p> <p>and</p> <p>11civ. Entity demonstrates effective use of a roster of specialized expertise on gender equality and the empowerment of women</p>

What is the Gender Architecture Performance Indicator?

Efforts to mainstream gender equality and the empowerment of women can be undermined by a lack of sufficient human and financial resources. Weak gender architecture, including understaffed and underfunded gender focal point networks and gender units, prevent UN entities from meeting their gender-related mandates. Despite progress in PI 11, with an increasing number of entities reporting

having gender units (40 entities in 2023), challenges related to resource allocation and the expanding remit of gender units to include other cross-cutting issues without additional resources continue to lead to the dilution of resources and attention to gender equality²³.

Given the paramount importance of ensuring adequate resourcing, the [2024 ECOSOC Resolution on Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system](#) calls for "...ensuring that United Nations entities retain a strong focus with resources on gender equality issues, and that gender equality units are able to do so with specific and dedicated resources and expertise, and that resource utilization and allocation is not diluted or compromised due to simultaneous focus on other cross-cutting thematic issues".

Elements derived from the Gender Equality Acceleration Plan	
✓	We conduct internal power analysis of systems, structures and hierarchies and formal/informal decision-making, and change barriers to gender equality and equity.
✓	Each entity implements changes that address the results of the power analysis, including enabling inclusive decision making, roll our bias training to all staff - starting with leadership, define staffing standards, training and deployment preparation.
✓	Define staffing standards, training and deployment preparation needed for supporting the implementation of the entity's gender equality goals in relation to their headquarters, regional and country architecture
✓	We work with other UN leaders to elevate and systematize specialized UN expertise on gender equality.
✓	Each UN entity will create a gender unit responsible for advancing dedicated work on gender equality and supporting gender mainstreaming across the work of the organization.
✓	A UN system ' gender capacity roster ' and surge mechanism developed. Develop ToRs and framework for cadre/roster to have training, mentoring, community of practice. 2.5.5. Build demand for system-wide gender expertise , including through agreeing on an appropriate standard and ratio of expertise needs in large scale programmes, humanitarian responses, WPS & climate resilience, and missions.

Who is the Business Owner for this indicator?

Ensuring adequate resourcing for a robust gender architecture would be the primary responsibility of the Head of entity. In entities with gender units/departments, they will be the business owner for indicator 11.

What are the specific requirements for this indicator?

To approach requirements

Requirement 11a²⁴: To approach requirements for this indicator, entities need to have **Gender Focal Points (GFP) or equivalent at HQ, regional and/or country levels who are appointed from staff level P4 and above or equivalent National Professional Officers, have written terms of reference, are capacitated with adequate gender expertise and have at least 20 per cent of their time allocated to gender focal point functions.** This requirement applies to GFPs across all relevant business owners.

Gender focal point personnel are located within offices, departments and units tasked to raise awareness on gender-related issues and promote gender mainstreaming – both at the level where gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls represents the main objective of a

²³ Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations System: report of the Secretary-General <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4050356?v=pdf#files>

²⁴ This is equivalent to **requirement 11bi** for meeting.

programme, as well as in cases where it is not necessarily central to the specific programme but is adeptly integrated into all aspects of the programme. Gender focal points' dedication to gender issues is partial, with less than 100% of their time allocated to gender issues and a requirement to at least dedicate 20% of their time.

A robust network of focal points is reported as valuable for quality assurance and effective implementation of the GEWE mandates, whether at the HQ level and across different organizational departments, or whether at the regional and country level architecture of the entity.

The junior level of the designated gender focal points has frequently been raised in reviews in the last years as symptomatic of lack of commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women across the UN system.^{1F2F}²⁵ Gender focal points have often been the most junior female staff members, which sends a message that gender equality is not being taken seriously. Further, the resolutions of the General Assembly have repeatedly called for their appointment at high levels. **If the P4 level requirement has been satisfied for at least one GFP, additional focal points can be from all professional levels. When referring to level of National Professional Officers, they are equivalent to P2, P3 and P4.**

The number of gender focal points within a UN entity is determined by that UN entity. For **the 20 per cent time allocation**, this can be distributed across Gender Focal Points; one Focal Point does not have to dedicate 20 per cent of his/her time to gender focal point responsibilities. The 20 per cent requirement can be achieved by summing the time several gender focal points devote to the associated functions, thereby allowing for rotation or burden sharing, especially in those cases where the focal point is undertaking the UN-SWAP/gender equality functions in addition to their regular functions not related to gender equality work.

To ensure that GFPs allocate 20 per cent of their time to GFP responsibilities, it is advisable that their supervisors/senior managers formally support this time allocation. This can be reflected in the Performance Appraisal System (PAS) or in other performance evaluation documents and their engagement should be taken in consideration in their performance evaluation and career advancement opportunities.

In addition to their staff level and the time allocated to GFP responsibilities, **all gender focal points need to be equipped with adequate gender expertise**, regardless of how they are nominated (on a voluntary basis or directly appointed by the senior management). For this, it is necessary for GFPs to have experience and/or training on gender equality and the rights and empowerment of all women and girls. The requirements for gender expertise should be described in the terms of reference of GFPs and periodic training and technical support should be provided to the GFPs.

All the requirements that GFPs need to meet should be outlined in **written terms of reference**, which also describes the responsibilities and tasks of GFPs and the nomination method. For entities nominating GFPs and alternate GFPs, this needs to be described in the terms of reference.

²⁵ For an overview see AfDB (2011) Mainstreaming gender: a road to results or a road to nowhere. Evaluation synthesis. Addis Ababa: African Development Bank, pp. 40-2. <http://idev.afdb.org/en/document/mainstreaming-gender-equality-road-results-or-road-nowhere>

The Performance Indicator on gender focal points refers to “**equivalents**”. Some UN entities, such as OHCHR and UNDP, have moved away from a focal point system. In UNDP the move is to a team-based system, where teams assign specific gender focal point functions – human resources, programming, etc. – to different staff members, with the teams reporting to a senior manager. In OHCHR Gender Facilitators are assistants to senior managers in charge of programme development and follow up on compliance within a Branch or Division. The requirements of this Performance Indicator apply, whether the UN entity chooses to appoint individual staff members as gender focal points or form a gender focal point team.

It is recommended that, one of the designated responsibilities for the gender focal points should pertain to achievement of gender balance in staffing and representation of women. Some UN entities may opt to have separate gender balance focal points, or equivalent. Gender balance focal points support senior management in relation to staff selection processes, identifying qualified female candidates and supporting the development of policies. Gender balance focal points may be required to serve on interview panels and reviews and assist with monitoring the status of women and men within their organization.

To meet requirements

To meet this Performance Indicator, UN entities need to meet three requirements: **Gender focal points** (requirement 11bi²⁶), **Staffing standards, training and deployment preparation** (requirement 11bii), and a **fully funded Gender Unit** (requirement 11biii).

Requirement 11bii: Staffing Standards, Training and Deployment Preparation is established

Baseline GEWE standards or benchmarks are being organically adopted in some entities, both larger and better resourced, as well as smaller entities with fewer resources available for GEWE. Emerging discussions and requests for standards are being elicited by colleagues working on gender units or as gender advisors, specialists, or focal points. The establishment of GEWE standards seeks to guarantee the achievement of commitments of the United Nations entities related to gender equality. To this end the Staffing Standards are translated into institutional benchmarks that hold UN entities accountable to minimum standards for human resources and institutional arrangements dedicated to gender equality. The **establishment of minimum standards for gender equality regarding staffing, training and deployment** is key to catalyse transformative and systematic change and to hold entities accountable. To approach requirements, entities are expected to develop a document (such as guidance, or a section of the Gender Policy/Gender strategy, etc.) that is endorsed by senior management and outlines a series of institutional benchmarks, including:

- **Standards for gender staffing** within Country Offices (COs), Regional Offices (ROs) and Headquarters (HQ), for example, recommending the number of gender specialists and gender focal points in Country Offices according to their annual budgets or their contexts (e.g. emergency contexts), the need for gender experts specialized in specific areas, and the composition and budget of the Gender Unit, etc.

²⁶ Requirement 11bi is equivalent to requirement 10^a in Approaches. For more information on this requirement, please see section ‘To approach requirements’ (pp. .xxx).

- **Terms of Reference:** the guidance needs to define the terms of reference of gender staffing, for example gender advisors, gender working group and gender focal points., with a focus on describing their roles and responsibilities as well.
- **Training and deployment preparation:** the capacity development needed for gender staffing as well as a detailed description of how deployment is prepared are key to ensure that they are able to develop their work effectively. This can be included in the terms of reference of each gender staffing position or in a separate section.

It is recommended that the guidance is built on recommendations based on available evidence, including recent independent evaluations and reviews, and feedback from field offices and headquarters.

Requirement 11biii: Fully resourced Gender Unit according to an agreed funding formula

A Gender Unit or Equivalent (Office, Department, Branch, etc) is a separate organizational unit charged with coordinating the entity's work on GEEW within the entity, through providing strategic support for the development of policies, projects, capacity building and strategic initiatives, etc.

The gender unit can be considered to be fully resourced if it has adequate human and financial resources to support the UN entity in meeting its GEEW mandate. This will differ from entity to entity. To estimate if the unit is fully resourced, the requirements set out in the UN entity gender equality policy, and assessment against the UN-SWAP Performance Indicators, can be taken into account. All UN entities should eventually be exceeding requirements. UN entities will thus need to determine the quantity of resources required by its gender unit/department for fulfilment of its gender mandate, including coordination, capacity development, quality assurance and inter-agency networking.

Gender units should be strategically placed in the entity and have adequate authority and capacity to influence entity's policies and decision-making. Optimally, gender units should be located at the highest possible level in the organigram and in direct connection with the executive office.

Strong gender architecture within an entity may be reflected by:

- senior gender personnel having roles within institutional decision-making and programmatic delivery, including authority/influence over budgets and policy (i.e. extent to which perspectives of gender staff reflected in key policies, programmes and procedures);
- participation of gender-dedicated staff in cross-functional teams in priority issue areas (other than gender equality) and chairing internal task forces and inter-agency mechanisms;
- adequate capacity and training for gender personnel to carry out their functions; and
- associated budgets under gender experts' responsibility.

In order to meet requirements, entities are requested to establish a fully resourced Gender Unit in accordance with an agreed funding formula outlined in the entity's staffing standards and aligned with the entity's mandate. In order to develop a funding formula, entities need to consider elements such as the staff required to ensure the effectiveness of a gender unit (number of staff, professional levels) as well as the necessary budget for it, paying attention to the budget sources dedicated to finance the gender unit.

Notes for Small entities:

Small entities that do not have a gender unit can meet requirements as long as they are able to explain that they have a well-functioning gender architecture with adequate resources according to the entity mandate, and provide evidence of that.

To exceed requirements

To exceed requirements for this Performance Indicator, UN entities need to meet four requirements: 1) on Gender Focal Points (additional criteria: nominated from P5 level or above and **specific funds** are allocated to support the gender architecture and gender focal point networking), 2) the **implementation of minimum standards** for gender equality regarding staffing, training and deployment, 3) **fully resourced Gender unit**, and 4) to demonstrate an **effective use of a roster of specialized expertise on gender equality and the empowerment of women**.

1. **Requirement 11ci**: Besides to meet the criteria on GFPs²⁷ related to having written terms or reference, capacitated with adequate gender expertise, and dedicate at least 20 per cent of their time to gender focal point functions, to exceed requirements, entities need:
 - To appoint GFPs from Professional staff level P5 and above or National Professional Officers. If the P5 level requirement has been satisfied for at least one GFP, additional focal points can be from all professional levels.
 - To allocate specific funds to support the gender architecture and GFP networking. Funds can be dedicated to capacity-building activities or any other initiatives that foster professional development and enhance effectiveness.
2. **Requirement 11cii**: While entities meeting requirements are expected to establish minimum standards for gender equality, to exceed requirements, entities need to have **implemented the recommendations** provided in the standards for gender equality. To substantiate this, entities are required to provide evidence of the recommendations that have been implemented.
3. **Requirement 11ciii**²⁸: Fully resourced Gender Unit according to an agreed funding formula, based on staffing standards, according to the entity mandate.
4. **Requirement 11civ**. Entity demonstrates effective use of a roster of specialized expertise on gender equality and the empowerment of women. Entities need to effectively use a roster, it can mean joining another entity's existing roster rather than creating a new one, as the latter may not be very efficient for small entities. While some entities use informal rosters, this requirement refers to formal rosters that have been created to ensure that there is access to the right expertise in the field.

A UN roster is 'a pool of pre-assessed candidates deemed suitable for temporary and longer-term employment opportunities within the UN system'²⁹. While there are different types of rosters in the

²⁷ For more information on these criteria, please see requirement 11.a in "To approach requirements"

²⁸ This requirement is equivalent to requirement 11bii in Meets. For more information, please see section 'To meet requirements'.

²⁹ <https://uncareer.net/UN-roster>

UN system³⁰ (generic rosters, emergency rosters...), in this case we refer to specialized rosters with a focus on specific expertise on GEEW. An effective use of a roster of specialized expertise on GEEW requires that UN entities use rosters to fill vacancies. To this end, entities can demonstrate, for example, that at least one vacancy has been filled using a roster of GEEW experts in the previous year or as appropriate.

Additional questions

1) For “Exceeds” “Meets” “Approaches” and “Missing”:

- 3) Total number of entity staff (*part time or full-time staff, no consultants*)
- 3) Total cost of all entity staff (*total financial “spend” for staff members payable by the entity*)

2) For “Exceeds” and “Meets” (entities with Gender Units)

- 3) Does the entity have a Gender Unit? Yes/No (*Gender Unit or Equivalent (Office, Department, Branch, etc.) personnel are individuals working in organizational units charged with coordinating the entity's work on GEWE through providing strategic support for the development of policies, projects, capacity building and strategic initiatives, etc*)

If YES (*applies only to entities that respond affirmatively to the previous question*):

- 4) Total number of staff in the gender unit
- 5) Total staff cost of gender unit
- 6) Financial allocation of gender unit (excluding staff cost). (*This refers to the budget of the Gender Unit that is not allocated to staff costs but dedicated to implement initiatives or coordinating programmes led by the Gender Unit*)
- 7) Has the remit of the gender unit recently expanded to address other cross-cutting issues than GEWE? Yes/No
- 8) If YES: the gender unit addresses cross-cutting issues in addition to GEWE, please select all that apply:
 - Racism - Environment - Disability - Risk management - Education - LGBTQI+ - Partnership and resource mobilization - Parity - Peace and security - Other

-If YES: please explain the extent to which the additional cross-cutting issues have been accompanied by an increase of financial and human resources allocated to the Gender Unit (Max:200 Words) *
- 9) Location of Gender Unit: Where is the gender unit located in the organigram?
 - Office of the Executive Director
 - USG Office
 - Division
 - Section
 - Cluster
 - Other (please explain)

³⁰ For more information on types of rosters in the UN System, please see <https://uncareer.net/UN-roster>

10) Level of seniority of Gender Unit: What is professional level of the head of the Gender Unit?

- Director level (D1 and D2)
- P5
- P4
- P3
- Other (please explain)

3) For “Exceeds” “Meets” “Approaches” and “Missing”:

11) Where is the gender parity function located? (Max:200 Words)

12) Total number of gender focal points in the entity (*Gender Focal Points, or their equivalents, are resource persons within entities tasked with raising awareness and understanding of gender-related issues. They also promote the application of gender equality and gender mainstreaming. Typically, only a fraction of their work time (around 20%) is allocated to gender issues.*)

13) Number of gender advisor and women’s protection advisor posts that have been vacant for six months or more in the previous reporting year.

14) Does the entity have gender advisors/specialists that are not part of the gender unit? * Yes/No. (*Gender Advisors, or their equivalents (specialist, officer, project specialist, etc.) are individual staff working fulltime outside of a Gender Unit (e.g., field-based gender advisors or individual gender advisors at HQ level in entities with no gender unit) to ensure gender perspectives are integrated across entity’s functional and substantive areas (e.g., capacity building, conducting gender analysis of strategic and project documents, provision of policy advice and high-quality advisory inputs, etc.).*)

If YES (*applies only to entities that respond affirmatively to the previous question*)

15) Total number of gender advisors/specialists (not part of the gender unit) in the most recent available reporting year.

Evidence base

Examples of documents to attach to substantiate reporting:

- Gender Focal Point TORs
- Overview of the gender unit’s budget for the reporting year and list of posts (titles and grades of all staff in the unit/department)
- Staffing standards
- Documents that demonstrate effective use of gender roster
- Organizational chart showing location of Gender Unit
- Documents detailing the funds allocated to support gender focal point networking
- Documents showing the activities organized for Gender Focal Points (minutes of GFP meetings, material of training activities...)

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

An effective gender architecture supports the efficient use of human and financial resources for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women across the UN system. To date, there

is insufficient comparable data on the current gender architecture across the UN system to establish a comprehensive baseline.

Examples

Effective use of roster of experts

Staffing standards on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

UNICEF is the most advanced entity in this regard, since its *Gender Staffing Guidance 2018* not only establishes a minimum architecture but also emphasizes capacity building. UNICEF has developed a new Gender Staffing Guidance that establishes, inter alia, that country offices with a budget over \$20 million should have a full-time gender specialist at the P4/P5 level, as well as sectoral gender specialists to be embedded within largest Country Office programs. For COs with a budget under 20 million, the guidance calls for either one Gender Focal Point (GFP) or a cost-shared subregional full-time gender specialist at the NOC/NOD or P3/P4 level or higher. In Level 2 or 3 country office emergency responses, the staffing standard mandates one full-time Gender Specialist (P4/P5).

Gender Unit

In 2022, the Gender, Equity and Human Rights team was upgraded to a fully-fledged **WHO** Department on Gender, Rights and Equity (GRE) within the Director-General's office, with an increase in staff at that time. In 2023, staff continued to increase, and posts were stabilized following the department's proposed organigram. Three P5 staff were hired to lead the newly formed Gender, Equity, and Human Rights units.

Gender Focal Points Network

UNOCT

The Gender Mainstreaming Task Force is composed of Gender Focal Points from UNOCT Branches and Units. The primary focus of the Gender Task Force is to support the implementation and monitoring of the UNOCT Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Action Plan, which aims at ensuring that UNOCT's mandate is implemented in a gender responsive manner, promoting gender equality and women's empowerment and integrating the women, peace and security agenda within Counter Terrorism and Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism. The Terms of Reference of the UNOCT Gender Task Force stipulates the objectives, functioning and scope of work of the Gender Task Force, as well as the roles, responsibilities and requirements of GFPs.

UNAIDS

In 2023, UNAIDS brought most of its gender focal points together as part of its efforts to strengthen knowledge-sharing through newly established communities of practice following its realignment. In October, the UNAIDS Gender Team, in collaboration with the Western and Central Africa regional office, convened thematic and operational focal points working on gender equality from regional, country, and global offices. The meeting aimed to reflect on UNAIDS' gender and HIV initiatives across priority areas, exchange insights, and highlight successes and challenges. Over 30 in-person participants and 20

virtual attendees engaged in discussions to share knowledge, revisit the GAS and Secretariat's key roles, and explore ways to maximize resources for transformative gender investments in the upcoming biennium.

UNHCR

In 2023, the Gender Equality Unit within the Division of International Protection introduced the terms of reference for gender focal points to over 200 individuals across over 130 UNHCR operations via a series of global webinars. Endorsed by regional and country offices, the TOR requires focal points to allocate at least 20% of their time to gender equality initiatives. GFPs focal play a pivotal role in advancing gender equality programming and integration efforts at the country level. They are supported with technical and advisory assistance from regional gender focal points and the Gender Equality Unit at Headquarters, under the overall supervision of the Director of the Division of International Protection.

Useful resources on the application of the Gender Architecture

[2022 UN Agencies Gender Architecture Mapping and Costing Study](#)

[Presentation of 2022 UN Agencies Gender Architecture Mapping and Costing Study](#)

[2024 Updated Study of Capacities and Functions of the UN Development System to Accelerate Progress on the SDGs](#)

[2023 Synthesis Review on Advancing Gender Equality in the United Nations Secretariat](#)