




**PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
17**

INTERAGENCY ENGAGEMENT



**17. Performance Indicator: UN System Inter-Agency Engagement
Business Owner: Inter-Agency Coordination Unit (or equivalent)**

 Approaches requirements	 Meets requirements	 Exceeds requirements
<p>17ai. Entity participated systematically in inter-agency coordination mechanisms on gender equality and the empowerment of women.</p> <p>and</p> <p>17a.ii. Entity undertakes a UN-SWAP peer review process at least once every 4 years</p>	<p>17bi. Entity effectively mainstreamed gender perspective into inter-agency coordination mechanisms</p> <p>and</p> <p>17b.ii. Entity undertakes a UN-SWAP peer review process at least once every 4 years</p> <p>and</p> <p>17b.iii. Agreed upon recommendations from the UN-SWAP peer review process implemented</p>	<p>17ci. Entity effectively mainstreamed gender perspective into inter-agency coordination mechanisms</p> <p>and</p> <p>17c.ii. Entity undertakes an UN-SWAP peer review process at least once every 4 years</p> <p>and</p> <p>17c.iii. Agreed upon recommendations from the UN-SWAP peer review process implemented</p> <p>and</p> <p>17c.iv. Entity supports implementation of at least one UN-SWAP Performance Indicator in another entity</p>



What is UN system inter-agency engagement for gender mainstreaming?

The [UN System-Wide Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women](#) (2006) calls on all entities within the UN system implement the [ECOSOC agreed conclusions 1997/2](#) requiring gender mainstreaming across the UN system.

UN System inter-agency engagement is a key aspect of *harmonizing and enhancing gender mainstreaming efforts across the system* and an important component of ensuring sustained progress on gender equality and women’s empowerment. Inter-agency coordination and coherence mechanisms have been established as part of overall UN reform efforts to harmonize practices, reduce duplication of effort and create efficiencies and synergies, among other benefits. It *involves three or more UN entities* collaborating through a formalized mechanism to further harmonize and enhance gender mainstreaming efforts such as the joint development of norms, standards, guidance, policies, tools, knowledge or data products. It can also include the development and implementation of communications and advocacy initiatives and/or focus on information sharing or practice exchange. Some high-level coordination mechanisms also provide strategic direction, oversight and act as decision-making bodies. Application or adherence by entities to the common standards and measures developed may be monitored and reported through the mechanism.

NOTE: For the purposes of this performance indicator, inter-agency engagement is not inclusive of joint programmes/initiatives is a distinct type of inter-agency engagement at the programmatic level that is addressed in UN-SWAP 3.0 Performance Indicator 3.

What are the different types of UN system inter-agency engagement mechanisms for gender mainstreaming?

There are two main types of UN system inter-agency mechanisms that entities can engage with to promote and advance gender mainstreaming in a meaningful way. *This performance indicator tracks and measures entities contributions to both.*

1. By engaging with inter-agency mechanisms established with the aim of **harmonizing and advancing entities gender mainstreaming efforts** through the application of common standards and measures and inter-agency exchange of experiences. **The UN-SWAP performance framework is the key example**, but others include the IANGWE and Gender Theme Groups at the regional and country-levels. These mechanisms were established to address gender mainstreaming more generally across all areas.

The [United Nations system-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women \(SWAP\)](#) was developed to operationalize the system-wide policy by developing common understandings, enhancing system-wide coherence in practice, and taking a progressive and supportive approach to improving accountability for gender mainstreaming. It is responsive to both UN reform and the system-wide policy.

2. By promoting and enhancing gender mainstreaming within **within broader UN system inter-agency mechanisms established to coordinate or bring coherence to UN system efforts within sectoral, thematic, or managerial areas** they engage with while implementing their core mandates. These mechanisms were not established to address gender mainstreaming but provide a forum to do so. Some examples include:
 - Taskforces dedicated to **management functions** such as the CEB's *Human Resources Network, Finance and Budget Network, Digital and Technology Network, Procurement Network, Inter-Agency Security Management Network, UN RIAS*, etc.
 - Collaborative mechanisms for joint follow-up action on specific thematic issues such as *UN-Water, UN-Oceans, UN-Energy, High-Level Task Force on Global Food and Nutrition Security*, etc.
 - Mechanisms established to coordinate UN system operations on **specific thematic or sectoral areas** such as *Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity, Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South Cooperation, Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development, Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking (ICAT)*, etc.

These are a few examples, but there are likely many other inter-agency mechanisms that can be identified that entities engage with in some manner, regardless of its mandate



Who is the business owner for this indicator?

Inter-Agency Coordination Units/Focal Points and Gender Units/Focal Points would act as the business owner/s for this indicator. For entities that do not have such units or focal points, the UN-SWAP Focal Point should identify the most appropriate business owner within the entity.



What are the requirements for this indicator?

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

Requirement 1: Entities should participate in *inter-agency coordination mechanisms* to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Requirement 2: Entities should *undertake a UN-SWAP Peer Review* at least once every four years and *implement agreed upon recommendations*.

Requirement 3: Entities should provide *peer support another entity to implement at least one UN-SWAP 3.0 Performance Indicator*.

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.

Requirement 1: Inter-agency coordination mechanisms

Approach requirements	17ai. Entity participated systematically in inter-agency coordination mechanisms on gender equality and the empowerment of women.
Meet requirements	17bi and 17ci. Entity effectively mainstreamed gender perspective into inter-agency coordination mechanisms
Exceed requirements	

Entities are expected to pursue gender mainstreaming within **at least one inter-agency mechanism** that they engage with related to GEEW, sectoral, thematic or managerial matters. Entities that engage with many mechanisms can report on those which they wish to prioritize for gender mainstreaming.

To *approach requirements*, entities should demonstrate systematic participation. **Systematically participating** in an inter-agency coordination mechanism requires that the entity **regularly attends meetings and initiates the inclusion of gender equality** concerns within the discussions or agenda of the meetings. To *meet and exceed requirements*, entities should demonstrate that they not only systematically participate, but **effectively participate** in an inter-agency coordination mechanism. This

involves entities demonstrating how they have been ***instrumental in advocating that gender is mainstreamed or included in the specific actions, products, discussions or other deliverables*** being pursued by the mechanism.

Where one or more UN-SWAP entity is a member, it is good practice to combine efforts to enhance effectiveness. It is understood that entities may not always be able to demonstrate the completion of actions or products, but they should at least demonstrate evidence of effort. Where there is strong resistance, demonstrating more openness or receptivity to consider gender equality issues in the future is also valid progress.

Requirement 2: UN-SWAP Peer Review

Approach requirements	17aii. Entity undertakes a UN-SWAP peer review process at least once every 4 years
Meet requirements	17bii and 17cii. Entity undertakes a UN-SWAP peer review process at least once every 4 years
Exceed requirements	17biii and ciii. Entity implements agreed upon recommendations from the UN-SWAP peer review process

The ***UN-SWAP Peer Review*** process is an effective way to share best practices and facilitate mutual learning about UN-SWAP implementation and gender mainstreaming ***among two or more UN system entities***, ideally with similar mandates or operational size. It consists of a comprehensive review and exchange of experiences that both ***supports harmonization of gender mainstreaming practices*** and acts as a valuable part of the ***quality assurance process of entities self-reporting*** through an integrated approach that fosters continued improvement with:

- ✓ Entities held ***accountable*** to their commitments and frameworks, ensuring adherence to established standards.
- ✓ ***Good practices, successful experiences and insights*** shared, enabling entities to learn from one another and adopt effective strategies.
- ✓ ***Processes and challenges reviewed***, identifying areas for improvement and opportunities for growth.
- ✓ ***Internal capacities strengthened***, leading to more effective reporting and behavior change.
- ✓ ***Reporting credibility and accuracy enhanced*** through rigorous peer assessments.
- ✓ ***Networking and partnerships fortified***, advancing collective efforts towards gender mainstreaming.

The [UN-SWAP 3.0 Peer Review Guidance](#) provides essential guidance for conducting an effective UN-SWAP Peer Review. It outlines the principles driving the process, details the roles of the involved individuals, and specifies the workflow, follow-up actions, and available tools. It also includes a Theory of Change. In order to ***approach requirements***, entities should ***conduct a UN-SWAP Peer Review process at least once every four years*** in line with the guidance and reporting templates., the ***UN-SWAP Peer Review Planning Calendar*** below is meant to support you comply with this requirement.

UN-SWAP Peer Review Planning Calendar	
If you completed your last peer review in...	You should plan to complete your next peer review in...
2020	2024
2021	2025
2022	2026
If your entity completed a peer review prior to 2020 or has never conducted a peer review....	2026
2023	2027
2024	2028
2025	2029
2026	2030

Peer Review reports are expected to include agreed recommendations. To *meet and exceed requirements* for this indicator, entities will need to **demonstrate that they have implemented or made progress against these agreed recommendations**. A good practice is to develop a simple action plan to support systematically tracking and reporting actions taken. For those **entities who completed a UN-SWAP Peer Review prior to 2025 that does not include agreed recommendations**, you are encouraged to **select at least two action points** based on the peer review findings that you can commit to achieving prior to the next peer review. These can be used to track progress per the indicator requirement. The table below is meant to guide you to determine if your progress meets or exceeds requirements.

Requirement 3: UN-SWAP Peer-to-Peer Support

Determining rating implementation of recommendations	
Meet requirements	Demonstrate progress and/or completion of approximately 50% of recommendations.
Exceed requirements	Demonstrate completion of 100% of recommendation.
Approach requirements	N/A
Meet requirements	
Exceed requirements	17civ. Entity supports implementation of at least one UN-SWAP Performance Indicator in another entity.

While UN-SWAP cross-entity learning is embedded in the UN-SWAP peer review process, some entities not yet meeting requirements for one or more indicators would benefit from more direct support from peers who have been able to meet or exceed those indicators. To exceed requirements for this indicator, entities should support at least one other entity to better implement at least one indicator. Entities that are exceeding requirements are best placed to provide insights and best practices. Some

guiding questions to help identify where you could best provide support include:

- ✓ What indicators have you met or exceeded?
- ✓ What best practices or innovations have you developed that could be adopted by other entities?
- ✓ What challenges have you faced in implementing the indicator/s and how did you address them? What would you do differently?
- ✓ Which peers would most benefit from your advice given their mandate, structure, size, etc.?

Remember to document and report the support provided including an increase in performance indicator rating for the recipient.



Evidence base

Examples of documents to attach to substantiate reporting:

- Peer review report
- Implementation updates on peer review recommendations
- Documents that demonstrate gender mainstreaming in inter-agency coordination mechanisms
- Examples of how the entity has supported another entity to improve performance

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



Useful resources

- [UN-SWAP 3.0 Peer Review Guidance](#)



Examples

Inter-Agency Coordination Mechanisms

UN-SWAP Peer Reviews

In 2019, **International Organisation for Migration (IOM)** and the **World Food Programme (WFP)** successfully completed a peer review on all reportable UN-SWAP 2.0 performance indicators for each entity. The peer review consisted of the development of a concept note to guide the process, a desk review of relevant documents from each entity, a field visit to each entity by the other entity's peer review team and the development of peer review reports assessing each entity's progress on implementing the UN-SWAP 2.0 performance indicators, including good practices, risks and recommendations. The concept notes and reports from this peer review were shared with UN Women, UN-SWAP focal points and IOM staff, as had been done for past peer reviews. IOM noted that all peer review experiences proved to be very

informative and useful in understanding how IOM is progressing on UN-SWAP indicators and what steps the Organization can take to improve.

In 2020, the **International Trade Center (ITC)** partnered with the **World Health Organization (WHO)** to conduct a peer review exercise of the organizations' 2019 UN-SWAP 2.0 reports. The shared goal was not only to provide an additional layer of quality assurance and scrutiny of the organizations' respective self-ratings, but also to share good practices, exchange experiences and enhance organizational learning. Along with sharing observations by indicator, the reports also provide specific recommendations for strengthening the partner entity's performance under each indicator, highlight key risks and challenges, point out good practices and enabling factors, and map out areas for future collaboration.

In 2022, the **Universal Postal Union (UPU)** and the **International Telecommunication Union (ITU)** conducted a peer review of the organizations' 2021 performance against UN-SWAP 2.0. Both the UPU and ITU agreed that the peer review would cover all 17 indicators for each entity, with a particular focus on low-performing indicators to make the best use of time and of this mechanism for feedback and improvement. Best practices and lessons learned were drawn from the indicators that the entities met or exceeded.

Examples of implementation of peer review recommendations (forthcoming).

UN-SWAP Peer-to-Peer Support

In 2020, the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** continued supporting the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to implement the OHCHR Gender Incentive Programme based on the UNDP Gender Seal methodology. As part of this process, in January 2020, UNDP carried out missions to three locations. UNDP provided expert advisory services to support OHCHR Women's Human Rights and Gender Section and Country Offices in two locations to test and validate the gender accreditation framework and methodology, including design of standards for gender equality adapted to OHCHR mandate and organization. The technical advice and support included: workshops facilitation, co-designing framework, standard and assessment matrix, sharing expertise, lessons learnt and good practices, and testing its implementation in the two OHCHR presences, and final validation of the proposed methodology.

In 2021, the **International Trade Centre (ITC)** continued its practice of supporting the implementation of different UN-SWAP 2.0 Performance Indicators in other entities, especially on enabling environment. For example, the introduction of ITC's '100 Coffees for Inclusion' initiative/ one module of a senior leadership training with WTO; ITC's Mentoring Programme for Women to IAEA; Sharing of ITC's 2021 Gender Unit pocket guide on making work objectives more gender-sensitive, and the sharing of key organizational policies, strategies and other materials with other entities, such as ITC's Work-Life Balance policies, its Breast-and Bottle-feeding policy, its 2020 Capacity Assessment Report and Capacity Development Plan, '100 Coffees for Inclusion' toolkit, ITC Policy Lab initiative with the broader UN-SWAP community.

The **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)** constantly provides support to other UN entities by sharing knowledge, data, and information on UNFPA's Gender Marker system.