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## **Accountability overview**

### **Progress towards achieving the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in 2022**

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

1. The United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP), which was introduced in 2012, is the first United Nations system-wide accountability mechanism for gender equality and women's empowerment. It is intended for all entities, departments and offices of the United Nations system to monitor and self-assess their progress towards a common set of standards to achieve gender equality. The UN-SWAP framework (UN-SWAP 2.0), released in 2018, includes refined performance indicators that are aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In 2021, a total of 71 United Nations entities (96% of the United Nations system) were reporting against the UN-SWAP framework.
2. The UN-SWAP 2.0 framework includes 17 performance indicators that focus on institutional processes and actions at the individual entity level, as a common method to advance towards the goals of gender equality and women's empowerment. Progress in each United Nations entity is monitored against a progressive sliding scale as part of each performance indicator.
3. In 2022, WHO increased its score on six of 16 performance indicators and reached the highest score on an additional two indicators.
4. Table 1 provides an overview of the UN-SWAP 2.0 performance indicators and WHO's performance for 2018–2022.

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

Performance indicators (PIs)	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 <sup>1</sup>
<i>Results-based management</i>					
1. Strategic planning of gender-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) results	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets
2. Reporting on gender-related SDG results	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches
3. Programmatic gender-related SDG results	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<i>Oversight</i>					
4. Evaluation	Meets	Meets	Meets	Exceeds	Exceeds
5. Audit	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets
<i>Accountability</i>					
6. Policy	Meets	Meets	Approaches	Approaches	Meets
7. Leadership	Approaches	Approaches	Meets	Approaches	Meets
8. Gender-responsive performance management	Exceeds	Exceeds	Exceeds	Exceeds	Exceeds
<i>Human and financial resources</i>					
9. Financial resource tracking	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches
10. Financial resource allocation	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches
11. Gender architecture	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches	Meets
12. Equal representation of women	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches
13. Organizational culture	Approaches	Approaches	Meets	Meets	Meets
<i>Capacity</i>					
14. Capacity assessment	Approaches	Missing	Missing	Missing	Approaches
15. Capacity development	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches
<i>Coherence</i>					
16. Knowledge and communication	Approaches	Approaches	Exceeds	Meets	Exceeds
17. Coherence	Approaches	Approaches	Meets	Meets	Exceeds
<b>Meets or exceeds</b>	<b>6/16 (35%)</b>	<b>5/16 (31%)</b>	<b>8/16 (50%)</b>	<b>7/16 (47%)</b>	<b>10/16 (63%)</b>

### Results-based management indicators

5. 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 (Programmatic gender-related SDG results). As with previous years, WHO continued to meet requirements for PI-01 in 2022, given that its main strategic documents (for example, the Thirteenth General Programme of Work, 2019–2023 (extended to 2025) and the Programme budget 2022–2023) include at least one high-level result (outcome) on gender equality and women's empowerment that contributes to meeting Sustainable Development Goal targets. More specifically, output 1.1.2 of the Programme budget 2022–2023 requires mainstreaming of gender, equity, disability and human rights when developing and implementing interventions, while output 4.2.6<sup>2</sup> highlights the integration of gender, equity and human

<sup>1</sup> To be confirmed by UN-WOMEN in 2023.

<sup>2</sup> Output 4.2.6 "Leave no one behind" approach focused on equity, gender and human rights progressively incorporated and monitored (<https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/330074>).

rights as a means to ensure delivery of people-centred health services. The output scorecard<sup>1</sup> further supports measurement of outputs as part of the current WHO results framework.

6. In line with the Director-General's ambitions to improve the Organization's performance against UN-SWAP indicators, WHO will aim to have at least one high-level transformative outcome on gender equality and women's empowerment in the next general programme of work in 2026 and demonstrate progress towards achieving that outcome. This is critical not only to exceed the requirement for UN-SWAP PI-01, but to showcase its commitment to fast-tracking progress towards gender equality in a transformative manner. The Gender, Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Department is working with the Department of Planning, Resource Coordination and Performance Monitoring to explore how to include a high-level transformative outcome in the next general programme of work.

7. With respect to PI-02, WHO continued to approach the requirements in 2022. One of the two requirements for this indicator is the systematic use of sex-disaggregated data in strategic plan reporting, where work remains to be completed. As of 2023, WHO intends to systematically provide information on the collection of sex-disaggregated data, and the analysis from available data, in its mid-term reviews and end of biennium reports on its programme budgets. The other requirement includes regular reporting to the governing bodies on gender equality, which is being implemented.

8. PI-03 remains not applicable to WHO, as all its programmatic and corporate results are included in the Programme budget and are therefore covered by PI-01 and PI-02.

### **Oversight indicators**

9. The two performance indicators in this category are: PI-04 (Evaluation) and PI-05 (Audit). WHO exceeded the PI-04 requirements in 2021, thanks to the completion of a corporate evaluation of the integration of gender, equity and human rights, and continued to exceed in 2022. In 2023, the Evaluation Office intends to expand its efforts to strengthen the integration of gender, equity, and human rights in the decentralized evaluations, and will conduct an analysis to understand factors that have facilitated or hindered the integration of gender, equity and human rights dimensions in corporate and decentralized evaluations and develop a portfolio of capacity-building and technical support activities to ensure better integration of gender, equity and human rights considerations in the design and content of evaluations. WHO continues to apply its tools for integrating gender, equity and human rights in audits and met the requirements for PI-05 in 2022.

### **Accountability indicators**

10. This category includes three performance indicators: PI-06 (Policy), PI-07 (Leadership) and PI-08 (Gender-responsive performance management). WHO advanced its rating and met the requirements for PI-06 in 2022 by developing an Organization-wide policy on health equity, gender equality and human rights following a consultative process, which is in the final clearance process. The policy outlines capacity-building and mainstreaming objectives as well as critical enablers for successful implementation and core accountabilities that are aligned with key Sustainable Development Goal targets and the Thirteenth General Programme of Work, 2019–2023 (extended to 2025) and recognizes that progress on health equity, gender equality and human rights are essential to country impact. The policy is accompanied by a monitoring and evaluation framework and a three-year costed action plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Proposed programme budget 2022–2023. A74/5 Rev.1  
([https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/WHA74/A74\\_5Rev1-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA74/A74_5Rev1-en.pdf)).

11. Regarding PI-07, WHO advanced its rating to meet the requirements in 2022 following the Director-General's commitment to advancing the UN-SWAP indicators demonstrated by various efforts: (1) progressively increasing investment in the Organization-wide work on gender equality, human rights and health equity, supporting the Gender, Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Department to lead the gender-mainstreaming efforts within the Organization and with Member States; (2) supporting the introduction of a gender marker to track expenditure and the quality of activities that promote gender equality and the empowerment of women; and (3) providing oversight in his office to three key areas of work, namely the prevention of, and response to, sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment; diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative; and gender, equity, and human rights. WHO leadership continues to closely monitor and commit to gender parity targets in staffing (for more information please see PI-12).

12. WHO exceeded the requirements of the Gender-responsive Performance management (PI-08) indicator in 2022 as it continuously invests in staff and resources for assessing the inclusion of gender, along with equity, human rights, diversity and inclusion, in the core competences and performance assessment of all staff, including in annual Excellence Award and as part of the 360-degree feedback that was launched in 2022.

### **Human and financial resources indicators**

13. This category includes the following 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 met the requirements for Gender architecture (PI-11) and Organizational culture (PI-13) in 2022 and approached the requirements for the remaining indicators in this category.

14. The key reasons for an approaching score for PI-09 and PI-10 include continuous obstacles to tracking resources invested in gender-related activities outside the dedicated enabling output in the Programme budget (for example, output 4.2.6 in the Programme budget 2022–2023), as well as the lack of tracking of expenditure on gender, equity and human-rights work. However, in 2022, important preparatory work was carried out by the Gender, Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Department and Department of Planning, Resource Coordination and Performance Monitoring towards implementing a gender marker, with guidance from UN-WOMEN, to improve tracking of expenditure on, and quality of, gender-related activities. This work will be integrated into the new business management system that will be rolled out in 2023. In 2022, as a first step towards setting a benchmark for the gender marker, WHO reviewed expenditure tagged as advancing gender, rights and equity in the Secretariat's activity work plans in the biennium 2020–2021.

15. WHO advanced its rating from approaching to meeting the requirement for PI-11 following several important actions. Importantly, the Gender, Equity and Human Rights team was upgraded to a fully-fledged department in the Office of the Director-General, highlighting its priority on the gender mainstreaming agenda. The department's staffing now comprises of a D2 post, and recruitment for a P5 technical lead for gender and a P5 technical lead for human rights is well advanced. In the meantime, the Director-General has strengthened the work of the department through allotment of core funding and human resources supplemented by staff loans. Furthermore, the dormant global network of gender equality, human rights and health equity focal points was re-established in 2022, ensuring appointed staff are at P4 level or above, allocating 20% of their time to integrating gender, equity and human rights into their programme's work and having these commitments outlined in their annual workplans and performance evaluations.

16. With respect to PI-12, WHO continues to approach the requirement based on the WHO workforce statistics as of 31 December 2022. In line with the United Nations Secretary-General’s gender parity strategy and the UN-SWAP, the required range to achieve gender parity is 47%–53% in each staff category. For the first time in WHO history, the overall representation of women holding longer-term positions in WHO reached parity, with 50.1% women and 49.9% for men for national and international staff holding long-term contracts across all categories of positions, as of December 2022. By the end of 2022, WHO almost achieved overall gender parity (46.8%) at aggregate level for the international professional and higher levels holding long-term contracts. However, parity gaps remain at senior leadership levels. Overall, the representation of women holding long-term appointments is highest at the entry levels, P1 and P2, at 77% and 58%, respectively, and decreases at the middle and higher professional levels, with 53% at P3 level, 45% at P4 level and 46% at P5 level. There are wider gaps at senior grade level, namely 35.6% (D1) and 35.9% (D2).

	Women	Men
P1	23	3
P2	159	107
P3	530	419
P4	610	754
P5	387	451
D1	75	136
D2	23	43
ASG	5	7
USG	1	1

17. To accelerate progress towards achieving gender parity targets, the WHO Human Resources and Talent Department, in close collaboration with the Gender, Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Department, and in consultation with senior management and Staff Associations at HQ and regions, updated the WHO Gender Policy and developed an implementation plan, which will come into force in March 2023. The new WHO gender policy and implementation plan includes updated targets, temporary recruitment measures, reliance on HR Business Intelligence tool for monitoring and formulated actions and accountability mechanisms for achieving parity by 2026, while mutually reinforcing diversity priorities with respect to geographical representation and United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS) indicators.

18. WHO continues to meet the requirements for PI-13 in 2022, relying on DEI Action Plan launched by HRT in May 2022, and HR policies foster an inclusive culture supportive of gender equality and diversity through a number of measures, including new parental leave to reduce parent’s workload, and enhanced flexible working arrangements policy launched in 2022.

### Capacity indicators

19. This category contains two indicators: PI-14 (Capacity assessment) and PI-15 (Capacity development). In 2022, after having missed PI-14 for several years, WHO approached the requirement in 2022 by conducting an Organization-wide capacity assessment survey on gender equality, human rights and health equity. The findings of the capacity assessment will be used to develop a capacity development plan in 2023, which will further advance WHO’s rating. Despite the lack of a capacity development plan, WHO offers several capacity-building opportunities and online learning. As part of the capacity-building plan and in collaboration with the WHO Academy, it intends to develop a

dedicated capacity-building course on gender, human rights and health equity. Furthermore, the draft policy commits to introducing a mandatory training on gender, rights and equity in the Organization, which, when implemented, will improve the rating for PI-15 from approaching in 2022 to meeting the requirements.

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

20. With respect to PI-16 (Knowledge and communication), WHO exceeded requirements in 2022, proactively sharing a wide range of gender-responsive materials and messages around gender-focused health topics and taking major steps through internal communications initiatives to mainstream gender in all areas of work. The WHO communications plan was further modified in response to the UN-SWAP requirements to include gender equality and women's empowerment, and a comprehensive gender-responsive communications guide was produced and disseminated for internal use.

21. In 2022, WHO continued its partnership with other specialized agencies and actively engaged in inter-agency collaborations on gender, human rights and health equity through multiple departments and programmes of the Organization. In particular, the Gender, Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Department strengthened its fruitful exchange with the International Trade Centre (ITC), with which it conducted a peer review of the UN-SWAP reports in 2019. WHO continued supporting the ITC mentoring programme for women and co-facilitated with the ITC an inter-agency working group to harmonize the integration of gender and diversity in exit surveys. As a result, WHO continues to exceed requirements for PI-17.

22. Each year, UN-WOMEN reviews and provides feedback on the performance of United Nations entities and publicizes the summary to the United Nations system and public as a matter of transparency and accountability.<sup>1</sup> UN-WOMEN has commended WHO for several achievements, including the UN-SWAP clinics and its rigorous UN-SWAP reporting, enhanced organizational culture and the development of the output scorecard related to gender, human rights and health equity mainstreaming. WHO welcomes the role of UN-WOMEN, and is pleased that its performance has made significant improvements in 2022 against its ratings in previous years. In 2022, WHO took firm and ambitious steps to accelerate progress, which is demonstrated by the notable increase: from 47% in 2021 to 63% (10/16) of indicators meeting or exceeding the requirements in 2022. It is noteworthy that substantial preparatory work has been put in place, which will further improve the performance for several indicators in 2023.

### **ACTION BY THE PROGRAMME, BUDGET AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**

23. The Committee is invited to note the report; in its discussions, it is further invited to provide guidance on the areas in which the Secretariat should prioritize its continuing gender-mainstreaming efforts.

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<sup>1</sup> Entity performance results can be reviewed at <https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/promoting-un-accountability/un-swap-results> (accessed 14 April 2023).