

# **Progress towards achieving the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women**

## **Report by the Director-General**

1. The present report has been drafted in response to requests made at recent meetings of the governing bodies<sup>1</sup> in order to provide information on progress towards achieving the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP).
2. The UN-SWAP was introduced in 2012 and constitutes the first accountability framework for gender mainstreaming in the United Nations system. It is designed to define, monitor and drive progress towards a common set of standards to which United Nations entities aspire and adhere for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. It applies to all entities, departments and offices of the United Nations system. As of 2019, a total of 68 entities report to the UN-SWAP, which establishes a common understanding of gender equality and a common method to advance towards this goal by focusing on corporate processes and institutional arrangements at the individual entity level.
3. The UN-SWAP encompasses a set of performance indicators, with a common and progressive sliding scale against which to monitor progress in each entity. The current UN-SWAP framework was launched in 2018 with a set of 17 indicators. The indicators are presented in Table 1, along with the performance of WHO for 2018 and 2019 and its expected performance in 2020.

**Table 1. WHO's performance in UN-SWAP 2.0**

<b>Performance indicators (PIs)<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020*</b>
<i>Results-based management</i>			
1. Strategic planning of gender-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) results	Meets	Meets	Meets
2. Reporting on gender-related SDG results	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches
3. Programmatic gender-related SDG results	N/A	N/A	N/A

<sup>1</sup> See document A73/36; see also the summary records of the Seventy-third World Health Assembly (resumed), second meeting of Committee B, section 2 (document WHA73/2020/REC/3).

<sup>2</sup> The UN-SWAP Performance Indicators and Rating System rating system consists of levels: (i) Not applicable, (ii) Missing, (iii) Approaches requirements, (iv) Meets requirements, and (v) Exceeds requirements. The requirements for each performance Indicator are defined in the UN-SWAP Framework and Technical Guidance 2019 (<https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/promoting-un-accountability>, accessed 22 December 2020).

Performance indicators (PIs) <sup>2</sup>	2018	2019	2020*
<i>Oversight</i>			
4. Evaluation	Meets	Meets	Meets
5. Audit	Meets	Meets	Meets
<i>Accountability</i>			
6. Policy	Meets	Meets	Meets
7. Leadership	Approaches	Approaches	Meets
8. Gender-responsive performance management	Exceeds	Exceeds	Exceeds
<i>Human and financial resources</i>			
9. Financial resource tracking	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches
10. Financial resource allocation	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches
11. Gender architecture	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches
12. Equal representation of women	Approaches	Approaches	Meets
13. Organizational culture	Approaches	Approaches	Meets
<i>Capacity</i>			
14. Capacity assessment	Approaches	Missing	Missing
15. Capacity development	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches
<i>Knowledge communication and coherence</i>			
16. Knowledge and communication	Approaches	Approaches	Meets
17. Coherence	Approaches	Approaches	Meets

\* To be confirmed by UN-WOMEN in 2021.

6/16 indicators  
met (35%)

5/16 indicators  
met (31%)

10/16 indicators  
met (63%)

## Results-based management indicators

4. This category includes three indicators: PI-01 (Strategic planning of gender-related SDG results); PI-02 (Reporting on gender-related SDG results); and PI-03 (Programming of gender-related SDG results). WHO met the requirements for PI-01 in 2018 and 2019 because the Organization's main strategic documents, the Thirteenth General Programme of Work, 2019–2023 and programme budgets, include at least one high-level result (outcome) on gender equality and the empowerment of women that contributes to meeting Sustainable Development Goal targets and makes reference to targets of Goal 5. Although none of the outcomes in the Programme budget 2020–2021 include a specific reference to gender, the annual assessment report indicates that WHO will continue to meet this requirement in 2020,<sup>1</sup> given that the Thirteenth General Programme of Work, 2019–2023 includes gender as one of the

<sup>1</sup> The final decision on the assessment will be made after UN-WOMEN has conducted a review of the entity report, including a quality check of the sources. The WHO 2020 UN-SWAP report is submitted to UN-WOMEN in January each year and the response, including a confirmation or corrections from UN-WOMEN, is usually provided two to three months after being submitted.

strategic shifts and that the outputs in the Programme budget 2020–2021 are intermediary outcomes in the results chain. Specifically, output 4.2.6 addresses gender mainstreaming<sup>1</sup> and is accompanied by a scorecard<sup>2</sup> for outputs measurement as part of the current WHO results framework. The Secretariat is working to ensure that the draft Proposed programme budget 2022–2023 includes a specific reference to gender in one of the outcomes. This will enable the Organization to meet the requirements through to 2023.

5. With respect to PI-02, WHO approached these requirements in 2018 and 2019. The requirements to meet this indicator are two: a standing report to governing bodies on gender equality and the systematic use of sex-disaggregated data in strategic plan reporting. The annual assessment report indicates that WHO will continue to approach requirements in 2020.

6. PI-03 is not applicable to WHO, according to the UN-WOMEN technical notes on the UN-SWAP and as confirmed by UN-WOMEN in its latest revision of WHO's report in 2019. The reason for WHO's non-applicability is that all programmatic and corporate results are included in the Programme budget and, therefore, covered by PI-01 and PI-02.

### **Oversight indicators**

7. This category includes two performance indicators: PI-04 (Evaluation) and PI-05 (Audit). WHO met the requirements in 2018 and 2019 and it is anticipated that the Organization will continue to meet them in 2020. WHO meets the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) gender equality-related norms and standards and applies the UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality. WHO has also developed tools for integrating gender, equity and human rights in audits. The gender equity and human rights team within the Secretariat works with the Evaluation Unit and the Office of Internal Oversight to build capacity in these areas and keep the scoring for WHO.

### **Accountability indicators**

8. This category includes three performance indicators: PI-06 (Policy), PI-07 (Leadership) and PI-08 (Gender-responsive performance management). WHO met requirements for PI-06 in 2018 and 2019 on the basis of the strategy document entitled “Integrating equity, gender, human rights and social determinants into the work of WHO: Roadmap for Action (2014–2019)”. In 2020, WHO will revisit this requirement as the Roadmap expired in 2019. Regarding PI-07, WHO approached the requirements in 2018 and 2019; in 2020 it will probably meet requirements thanks to remedial action plans put in place by the Secretariat, such as for providing enhanced input to the Director-General's public speeches and lectures, the inclusion of internal advocacy in the output scorecard measurements and the development of a checklist for assessing and supporting senior leadership's speeches.

9. With respect to PI-08, WHO exceeded requirements in 2018 and 2019 and will continue to exceed them in 2020, primarily thanks to the allocation of staff and resources for assessing the inclusion of gender, along with equity, human rights, diversity and inclusiveness, in the core competencies and performance assessment of all staff.

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<sup>1</sup> Output 4.2.6 of the Programme budget 2020–2021, the “Leave no one behind” approach, focuses on equity, gender and human rights progressively incorporated and monitored.

<sup>2</sup> Programme budget 2020–2021. WHO results framework: an update. Report by the Director-General. EB146/28/Rev.1.

## **Human and financial resources indicators**

10. This category encompasses five indicators: PI-09 (Financial resource tracking), PI-10 (Financial resource allocation), PI-11 (Gender architecture), PI-12 (Equal representation of women), and PI-13 (Organizational culture). WHO approached requirements for all five indicators in 2018 and 2019. In the 2020 report, it is anticipated that WHO will continue to approach requirements for indicators PI-09, PI-10 and PI-11. The key reasons for its continuing to approach the requirements for three consecutive years include: (a) the constraints against facilitating the tracking of all resources that are spent on gender-related activities outside the assigned output in the Programme budget (for example output 4.2.6 in the Programme budget 2020–2021); (b) the funding gap for gender, equity and human rights related activities when planned costs and actual funding are assessed in the UN-SWAP report; and (c) the reduction of staff appointed to gender mainstreaming activities in the Organization, which is measured by the UN-SWAP indicator. To remediate the shortcomings in PI-09, the Secretariat is working to explore the possibility of creating a tag for expenses in line with the guidance from UN-WOMEN on gender markers. The development of a new enterprise management system in the coming years offers an opportunity to work towards this objective.

11. With respect to PI-12, the annual assessment report suggests that WHO will probably move to “meeting requirements” in 2020, but this is dependent on the WHO workforce statistics as of 31 December 2020. The range for achieving equal representation of women is 47–53% in all staff categories. As of 31 July 2020, women staff members represented 46% in the Professional category and 55% in the General Service category. Variations occur across regions and grades and parity has been reached at some levels, including in senior leadership teams (for example at Under-Secretary-General level).

12. With respect to PI-13, the annual assessment report suggests that WHO will meet requirements in 2020 as a result of remedial action plans and policies put in place by the Organization, including policies and regulations on ethical behaviour, facilitative policies for staff such as flexible working arrangements, analysis of staff exit interviews and demonstrated adherence to all system-wide and agency-specific sexual harassment policies.

## **Capacity indicators**

13. This category contains two indicators: PI-14 (Capacity assessment) and PI-15 (Capacity development). With respect to PI-14, WHO approached requirements in 2018 but missed requirements in 2019. With respect to PI-15, WHO approached requirements in 2018 and 2019. The reason for these scores is that an Organization-wide assessment of staff capacities in gender equality should be conducted, after which a five-year follow-up plan of capacity development needs to be established. In 2020, WHO will continue to miss requirements for PI-14 but will approach requirements to PI-15 thanks to the efforts related to capacity-building, online learning and collaboration with the WHO Academy to develop a course on gender, equity and human rights. In order to meet requirements in both indicators, the Organization-wide capacity assessment should be conducted.

## **Knowledge, communication and coherence indicators**

14. This category covers two indicators: PI-16 (Knowledge and communication), and PI-17 (Coherence). WHO approached or met requirements for these indicators in 2018 and 2019. The key factors for these scores suggest the need to establish a clear gender-sensitive communications plan and the necessity to conduct a peer review of the UN-SWAP reporting process with another United Nations entity. In 2020, it is expected that WHO will meet both indicators. The Secretariat has worked to

strengthen communications with a stronger emphasis on gender, including in the Organization's main website and through its online presence in social media. Also in 2020, relevant teams at WHO headquarters and the International Trade Centre partnered to conduct a peer-review process, assessed by an external expert on gender equality and gender mainstreaming. The peer-review process engaged all departments working on the UN-SWAP. It is also expected that WHO will meet requirements for PI-17 in 2020 thanks to the strengthening of inter-agency work on gender, equity and human rights by multiple programmes of the Organization, particularly on UN/SDG task teams, inter-agency forums and multi-partner reports.

15. The performance of WHO in the UN-SWAP is assessed by UN-WOMEN and published within the United Nations system.<sup>1</sup> UN-WOMEN has commended WHO for its innovations on performance management, capacity-building, new mechanisms such as UN-SWAP clinics, enhanced organizational culture and the development of the output scorecard with a section dedicated to assessing gender, equity and human rights mainstreaming. UN-WOMEN has also encouraged WHO to make progress on other performance indicators in order to advance to the average level of United Nations system entities and specialized agencies.

## **ACTION BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

16. The Board is invited to note the report.

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/promoting-un-accountability/un-swap-results/2019>, accessed 22 December 2020.