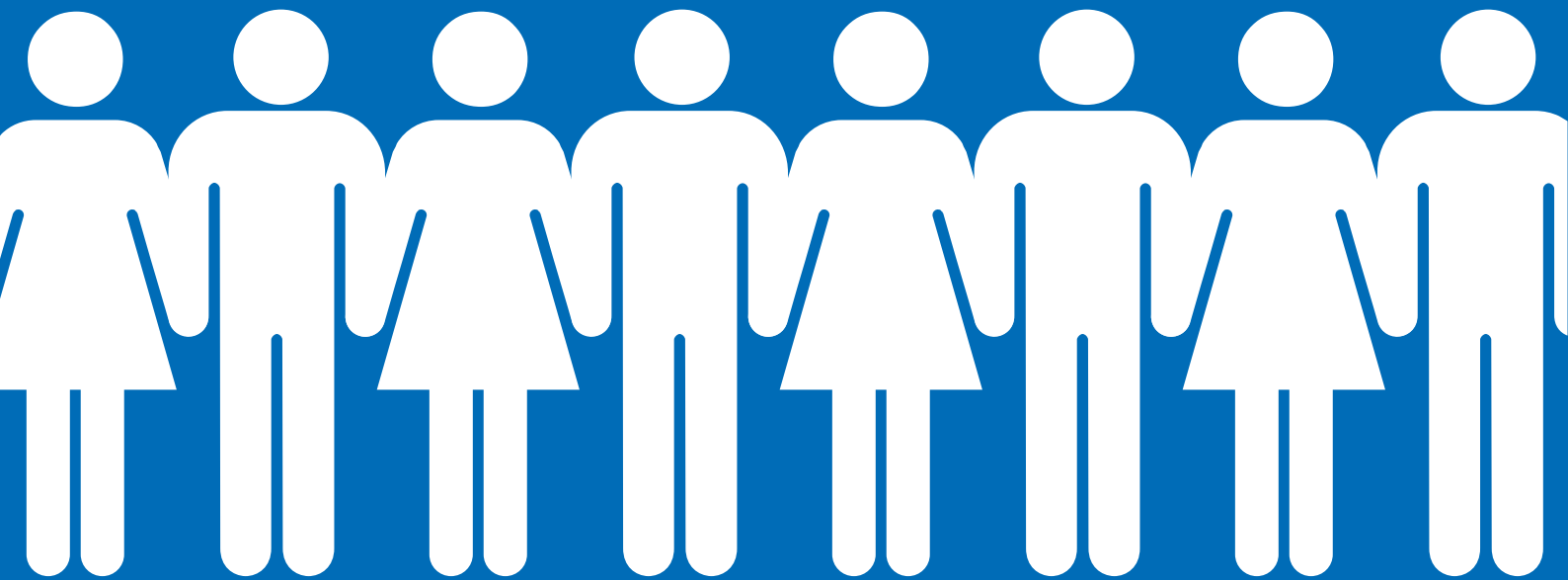


BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION



Since its introduction in 2012, the UN-SWAP has supported substantial and sustained improvement in the UN's performance on mainstreaming gender, with the aggregate rating meets or exceeds improving from 31 to 65 per cent across the 15 UN-SWAP Performance Indicators between 2012 and 2017, with 66 UN entities reporting, or 94 per cent of all UN entities.² Building on this significant system wide progress, UN-SWAP 2.0 was launched in 2018 raising the bar for accountability by strengthening existing indicators and anchoring the framework within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

UN-SWAP 2.0 was developed through an 18-month participatory process involving over 50 UN entities, coordinated through an 11-member inter-agency Working Group on Results, chaired by UN Women, and including piloting by 10 entities. It was developed within the overall context of UN reform and the planned move by the UN to system-wide reporting.³ The timeframe for UN-SWAP 2.0 implementation is 2018-2024.

The UN-SWAP Framework endorsed by the CEB in 2012 set out a plan for three aligned foci of accountability for gender equality and the empowerment of women:

1. The UN-SWAP 1.0, with a focus on corporate processes and institutional arrangements at the individual entity level.
2. The United Nations Country Teams (UNCT) Performance Indicators for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, introduced in August 2008 focusing on joint processes and institutional arrangements within the UNCT. An updated version of the UNCT Performance Indicators (the SWAP-Scorecard), aligned to UN-SWAP 2.0, was rolled out in 2018.
3. Development results at country and normative levels. This third level of accountability is a natural extension of UN-SWAP 1.0 and the UNCT Performance Indicators, which until 2018 focused on institutional processes, and constitute the changes in UN-SWAP 2.0. These and corresponding revisions to the UNCT Performance Indicators complete the accountability framework as originally planned.

UN-SWAP 2.0 consists of 17 Performance Indicators organised in six performance areas aligned with the CEB Policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women ([CEB/2006/2](#)).

Purpose and organisation of the Technical Notes

These Technical Notes provide guidance on the completion of the Performance Indicators developed as part of the reporting framework of the UN System-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) to implement the CEB Policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women (CEB/2006/2). For each of the Performance Indicators, the Technical Notes set out:

- the Performance Indicator itself;
- how to complete the rating for the Performance Indicator, i.e. guidance on what you need to do to report on each Performance Indicator;
- current practice and examples from across the UN system that will support your entity in meeting and exceeding the Performance Indicators; and
- the inter-governmental mandate on which the Performance Indicator is based (Annex 3).

² Entities meeting and exceeding requirements. For details see: ECOSOC 2017. *Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system*. E/2017/57.

³ *Repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: our promise for dignity, prosperity and peace on a healthy planet*. Report of the Secretary-General. A/72/684-E/2018/7

The Performance Indicators and Rating System

The UN-SWAP rating system consists of five levels. The ratings allow UN entities to self-assess and report on their standing with respect to each indicator, and to move progressively towards excellent performance. As such, the rating system is intended as an aid to promote leadership and direction and enhance coherence.

The five levels of the rating system are:

- Exceeds requirements
- Meets requirements
- Approaches requirements
- Missing
- Not applicable

At a minimum, each UN system entity should aim to achieve “meets requirements”. Meeting requirements is, however, a starting point, rather than the conclusion of an entity’s promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. It is anticipated that all UN entities will aspire to “exceed requirements”, with the UN thereby being an institutional leader in gender equality and the empowerment of women.

For the “approaches requirements” rating, where there is an either/or option, UN entities which meet one of the options should be rated under this heading. If neither option is met, the Performance Indicator should be rated as “missing”. For the “meets requirements” and “exceeds requirements” ratings, all options must be met. Where there are two or more requirements for a Performance Indicator, if an entity approaches requirements in one element and exceeds requirements in another, UN entity performance should be rated as “approaches requirements”.

The “missing” rating should be applied when the Performance Indicator is relevant to an entity, but the “approaches expectations” rating is not met. “Not applicable” applies where the Performance Indicator is not relevant to a UN entity.

In the UN-SWAP web-based reporting system, UN entities are expected to provide a clear justification for each rating. Where there are multiple parts to a Performance Indicator, UN entities are required to report on each of the elements. In this context, additional mandatory explanation boxes have been added to facilitate more complete and accurate reporting.

A glossary of key terms can be found at the end of the Technical Notes.

Action Plans for Performance Indicators

UN-SWAP reporting requires the submission of Action Plans to accompany ratings for all indicators, including timelines, resources and responsibility for follow-up actions **in order to keep or improve current ratings**. Action plans are critical for enabling gaps and challenges to be addressed, and where possible should be agreed upon at the highest possible level within entities.

Unless plans of action adequately express clear commitments to maintain or improve performance, entities’ UN- SWAP reports will not be accepted.

1. **Action Points for Improvement:** Entities need to include planned activities to maintain and/or improve performance for each Performance Indicator. Examples of planned activities could include: undertake a capacity assessment (in X year led by X department), conduct a

UN-SWAP peer review (with X entity in X year), make the “I Know Gender” course mandatory (for X year), hire a consultant to help develop the entity’s gender policy (in X year).

2. **Timelines:** Timelines for improving or maintaining performance for each Performance Indicator should be realistic. Timelines should reflect implementation plans and review dates included in gender policies/strategies and/or gender equality related outputs included in strategic plans. When applicable, the respective number of years and/or months needed to attain the next performance level since the time of reporting should be indicated.
3. **Resources:** Entities need to include resources required to improve or maintain performance for each Performance Indicator and to document the required resources in their Action Plans. Indicating resource requirements does not commit UN entities to the allocation of the funds; rather, they provide a notional guide to estimated resource requirements within entities and across the UN system for realizing gender equality and women’s empowerment. Estimates of required financial resources are also useful with respect to resource mobilisation.

In the “resources required” field of the online reporting system, UN entities should include costs associated with the implementation of the UN-SWAP Performance Indicators which are additional to recurring costs; for example, the cost of developing a policy or implementing a training course, rather than costs such as staffing. Development of a policy might require 25,000 USD in consultancy funds and implementing a training course may cost 100,000 USD.

Staffing resources for work related to improving gender equality and the empowerment of women should only be included for Performance Indicator 11 (Gender Architecture). Funds for consultants, for example to develop gender policies, conduct gender audits or develop training programmes, can be included in resource requirements for relevant individual Performance Indicators.

4. **Responsibility for follow-up:** The UN-SWAP seeks to clarify staff and departmental responsibility for gender mainstreaming and for meeting/exceeding the Performance Indicator relevant to their mandate. To encourage decentralization of responsibility and accountability for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women within each UN entity, where possible, staff other than the gender focal point(s) or gender unit should be assigned responsibilities for follow-up in the action plans. Designation of senior management as responsible for follow-up is also highly encouraged in order to strengthen accountability.

UN-SWAP Performance Indicator Business Owners

A good practice in shared responsibility is **identifying ‘Business Owners’ for each of the UN-SWAP Performance Indicators**. The Business Owners can be responsible for:

- (i) determining actions to ensure that the Performance Indicators are met;
- (ii) communicating and championing gender equality in their areas of work; and
- (iii) reporting against the Performance Indicator.

The Business Owners should be supported by the Gender Office/main UN-SWAP Focal Point, who provides overall technical advice, coordination and coherence.

Generic Terms of Reference for a network of UN-SWAP Performance Indicator Business Owners is available in Annex 4.

Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) review of UN-SWAP 1.0

During 2018-2019 the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) conducted a [Review of UN-SWAP 1](#), which included a desk review, questionnaires to UN Women and 55 reporting entities, an online survey, a series of interviews and a focus group discussion. The Review also includes an analysis of enabling factors and best practices for each UN-SWAP 1.0 Performance Indicator.

The thorough Review concluded that the UN-SWAP has proven to be an effective framework for tracking system-wide progress and a useful benchmark and catalyst for advancement towards gender mainstreaming in most participating entities, as well as a system-wide achievement.

The JIU Review of the UN-SWAP contains five recommendations aimed at further improvements, addressed respectively to the members of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination, the executive heads of the reporting entities, the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of UN-Women and to the legislative and governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations. These recommendations aim at enhancing credibility in the implementation of SWAP, increasing the ownership of reporting entities and reinforcing accountability by executive heads and governing bodies.

Recommendations from the JIU Review of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (JIU/REP/2019/2)

1. Considering that UN-SWAP is based on self-assessment, quality assurance mechanisms in place in the reporting entities should be assessed regularly to ensure that ratings by indicator are accurate and are appropriately supported by evidence.
2. The members of the CEB are invited to undertake a comprehensive review of the results achieved following the implementation of the first phase of UN-SWAP and endorse the framework as revised in 2018 which was expanded to promote more sustainable achievements by UN Country Teams at the field level.
3. UN-Women is encouraged to review the content of the report formally presented by the United Nations Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council, notably to indicate the progress made by individual reporting entities, the drivers of success and the challenges they face.
4. The legislative and governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should review the UN-Women annual letter addressed to executive management that should be accompanied by the measure proposed by executive management to be undertaken to improve compliance with the indicators and expected contribution to gender equality and the empowerment of women.
5. An independent assessment of effective progress towards gender mainstreaming to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women should be undertaken within each of the UN participating organizations, possibly using UN-SWAP as a benchmark.

In response to the JIU Review recommendations, UN Women is publishing individual UN entity performance results against the UN-SWAP 2.0 framework on its website annually.⁴ For a stronger evidence base in the UN-SWAP 2.0 reporting, entities are required to upload the necessary documents to substantiate the self-assessment outlined for each Performance Indicator. In the same vein, entities are also encouraged to conduct UN-SWAP peer reviews included among the requirements for the Performance Indicator 17 on Coherence.

⁴ UN-SWAP results by entity: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/promoting-un-accountability/un-swap-results>

Emerging crises and global challenges, including COVID-19 crisis in 2022 reporting

Please note that in 2022 reporting, questions related to the COVID-19 crisis and other crises are not mandatory for any Performance Indicator.

In order to track the effects of the COVID-19 crisis and other emerging crises and global challenges on the efforts to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women in UN entities, specific questions have been kept under each Performance Indicator of the UN-SWAP framework, as follows

- Has the entity's work in this field been impacted by the COVID-19 crisis or other emerging crisis during the reporting period? YES/NO
- (If yes): Please briefly explain how the work has been impacted (word limit: 300):

Please note that performance Indicators 1 and 3 also include a drop-down menu (no longer mandatory):

In regard to emerging crises and global challenges, as well as COVID-19 and their impact on GEEW, please select the most relevant contribution from the entity in 2022:

- Contribution to the delivery of a health response
- Contribution to address the socioeconomic, humanitarian and human rights aspects of the crisis
- Contribution to a recovery process addressing the climate crisis, inequalities, exclusion and gaps in social protection systems

In alignment with the previous selection, describe specific focus of existing gender-related strategic work as well as new activities and deliverables in response to emerging crises and global challenges.

Additional

This updated version of the Technical Guidance also includes an Annex which clarifies the reporting requirements for Secretariat entities which have a mainly administrative focus and Training and Research Institutes.

***NOTE:** Please do not include acronyms in reporting. It is important to include full titles and office/department names.

For technical support or any clarifications, please contact the UN-SWAP Help Desk: unswap.helpdesk@unwomen.org