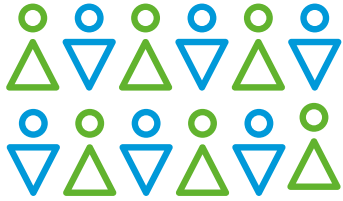


Developing a Gender Parity Implementation/ Action Plan

SUGGESTED MEASURES

February 2025



Introduction

Achieving gender parity requires a multi-faceted approach that analyzes the challenges and opportunities specific to each entity. While targets are important, gender parity is not just about numbers.

A successful strategy is robust and targeted with clear goals that are supported by accountability mechanisms, transparent and thorough tracking mechanisms, well-developed and gender-disaggregated data collection, and precise implementation of temporary special measures. Most importantly, leadership commitment and subsequent action, bolstered by responsiveness, adaptability, creativity, and dedicated prioritization of gender parity are pivotal to making progress.

UN Women has created the following resources to help you develop your implementation plan and make parity a reality. Please remember, every good implementation plan starts with accurate data, therefore please make sure to benefit from the UN Secretariat Gender Parity Dashboard and the UN System-wide Dashboard on Gender Parity.

Monitoring & Reporting on Gender Parity

- » [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](#)
- » [Infographics on the 'Representation of women in the UN system'](#)

Leadership Commitment and Accountability

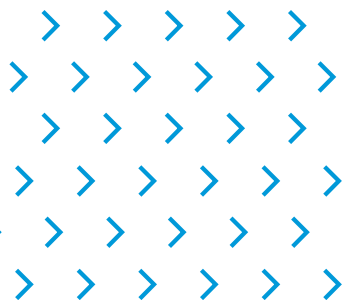
- » Advocacy video series by UN Leaders, ['Making Parity a Reality at the UN'](#)
- » [Why Gender Parity?](#)

Knowledge Management

- » [Gender parity resources webpage](#)

Creating Enabling Working Environments

- » [Enabling Environment Guidelines & Supplementary Guidance](#)
- » [Field-specific Enabling Environment Guideline](#)
- » [How can we reach gender parity at the UN by 2028? A collection of good practices from the UN System](#)
- » [Intersectionality and the Enabling Environment](#)
- » [Gender Inclusion Practice Note: Designated Lactation Spaces for Nursing Parents](#)
- » ['Guidance on creating inclusive vacancy announcements: Good practice examples from the UN'](#)
- » ['Flexible working arrangements for the United Nations – why it makes sense'](#)
- » [Template for exit surveys](#)



Tips for Designing and Implementing a Successful Plan

Be specific

- » Use the template to detail the specific actions your entity will take to implement the recommendations.
- » Set a specific timeline for key actions.
- » Assign responsibilities and resources for the different actions of the implementation plan, with the involvement of key personnel including Gender Focal Points, HR personnel and senior management.
- » Where parity has been achieved, put in place measures and mechanisms to sustain parity and prevent regressing.

Prioritize buy-in

- » Engage all personnel in this collective effort to achieve gender parity and foster enabling work environments and ensure each understands the importance of gender equality to their work and to the organization.
- » Design a messaging strategy or campaign on the importance of reaching gender parity to ensure organization-wide awareness.

Connect your plan to an ecosystem

- » Link the Gender Parity Implementation Plan with the wider context of gender mainstreaming and UN-SWAP to the extent possible.
- » Consider making the implementation plan public to allow for third party reporting and increased accountability.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This Guidance Note is designed to help your entity develop a Gender Parity Action Plan using the entity-specific implementation plan template.

We've compiled a wide range of approaches to setting goals and developing a plan. The suggestions and examples here are not meant to be exhaustive or to limit the way you design your entity's approach. Rather, we hope this document serves to inspire you, showcasing the diverse and creative ways to make, enhance, and sustain progress towards gender parity.

SETTING TARGETS



Analyze the available data.

- » Use data from the [UN System-wide Dashboard on Gender Parity](#), [UN Secretariat Gender Parity Dashboard](#), and internal dashboards to identify key trends and possible bottlenecks in recruitment and talent management. Closely analyze staff engagement survey and pulse check data.

Ask yourself about the pain points.

- » In conversation with GFPs, HR personnel, senior management and other relevant team members, reflect on the specific challenges faced by your entity and their underlying causes.

Think holistically and creatively.

- » Attention should focus on various dimensions, such as grade, staff category, job family, contract type, and location, with a view to developing associated remedial measures to advance gender parity where progress is weak or slow.

MONITORING PROGRESS



Monitor progress against annual targets at all levels

- » Establish an oversight mechanism for monitoring the implementation of the strategy/action plan, chaired by senior leadership, with dedicated personnel and a working group to oversee progress towards implementation.

Keep personnel with decision-making power regularly informed of progress against annual targets

- » Regularly disseminate disaggregated hiring statistics across various dimensions to hiring managers with a view towards identifying and filling gaps.

Implement gender-disaggregated data collection to inform development of new initiatives or assess the success of existing programs.

What does your entity want to accomplish? This could look like a recommendation from the SG's Report, something more specific outlined in an entity directive, or from a gap revealed in a Staff Engagement survey.

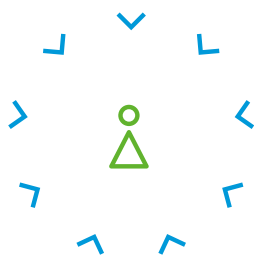
How will your entity achieve this goal? List the activities, initiatives, or measures that your entity will put in place to achieve the desired outcome.

Who will responsible for executing these activities? Who will oversee them? Who will collect data on your entities initiatives?

When will these activities be implemented? How often? Are there different phases? How long will each take?

+ Goal + Objective + Expected Impact	+ Activities + Initiatives + Measures	+ Accountability + Monitoring + Tracking	+ Timeframe + Frequency

LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY



Enhance the role of senior management in strengthening accountability for gender parity progress.

- » Senior management to convene quarterly monitoring and review meetings with GFPs and program managers on progress towards gender parity, and identify corrective measures required.
- » Publish a directive to all managers on their responsibility and accountability for reaching the targets, and the requirement to include this commitment in their annual workplans and performance reviews.
- » Organize entity-wide forums and capacity building on gender parity and enabling environment-related topics, bringing together leadership and all personnel.

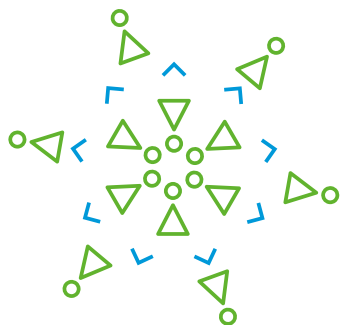
Ensure all senior leadership workplans contain concrete steps to ensure an enabling working environment.

- » Include SMART goals on gender parity and enabling environments in performance management, such as consistent use of Temporary Special Measures, accountability mechanisms, performance appraisals, key performance indicators, and leadership compacts. Include gender parity as a mandatory goal in the workplans of hiring managers, who will be accountable for improving parity, diversity and inclusion in their respective units and sections.

Senior management publicly demonstrate their commitment to gender parity.

- » Head of the Organization to join the International Gender Champions.
- » Senior management to commit to participate in gender- and geographically balanced panels.
- » Senior management to pledge commitment to gender parity and the creation of enabling environments in public fora.
- » Include gender parity and enabling environment goals in all communications and messaging across the organization.

RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, PROGRESSION, TALENT MANAGEMENT



Implement a robust series of measures to attract and recruit women, while widening 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 steps and good practices.
- » Strengthen outreach communications to attract more women applicants by collaborating with Member States, national universities, and specialized networks in traditionally male-dominated job families (logistics, IT, security, etc.).
- » Advertise vacancies well ahead of time and share with other UN entities and networks.
- » Circulate vacancies to local and global women's organizations, women's professional associations and civil society representatives.
- » Use inclusive vacancy announcements with a conscious effort to maximize the talent pool. Use this [Guidance on Creating Inclusive Vacancy Announcements](#). In it you'll find examples of good practice from across the UN system.
- » Consider temporarily suspending restrictive requirements from job descriptions, such as removing requirements for time-in-post.

Mitigate bias among staff involved in recruitment processes.

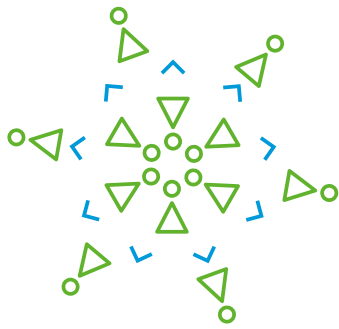
- » Remove personal information, including candidates' identities, such as gender, age, health conditions or impairments, sexual orientation, and marital status, from initial screening processes (such as the application and written assessment).
- » Provide mandatory training on unconscious bias for hiring managers and others involved in the interview or selection process to mitigate bias.

Require gender parity in interview panels.

- » Require that interview panels are diverse, gender-balanced and include a GFP, if possible. The GFP can provide oversight to bodies of the recruitment process, such as the central review board, to minimize bias.

Provide hiring managers with the most up-to-date information on gender balance for the relevant level prior to and at each stage of recruitment, to ensure that hiring managers are aware of and personally sign off on the implications of their hiring decision on overall parity goals.

RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, PROGRESSION, TALENT MANAGEMENT



Ensure Temporary Special Measures are applied consistently, integrated with relevant HR policies and procedures, and supported through strong accountability mechanisms.

- » Issue a memorandum to all section chiefs 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.
- » Ensure continued awareness and adherence to adopted policy initiatives such as the administrative instruction on the staff selection system ([ST/AI/2010/3/Rev.1](#)) and the administrative instruction on downsizing or restructuring ([ST/AI/2023/1](#)).
- » Keep regular lines of communication open between headquarters and non-headquarters locations.

Provide written justification of efforts made to consider and recommend female candidates should a male candidate be selected.

- » The Director of HR and the Entity Head review justification before selection is finalized.

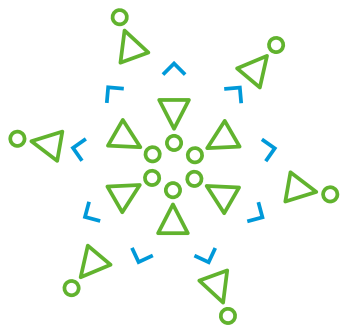
Recognize that nationality and other dimensions of diversity are important aspects that are not mutually exclusive from achieving gender parity and put special focus into integrating these objectives in recruitment and outreach efforts.

- » If there is an underrepresentation of female personnel from a particular geographic region, target women's networks and civil society representatives in that region.

Support and invest in women's career development, especially at the mid-career level.

- » Establish a coaching and mentoring system for female personnel at all levels. Senior staff mentor junior staff with both male and female staff participating as mentors or mentees, with a particular attention to gender-related challenges. [Mentoring is a critical part of creating an enabling environment.](#)
- » Ensure gender parity among participants of career development and leadership training programs.
- » Promote inter-agency mobility through short-term assignments, secondments, inter-agency exchanges, and shared rosters and by treating women candidates from participating entities as internal candidates.
- » Provide opportunities for spousal employment and designation of family duty stations to consider not only security concerns but also aspects such as the availability of health care, schools, and recreational facilities.

RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, PROGRESSION, TALENT MANAGEMENT



Conduct staff engagement surveys and pulse checks that collect gender-disaggregated data

- » Periodically conduct staff engagement surveys at least every year to assess organizational culture, identify gaps, and solicit feedback.
- » Establish a procedure to report on systemic issues or trends found in the surveys on a quarterly basis to mission leadership and senior management, and to task and monitor related action required.

Establish mandatory gender-sensitive exit surveys or interviews led by, or in consultation with, GFPs. See UN Women's [Template for Exit Surveys](#) as a helpful guide.

- » Conduct anonymous exit interviews for all departing personnel (including interns, volunteers, and short- or fixed-term consultants) to record the reasons for leaving and address possible misconduct, sexual or otherwise, discrimination, or abuse of power using a victim-centered approach.
- » Establish clear reporting lines and accountability frameworks for the aggregated results for senior leadership to identify remedial actions.
- » Regularly compile and share findings with senior leadership and at quarterly briefings.

Identify and use potential vacancies from anticipated retirements to make progress towards targets through internal pipelines and strategic workforce and structured succession planning.

CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT



Consult with staff to identify key areas in creating an enabling environment.

- » Survey staff on organizational culture, policies, staff engagement, career advancement, etc. to help identify key areas adversely impacting recruitment, retention, and overall staff contentment. Feedback should be used to guide policy reforms and follow-up surveys should be conducted to measure remedial impact.
- » Form peer support groups of women, including women from different professional areas and different regional offices; provide a platform to highlight specific needs of female personnel; share issues arising from these meetings with GFPs to further improve the working environment.

Adopt measures to allow for a better work-life balance, such as Flexible Working Arrangements

- » Use 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, or listen to this podcast series on the [WorkLife HUB about Flexible Working Arrangements](#).
- » Ensure the forms and processes for obtaining FWA are streamlined so as not to deter uptake and that guidance is readily available and understood.
- » Promote flexible working for all personnel irrespective of care responsibilities.
- » Collect data on the number of FWA requests and approvals to monitor and analyze the use of flexible working policies. Disaggregate data by sex/gender, age, disability, contract type, grade, staff category and location and report on this regularly to executive leadership and all personnel.
- » Equip all personnel with means to work remotely.
- » Senior managers should lead by example and encourage the use of FWAs and gender-responsive working practices.
- » Consult staff before making assumptions regarding their preference for work-life balance.

Uphold standards of conduct for ethics, safety, and prevention of harassment.

- » Ensure all personnel are aware of and held accountable for the standards of conduct and their respective rights and responsibilities.
- » Implement policies to prevent harassment, discrimination and abuse of authority, utilizing a victim/survivor-centered approach.

CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT



- » Offer safe ways to formally and informally report misconduct and establish proper investigation measures.
- » Launch an awareness campaign on addressing sexual harassment and implement active bystander trainings.
- » Enforce zero-tolerance of retaliation against those who report misconduct.
- » Establish and communicate a transparent investigation process which is victim/survivor-centered.

Extend the goal of gender parity and zero tolerance against harassment, including sexual harassment, to activities organized with external partners, especially public engagements such as conferences and workshops, using the peer-to-peer learning publication, [Making zero tolerance a reality](#)

- » Make gender balance a requirement in the composition of panels.
- » Make sure panel members are gender-sensitive.
- » Ensure that all UN system events adhere to the Code of Conduct to Prevent Harassment, Including Sexual Harassment.

Institute family-friendly policies (recommendations from System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity).

- » Ensure on-site creche availability or reimbursement for child-care costs.
- » Establish private and accessible lactation facilities, as per the [Guidance Note on Designated Lactation Spaces for Nursing Parents](#).
- » Make sure decisions on staff mobility are communicated at least 6 months in advance and scheduled following the completion of school year.
- » Monitor adherence to parental and family leave policies to identify and address gender disparities among employees taking leave.
- » Provide additional leave and flexibility when possible to account for the broader care needs of personnel.

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

- » Ensure diversity in all communications materials.
- » Ensure policies use gender-neutral language inclusive of trans and gender non-conforming personnel in line with UN-GLOBE's recommendations.
- » Ensure all relevant policies, including human resources and those pertaining to the development of facilities, specify provision of reasonable accommodation, where necessary.
- » Ensure internal and external websites are accessible, particularly implementation pages.

CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT



Designate Gender Focal Points and Focal Points for Women with adequate levels of seniority and responsibility, preferably at the P-4 level or above, with written terms of reference and at least 20 per cent of their time allocated to focal point functions as per the [UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women \(UN-SWAP\)](#) and [A/RES/78/182](#).

- » Large entities and 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.
- » Update and streamline the terms of reference for GFPs to enhance inter-agency efforts.
- » Provide GFPs with access to staff selection and representation statistics and actively include them in workforce planning, selection processes, and outreach efforts.
- » Ensure senior leadership's active and visible commitment to collaborating with GFPs and Focal Points for Women.

MISSION SETTINGS



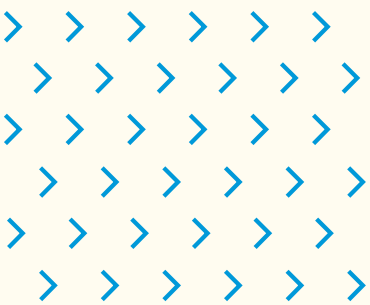
Improve working and living conditions to provide a safe and supportive environment for all.

- » Conduct staff surveys to identify accommodation enhancement opportunities.
- » Assess working and living conditions, including the need for improved infrastructure, services, and support networks
- » Survey, identify and address gender-based security concerns.

With regard to international staff, senior management commits to ensuring that staff take their full complement of off-time (including respecting weekends at duty stations).

- » Ensure timely release of women recruited to other missions.
- » Partner with other UN system entities and local recruitment initiatives.
- » Consider efforts to facilitate spousal employment for international staff.
- » Offer extra parental leave or remote working for staff in non-family duty stations, whether married or unmarried.
- » Review possibilities of relocating family to a neighboring duty station.
- » Include female staff in all field visit teams.

Increase professional mobility of women within mission settings



Expanding the Gender Parity Strategy to National Professional Officers and General Service Staff

As part of Phase 2 of the System-wide Strategy, leadership (including resident coordinators and heads of agencies and missions) should champion and coordinate gender parity efforts among National Professional Officers and General Service staff.

Ask yourself: How can we adapt our existing measures to address imbalances among National Professional Officers and General Service Staff?

- » Expand gender parity targets to the workplans of country teams and resident coordinators while instituting monitoring and tracking.
- » Actively participate in the United Nations talent community.
- » Institute targeted recruitment efforts aimed at widening the talent pool
- » Consider re-examining restrictive requirements in terms of field experience to attract a wider range of women to entry-level positions.
- » Make application process more accessible and focus on ways to recruit women contractors and interns to build experience