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Management response to the evaluation report**Evaluation of the UNICEF Gender Policy and Gender Action Plans***Summary*

The present report provides an overview of the UNICEF response to the evaluation of the UNICEF Gender Policy and Gender Action Plans. The evaluation shows that UNICEF has made progress to advance gender equality and empower girls and women. It affirms that an ambitious vision for gender equality and a solid gender architecture, including improved monitoring and evaluation systems, have contributed to progress and should be sustained. The organization's adoption of gender-transformative approaches is helping to yield results programmatically, especially to tackle policy reforms and engage communities in systems change. Early but visible gains in a new adolescent girls agenda call for greater investments in this area by all sectors for at-scale change. Country and regional leadership will be critical to success, including by setting clear priorities for and with adolescent girls, and improving ways to finance girl-focused organizations. Institutionally, improved operational clarity on gender expenditure reporting and dedicated trainings – especially for leaders – accompanied by clear accountability mechanisms, for all levels of leadership, are needed.

Elements of a draft decision for consideration by the Executive Board are provided in section V.

* E/ICEF/2025/1.

Note: The present document was processed in its entirety by UNICEF.



I. Overview

1. In 2023, UNICEF commissioned an independent evaluation to assess the results of gender equality efforts by UNICEF since the last evaluation in 2019. The 2023 evaluation focused on the Gender Policy (2021–2030) and the Gender Action Plans from 2018 to 2023 and reviewed programmatic and institutional actions taken by UNICEF to advance gender equality and empower girls and women to do this well.
2. The evaluation was conducted through a careful review of documents, country case studies, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, an all-staff survey and an analysis of gender integration approaches at comparable organizations. The evaluation also drew from external reference groups, including a dedicated youth advisory group.
3. Overall, the evaluation commends UNICEF for establishing an ambitious vision for gender equality in its Gender Policy and for setting clear, time-bound actions to advance gender equality across sectors and contexts in the Gender Action Plans. The report notes significant programmatic gains for girls and women, with important foundations established for advancing the rights of adolescent girls in particular. The evaluation also recognizes that UNICEF has made progress in improving its institutional architecture to support gender work, and notes how well the organization performs on system-wide benchmarks for gender in comparison to sister United Nations agencies.
4. The evaluation also finds that the transformative efforts required to achieve the Gender Policy’s ambitious aims and the Gender Action Plan targets require further integration into UNICEF programmes, and appeals to UNICEF leadership at all levels to prioritize greater investment in gender equality, especially in humanitarian contexts.
5. The evaluation findings and recommendations focus on three areas: the design, relevance and coherence of the UNICEF gender frameworks; the extent to which UNICEF has achieved programmatic results for gender equality and adolescent girls’ leadership and well-being; and the implementation of gender-related organizational changes and performance enablers.

II. Analysis and findings

A. Gender frameworks

6. The evaluation finds that the Gender Policy and the third Gender Action Plan (2022–2025) established a compelling vision for gender equality, which is sufficiently flexible to respond to the diverse needs of children and women across diverse contexts. The evaluation notes that these frameworks have had traction in part because they are anchored in the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025 and were developed through a wide-reaching consultative process.
7. The evaluation also finds that the expectation in the third Gender Action Plan that “gender is the responsibility of all” has not been fully realized, however, with limited gender expertise to operationalize gender work across sectors.

B. Programmatic results

8. The evaluation finds progress in the promotion of gender equality across UNICEF Strategic Plan Goal Areas, with the child protection sector being particularly successful in integrating gender-transformative approaches into its work. UNICEF has also expanded its investments in and commitment to gender-intentional

programming in social protection and in water, sanitation and hygiene. Health has a larger budget but relatively fewer gender-transformative expenditures. Education has adequate funding and some gender-transformative strategies, but progress is constrained by limited gender expertise in country offices.

9. The evaluation finds that gender is increasingly reflected in UNICEF humanitarian programming, with improvements in gender analyses, data disaggregation, programming for adolescent girls, and partnerships with women- and girl-led organizations. However, more at-scale, deliberate action is needed, backed by accountable leadership at all levels.

C. Institutional enablers

10. The evaluation appreciates that UNICEF is one of the strongest performers under the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on gender equality and the empowerment of women, with consistent improvements being made to monitoring and reporting on gender equality, including regular evaluations and trainings. With respect to other United Nations agencies, however, the evaluation finds that the unique contributions made by UNICEF to gender equality are not always well understood, and communication on the organization's flagship priorities, such as adolescent girls, could be shared more regularly with United Nations country teams by UNICEF country leadership.

11. UNICEF has invested in a core gender architecture at headquarters and at regional level. Staff, especially senior leaders, increasingly understand that gender equality is central to the mission of UNICEF and critical for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, but regional and country offices require additional support to champion priorities in their respective contexts.

12. A solid Gender Action Plan monitoring and evaluation system and growing use of gender analysis across the organization strengthen accountability, but the evaluation finds that these tools are not always used consistently to drive impactful programming. Bolder, more visible leadership to champion gender equality targets is required across most sectors and regions, aligned to Gender Action Plan priorities.

13. The evaluation finds that efforts to address gender imbalances in staffing have improved. However, gender gaps persist in certain sectors, levels and country offices. Further, norms and values around gender inequality within UNICEF hinder both programmatic outcomes and the creation of a more equitable workplace, as reflected in multiple staff survey results.

III. Responses to main findings

14. UNICEF agrees with the recommendations of the evaluation, particularly the need to develop a fourth Gender Action Plan for the period 2026–2029 that is aligned with the upcoming Strategic Plan. The next Strategic Plan should more clearly emphasize the critical links between the UNICEF mandate on children's rights, gender equality and the rights of girls and women, and reflect visible results for girls and women in key areas. The fourth Gender Action Plan should further these priorities and be complemented by specific operational guidance in key areas.

15. UNICEF also agrees with the evaluation's recommendation to deepen its focus on adolescent girls in the fourth Gender Action Plan, building on important advances such as the development and socialization of the UNICEF Adolescent Girls Programme Strategy, 2022–2025, and related guidance, as well as programmatic successes in addressing child marriage, increasing human papillomavirus vaccination uptake, and equipping girls with skills for the future, among others. A continued

emphasis on select areas for programmatic gender integration in the fourth Gender Action Plan will also be needed.

16. UNICEF agrees that to ensure the prioritization of gender and accountability to Gender Action Plan implementation, sector strategies must more explicitly incorporate gender at the outcomes level. Further, gender integration in humanitarian response programming must be significantly expanded to match the scale of funding in this area.

17. With consistent country and regional office leadership, UNICEF will advance time-bound targets for gender equality in its country programmes. Following rigorous gender analyses, offices will more consistently reflect prime targets for girls and women in their country programme documents aligned to the fourth Gender Action Plan and the Strategic Plan, and elaborate partnership and resource mobilization strategies, including for emergencies (such as Humanitarian Action for Children appeals). Select fourth Gender Action Plan priorities for adolescent girls will be pre-eminent among these, noting the widespread violence, abuse and discrimination this cohort confronts in all contexts. Regional management will amplify these efforts, with regular peer sharing and learning opportunities at Regional Management Team meetings and other governance mechanisms.

18. UNICEF must expand and improve its human and financial resources for gender equality. The “minimum standards” established by the internal Guidance on Staffing for Gender Action Plan Results and Institutional Standards in 2021 will continue to be monitored by established governance mechanisms, such as Regional Management Team meetings and the global Gender Equality Steering Committee. The current cadre of gender experts should be bolstered by additional gender expertise in key sectors and across country offices, with active support from relevant partners. Further, a tailored training package to enhance leadership support for advancing gender equality will be rolled out.

19. Meaningful partnerships with civil society organizations, especially women- and girl-led organizations and networks, must be prioritized to “move the needle” on gender equality, particularly in humanitarian settings. This may require easing bureaucratic restrictions on funding for such groups.

20. Despite funding constraints and resistance to gender equality, UNICEF is reaching more girls, women and their allies with more gender-equitable programming than ever. Yet much remains to be done. In 2025, the global community marks the thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. This evaluation will guide UNICEF in strengthening its leadership role in realizing the goals of the Beijing Platform and the Sustainable Development Goals, aligned with its mandate as the guardian of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

21. Elements of the proposed actions and next steps to address the recommendations of the evaluation are included in section IV.

IV. Key evaluation recommendations and UNICEF management response

Action	Responsible section(s)	Expected completion date	Actions taken and implementation stage: Not started; Under way; Completed; Cancelled	Supporting documents
<p>Evaluation recommendation 1: Update the vision for gender equality, refer to it consistently, and ensure alignment between the fourth Gender Action Plan and all policy frameworks across Goal Areas and in the humanitarian sector.</p> <p>In particular, UNICEF should consider the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update its vision on gender equality in the new Strategic Plan with a more explicit narrative placing gender equality and women's rights as central to the attainment of children's rights and explain how they are linked, while also referencing the relevant human rights frameworks. 2. Ensure alignment between the updated vision in the Gender Policy, the Gender Action Plan and all sectoral strategies, including on intersectionality. 3. Ensure alignment between the fourth Gender Action Plan programmatic priorities and sectoral strategies by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Discussing and defining gender sectoral priorities for the fourth Gender Action Plan with the Programme Group, under the supervision of the Programme Group Director, as well as individual Goal Areas leads and gender advisors. II. Revising UNICEF sectoral strategies (including health and climate change) to ensure alignment with Gender Action Plan priorities and ensuring that gender transformation is more deliberately embedded at the outcome level, with clear gender inputs. 4. Cross-reference the Gender Action Plan and the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action more explicitly. <p>Management response: Agree</p>				
1.1 The new Strategic Plan and accompanying Gender Action Plan 2026–2029 will explicitly articulate how children's rights and women's and girls' rights intersect. They will also outline priority gender-related outcomes to which UNICEF will contribute. This includes ensuring visibility of adolescent girls' rights and well-being in the narrative, targets and results frameworks.	Programme Group (PG) Gender and Human Rights sections, Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring (DAPM), Office of Emergency Programmes (EMOPS)	September 2025	Not started	New Strategic Plan and Gender Action Plan
1.2 The new Strategic Plan and fourth Gender Action Plan will set priority outcome-level gender-	PG, DAPM	September 2025	Not started	

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relevant targets and sub-targets, disaggregating results by sex, age and disability where relevant.				
1.3 The Strategic Plan and fourth Gender Action Plan will more closely articulate the links between gender-equality objectives and the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, especially for monitoring and reporting.	PG, EMOPS	September 2025	Not started	
<p>Evaluation recommendation 2: Develop a fourth Gender Action Plan that is more explicit on “how” to operationalize it at all levels and implement programmes for gender equality.</p> <p>A number of suggested actions are proposed across key themes for this recommendation, notably:</p> <p>2A. Gender Action Plan and contextualization to country context</p> <p>In drafting a new Gender Action Plan, UNICEF needs to consider:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The fourth Gender Action Plan could take the form of a guiding framework, outlining expected programmatic and institutional results on gender equality, followed by operationalization guidelines. In particular: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> It should include a menu of gender-transformative interventions that could be implemented under each Goal Area and for adolescent girls, in the next five years, and include clear outcome-level results (see below recommendation on monitoring and evaluation framework). This menu should be defined in consultation with the various sectors and based on effective interventions that have been tested by UNICEF and others. Sectoral tools and programming guidance on each of the interventions should be annexed to the fourth Gender Action Plan. It should also include precise operationalization guidelines and clear procedures (covering human resources); monitoring and evaluation; and gender results reporting mechanisms at country office and regional office levels (see details below). This should also include guidance on how to operationalize the inclusion of various cross-cutting issues (consider tackling inclusion through a gender lens and developing “two-in-one tools” to tackle gender and disability together, for example). Provide more precise operational guidance on the development of national Gender Action Plans, notably: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> National Gender Action Plans should be linked to Gender Programmatic Reviews (GPRs), which need to be conducted at the same time as country programme document (CPD) reviews, with hands-on support from Regional Gender Advisors. They should also have realistic and time-bound targets and intermediary steps that should be reflected in the CPD. 				

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<p>II. Country offices should carefully set the level of ambition in each Goal Area within the global menu and identify realistic priorities that align with their current portfolio, based on context, opportunities, capacities and ability to manage risks, as identified in the GPR and other gender analyses, with the support of the Regional Gender Advisor (fostering a “bottom-up approach” to defining priorities).</p> <p>III. They should reference the enactment of global human rights frameworks and national reviews, where they exist.</p> <p>3. Ensure that reporting on gender is a standing item in key country office and regional meetings (Country Management Team, Regional Management Team and Deputy Representatives and Operations Managers’ meetings) and is given more space in country office annual reports.</p> <p>Management response: Partially agree Experience has shown that mandating country offices to develop contextualized versions of global frameworks (e.g. national Gender Action Plans) can risk a perfunctory or checkbox exercise, which imposes process burdens without corresponding gains in programme effectiveness. For this reason, management proposes alternative solutions below to improve gender intentionality in country strategies, building on current practice and with a sharp focus on quality programmatic outcomes for girls and women.</p>				
2.1 Country offices will consistently reflect alignment with the Strategic Plan and Gender Action Plan in their CPD development, informed by timely and quality gender analyses. Country offices will regularly track progress to achieve CPD gender-related priorities, through governance mechanisms such as the Country Management Team and Programme Management Teams. To support this effort, DAPM and PG will regularly update and disseminate training and operational guidance related to CPD development reflecting gender-equality frameworks.	Country offices, PG Gender, DAPM (Programme Guidance Unit)	December 2025	Under way	Annual quality review of CPDs
2.2 Three programmatic areas for publication of tailored gender-transformative operational guidance will be prioritized (e.g.	PG	December 2026	Not started	Guidance documents

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nutrition, climate, immunization) to improve programming, including with reference to other cross-cutting issues such as disability.				
2.3 At least two impact evaluations on gender-transformative programming approaches in the next Strategic Plan cycle will be undertaken to support outcome-level change and organizational learning.	PG, Evaluation Office, regional offices	December 2026	Not started	Evaluation reports
2.4 Key gender priorities will be reflected in the revised emergency procedures (including preparedness).	EMOPS, PG Gender	December 2025	Under way	
2.5 Guided by regional offices, accompanying operational guidance on the fourth Gender Action Plan will be rolled out for specific aspects of the Plan, including simplified reporting guidance, and GPR/analysis guidance, including in humanitarian action, among others. UNICEF will be strategic, selective and field-focused in the development of such guidance to avoid overwhelming country offices with unnecessary reporting.	PG Gender	December 2026	Not started	Guidance documents
2B. Accountabilities on gender equality In operationalizing the Gender Action Plan, UNICEF should:				

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<p>1. Strengthen accountabilities to implement the Gender Action Plan among senior and middle management, across sectors and at all levels (headquarters, regional offices and country offices) by making the “minimum standards” established by the 2021 Staffing Guidance mandatory, including by:</p> <p>I. Update job descriptions and performance evaluation reports of Heads of Sections at headquarters, regional office and country office level, and for Country Representatives and Deputy Representatives so that they reflect roles and responsibilities on gender equality outlined in the Staffing Guidance.</p> <p>II. Ensure that Gender Specialists reporting to the Country Representative or Deputy Representative hold an equivalent hierarchical level as the Chiefs of Sections and attend Country Management Team meetings and/or Section Chiefs meetings – including in humanitarian contexts.</p> <p>III. Appoint Sectoral Gender Specialists embedded in sections who possess dual gender and sectoral technical expertise (“double hatting”) in all country offices (even those that have a Gender Specialist), to support the gender integration in sectoral workplans and attend Country Management Team meetings and/or Section Chief meetings.</p> <p>IV. Ensure that Gender Focal Points in country offices who do not qualify for a full-time Gender Specialist attend Country Management Team meetings and/or Section Chief meetings, and include Gender Focal Point duties in their performance plan; ensure that in those countries sectoral gender technical experts are also appointed.</p> <p>V. Ensure that the Gender Working Group, composed of staff from across sections and operations with sufficient seniority (mix of genders), and chaired by the Country Representative or Deputy Representatives, meets regularly, and develops and monitors the implementation of the country office gender action plan annexed to the national Gender Action Plan.</p> <p>2. Amend the existing rule to appoint a Gender Specialist in-country (based on budget) and consider making it based on merit and context (country offices demonstrating increasing gender results and portfolio or where the context warrants a specialist).</p> <p>Management response: Agree</p> <p>UNICEF will continue to monitor adherence to the Staffing Guidance through various regional and global management mechanisms, and improve incentives to country offices to apply these and other guidance. Country, regional and global sectoral proposals will seek to include reference to sectoral gender expertise as a priority gap to fill. Annual reports to the Executive Board will continue to update Member States on available gender expertise. Gender Specialists will consistently report to senior management (including Representatives and/or Deputy Representatives) and gender priorities will be regularly monitored at management meetings, such as Country Management Team and Regional Management Team meetings.</p>				
2.6 Gender Action Plan Staffing Guidance will be reviewed, including for applicability in emergencies, and regularly monitored through dedicated management mechanisms such as the Gender Equality Steering	PG Gender, Regional Gender Advisors, Regional Directors/Deputies, Representatives	December 2026	Under way	Gender Action Plan staffing guidance Global Gender Equality Steering Committee meeting minutes, Regional

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Committee and Regional Management Teams.				Management Team minutes
2.7 Support gender surge deployments to Level 3 and Level 2 emergencies in coordination with sector PG/Emergency Response Team deployments	EMOPS, PG	December 2026	Under way	Surge deployment records
2.8 Office Management Plans will reflect Gender Specialists and Focal Points as having dotted reporting lines to senior management (Representatives, Deputy Representatives, Section Chiefs, others) and will require their participation in senior decision-making and information-sharing mechanisms such as the Country Management Team and/or Section Chiefs meetings. These Plans will also reflect how gender issues (programmatic and institutional) will be managed and tracked, including through mechanisms such as Gender Working Groups.	Country office leadership (Representatives, Deputy Representatives), regional offices (Regional Directors and Division of People and Culture Regional Advisors with Regional Gender Advisor support)	December 2026	Not started	Office Management Plans Regional Management Team minutes
2.9 Prioritized gender equality issues aligned to the Gender Action Plan and CPDs regularly feature in Country Management Teams, Regional Management Teams, Global Management Teams, Emergency Management Team and Regional Emergency Management Team meetings. Gender working groups in country offices will have clear terms of reference that include	Country office leadership (Representatives, Deputy Representatives), Regional Gender Advisors, Chief of Staff/Office of the Executive Director, PG Gender	December 2026	Under way	Regional Management Team and Global Management Team minutes Annual Gender Action Plan standard reporting

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chairpersonship by a senior management representative, required participation by senior staff and clear articulation of roles and responsibilities.				
2C. Financing In financing the Gender Action Plan, UNICEF needs to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen the support to country office staff to use the existing expenditure tracking system more accurately. 2. Incentivize country office senior management to spend at least 15 per cent of unearmarked funding for gender-transformative work (this could be a criterion to qualify for the allocation of a Gender Specialist). 3. Ensure that the 15 per cent target of gender-transformative expenditure is reached more equitably across Goal Areas, particularly those with the highest budgets, such as health and education. 4. When assessing a country office's success in mobilizing funds for gender work, also emphasize achievements towards increasing levels of gender-integrated expenditure. 5. Track and report the regular resources dedicated to strengthening internal capacity on gender at headquarters. Management response: Agree Management notes that 2C.4, tracking gender-integrated expenditure, is already done. UNICEF also tracks the number of Gender Specialists in the organization and reports on this in the Gender Action Plan annual report to the Executive Board, as well as the United Nations System-wide Action Plan report. UNICEF recommends a focus on tracking sectoral, country, regional and global expenditure overall, building on existing reporting mechanisms.				
2.10 UNICEF will provide closer support to Gender Specialists and Focal Points, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialists, and Emergency Specialists in country offices, for more accurate and uniform expenditure tagging and reporting.	PG, DAPM, EMOPS (Monitoring Unit)	December 2026	Under way	
2.11 Global and regional decision-making for allocations of tagged gender funding (e.g. set-aside and core funding) will take into account country office adherence	PG Gender, regional offices	December 2026	Not started	

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to Gender Action Plan institutional standards, including financing for gender equality, as a key criterion in future allocations.				
2.12 Sectoral expenditures on gender-transformative and gender-integrated interventions will be tracked, with mid-year alerts shared with sector leads and country offices on Goal Areas that are off-track on the 15 per cent target.	PG Gender and Directors/Leads	December 2026	Under way	Strategic Plan analysis cube
<p>2D. Programming modalities</p> <p>1. Encourage country offices to develop programmes that are aligned with the CPD cycle and last approximately five years, and consider advocating with donors for longer-term funding, evidencing that this is a precondition to achieve transformative results.</p> <p>2. Align UNICEF programming processes to the “gold programming standards” recommended by ensuring that the gender change pathways are reflected in the theory of change developed for all UNICEF country programmes, as recommended by the new UNICEF country programme planning guidance and rights and results-based management training, to ensure that the incremental steps/milestones towards gender transformation are clear (and reflected in monitoring and evaluation frameworks), and risks and assumptions are identified. The participatory development of theories of change is also a key step to motivate and mobilize staff on gender transformation.</p> <p>Management response: Partially agree</p> <p>Alignment of programmes to CPD cycles is possible to a limited extent, as programme durations are also determined by national budgeting cycles, local context and donor cycles, among other factors. UNICEF must maintain flexibility in its programmatic priorities, for example to adapt to sudden-onset crises. As donor practices are an issue that affect gender equality and all other objectives of UNICEF, strategic dialogues will continue with donors in order to improve adherence to aid effectiveness principles.</p>				
2.13 Gender-transformation will be reflected in the development of the new Strategic Plan and its associated theory of change.	DAPM (Strategic Planning and Corporate Analysis Unit)	September 2025	Not started	Strategic Plan and theory of change
2.14 At the country office level, the mandatory theories of change developed as part of the country programme planning process will reflect the gender-related	DAPM (Programme Effectiveness Unit)	December 2026	Under way	CPDs

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deprivations, bottlenecks, interventions, assumptions and system-level change from a gender lens at every step.				
<p>2E. Monitoring and evaluation</p> <p>1. Ensure that impact- and outcome-level targets and core standard indicators across the Goal Areas better capture change at the outcome level. Some points for consideration include testing the following:</p> <p>I. Including the same indicator under each Goal Area that measures norms change (for example: “percentage of country programmes that demonstrate meaningful contribution to gender-equitable norms in [include relevant sector]”).</p> <p>II. Other examples of indicators that could be tested include percentage of people holding egalitarian beliefs about men and women. Indicators could also measure changes in legal and regulatory frameworks, and changes in access to adolescent-friendly services, among others.</p> <p>2. Considering using progress markers or shifting towards indicators that aim to capture contributions towards system change, instead of binary indicators.</p> <p>Management response: Partially agree</p> <p>Management will reflect critical norms change indicators, as agreed with sectors and thematic teams, in the new Strategic Plan and the fourth Gender Action Plan but will not necessarily repeat similar indicators.</p>				
2.15 The monitoring framework of the Gender Action Plan 2026–2029 will emphasize outcome-level changes and a minimal reporting burden for offices.	PG Gender, DAPM	September 2025	Not started	Gender Action Plan results framework
2.16 As part of the emphasis placed by UNICEF on outcome-level measurement, where possible, meaningful outcome-level indicators will be introduced into the Strategic Plan and Gender Action Plan 2026–2029 results framework, capturing changes in outcomes for girls and women at the individual and systems levels, and reflected in the core standard	DAPM (Monitoring Unit) and PG Gender	September 2025	Not started	Strategic Plan and Gender Action Plan results framework

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indicators, where this is the most relevant source of data. Core standard indicator changes in the current Strategic Plan cycle have already been finalized and deployed following the midterm review and will not be tweaked further.				
2F. Partnerships 1. Revise partnership procedures to support more partnerships with small civil society organizations, especially women's rights organizations and youth-led organizations. 2. Invest in the institutional capacities of civil society organization working on gender equality (youth networks, feminist organizations), recognizing their key role in the context of backlash against rights and providing them with core flexible funding. Management response: Agree				
2.17 Further simplify partnership modalities for grass-roots and locally registered and unregistered civil society organizations, informed by consultations, ensuring alignment with broader organizational policies and procedures, and building on existing streamlined approaches (e.g. simplified programme document, consortium models).	DAPM (Programme Implementation Unit), PG Gender	December 2025	Under way	Policy/procedure on small grants or other partnership modality
2.18 UNICEF will pioneer a dedicated funding mechanism for supporting girl-led organizations as part of its adolescent girl agenda in 2025 to inform global revision of guidance on partnership with registered and unregistered civil society organizations.	PG Gender	December 2026	Not started	

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2G. Gender analysis 1. Make GPRs mandatory in every CPD and conduct robust gender analysis of all sector portfolios to identify entry points to mainstream gender. Develop gender-specific programmes and reflect them in the CPD, with ambitions to be set depending on contexts, and using the Gender Action Plan guidance. 2. Deepen the existing guidance on gender analysis to include power/barrier analysis of opportunities and risks to embark in transformative work and use a “do no harm” approach. 3. Ensure that initial gender analyses/GPRs are reviewed on an ongoing basis to help adaptive programming and to update the risk matrix. Management response: Agree GPRs are recommended for all CPDs, and careful reviews of CPDs by regional and global teams are conducted for the quality of analysis. Quality varies and needs more consistency. UNICEF will simplify guidance and templates on gender analysis, including in humanitarian contexts, to make application more consistent.				
2.19 GPRs, already recommended in all country programme development processes, will be given prominence in CPD and country programme planning guidance, alongside the situation analysis and evidence synthesis, including the bottleneck analysis.	DAPM (Programme Guidance Unit)	December 2025	Under way	GPR toolkit
2.20 UNICEF will ensure that rapid gender analysis is consistently conducted in needs assessments led or coordinated by UNICEF (e.g. sectoral, cluster or inter-agency)	EMOPS, country office leadership	December 2026	Under way	Annual Gender Action Plan standard reporting
2.21 UNICEF will revise the GPR toolkit to better incorporate power issues, gender pushback, values and norms (of communities, programme staff, partners), and do no harm considerations in working with girls and women in particular. The toolkit will be	PG Gender	December 2026	Not started	GPR toolkit

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reviewed for simplification and ease of use.				
<p>Evaluation recommendation 3: Train, motivate and hold staff accountable for the operationalization of gender integration across all sectors.</p> <p>UNICEF should consider the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a gender-equality capacity strengthening plan that is based on an approach that “starts from where people are at”, building on the interest of the staff and motivating those who are not motivated, while increasing technical practical skills. This training should be utilization-focused, avoid using jargon, and engage staff in more discussions to help them identify entry points to integrate gender within their sections and build on those entry points incrementally. This would involve, among other activities: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Conducting a training programme over a long period of time, mixing approaches and favouring practical approaches using examples, case studies and peer learning. II. Developing training modules on gender per sector. III. Develop training modules on gender diversity. IV. Developing and/or disseminating wider practical sector guidance that goes beyond mainstreaming tips at the design and implementation phases, and share step-by-step guidance on activities/approaches that work in each sector. V. Encouraging peer learning across regions and countries, typically among those implementing in similar contexts (e.g. humanitarian settings); and encouraging mentoring and practical on-the-ground training and “shadowing”, especially in humanitarian settings. VI. Engaging staff in critical reflections on their own biases and values over several sessions. Consider adapting and testing tools like those developed in the female genital mutilation programme (gender-transformative accelerator and values clarification training), the Looking In, Looking Out tool or annual Gender Equality and Social Inclusion scans/audits to address issues such as unconscious bias, attitudes, etc. VII. Conducting regular appraisals of staff capacity and values on gender, based on a competency framework within each sector (not just certifying “yes/no” after training), to measure progress at all levels (leadership/programmes/General Service staff). VIII. Systematically assessing progress on gender competencies after a training. 2. Conducting face-to-face – as well as online – trainings on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. <p>Management response: Agree</p> <p>Management will design and roll out a robust training and learning agenda for staff on gender equality, building on feedback from current efforts. A special focus will include onboarding for senior leadership (Representatives, Deputy Representatives) and managers (such as Section Chiefs) and facilitating country office dialogues, especially with reference to gender gaps in Global Staff Surveys and Pulse Checks. See also section 4 for reference to competency framework revision.</p>				

<i>Action</i>	<i>Responsible section(s)</i>	<i>Expected completion date</i>	<i>Actions taken and implementation stage: Not started; Under way; Completed; Cancelled</i>	<i>Supporting documents</i>
3.1 UNICEF will develop and roll out a multifaceted learning agenda for staff, especially senior leaders (Representatives, Deputy Representatives, Section Chiefs), on the fourth Gender Action Plan, including gender transformative leadership	Division of People and Culture, PG Gender	December 2026	Under way	Senior leadership training content
3.2 UNICEF will elaborate an asynchronous online gender-equality training for all staff supplemented with quarterly webinars focused on themes identified by staff.	PG Gender, Division of People and Culture	December 2025	Under way	All-staff course
3.3 UNICEF will define a learning and capacity strengthening plan for gender in humanitarian action, including surge training, stretch assignments and online learning opportunities including training on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.	PG Gender, Regional Gender Advisors, EMOPS	December 2026	Under way	
3.4 UNICEF country offices will hold annual reflection sessions to explore unconscious biases, attitudes and practices that are discriminatory, providing a safe space for country office staff to share their experiences in the workplace. These sessions will be supported by trained facilitators and grounded in staff survey results.	Country office leadership, Division of People and Culture, PG Gender	December 2026	Not started	

<i>Action</i>	<i>Responsible section(s)</i>	<i>Expected completion date</i>	<i>Actions taken and implementation stage: Not started; Under way; Completed; Cancelled</i>	<i>Supporting documents</i>
<p>Evaluation recommendation 4: Review recruitment, parity and workplace well-being policies, procedures and practices in line with the UNICEF vision for gender equality.</p> <p>In follow-up, UNICEF should consider the following actions on human resources and workplace culture:</p> <p>4A. Human resources</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The existing practice consisting of recruiting male staff when the 70 per cent threshold is reached on female staff needs revisions due to adverse consequences. Provide clearer guidance to hiring managers. 2. In recruitment assessments and interviews, systematically integrate questions to assess if personal values of the staff are in line with the UNICEF vision for gender and a rights-based approach, through scenario-based discussions. <p>Management response: Agree</p>				
4.1 The Division of People and Culture will regularly share and clarify the gender parity guidance, in writing and at divisional network meetings, with continued reference to closing gender gaps in key sectors and teams.	Division of People and Culture	December 2026	Under way	
4.2 The revised leadership performance evaluation framework, vacancy announcements and interview guides will be updated to specific gender competencies and skills.	Division of People and Culture, PG Gender	December 2026	Not started	Competency framework
<p>4B. Workplace culture</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make it mandatory for Human Resources to systematically analyse gender gap surveys, with the support of the Gender Advisors and under the supervision of senior management, and take remedial actions as required (at headquarters, regional office and country office levels). This should be discussed in senior management team meetings and during a capacity-building session engaging staff in discussions on gender norms. 2. Support and promote the development of accessible and safe spaces for women, in all their diversity, to engage on issues that matter to them. 3. Human Resources to engage with the Gender Team, Gender Push (internal employee resource group focused on gender equality) and other women's groups to better capture factors affecting women's well-being within the workplace and their career progression (looking at 				

<i>Action</i>	<i>Responsible section(s)</i>	<i>Expected completion date</i>	<i>Actions taken and implementation stage: Not started; Under way; Completed; Cancelled</i>	<i>Supporting documents</i>
<p>issues faced by pregnant women, single women with children, women in emergency contexts, and work-life balance, among others), with a view to develop human resources measures/an action plan to respond to women's challenges.</p> <p>4. Ensure that accessible reporting mechanisms for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse are in place and known by the staff in each UNICEF office, at all levels.</p> <p>5. Improve the resolution of sexual exploitation and abuse cases by the UNICEF Office of Internal Audit and Investigations, including by speeding up the management of cases.</p> <p>6. Design and roll out initiatives and trainings that tackle organizational and individual unconscious biases, attitudes and values for staff at all levels, including management and leadership (see section on capacity-building above).</p> <p>Management response: Agree</p>				
4.3 Gender in workplace issues, including those raised in employee resource groups (such as Gender Push), Global Staff Surveys and Pulse Checks will be consistently integrated in training for country office leadership (Representatives, Deputy Representatives) and Division of People and Culture focal points, including through (a) senior leader dialogues; (b) senior staff orientations; (c) Deputy Representative leadership initiatives; and (d) the optional module of the Managing People with Purpose programme, among others.	Division of People and Culture, PG Gender	December 2026	Under way	
4.4 Sexual harassment reporting and follow-up mechanisms will be reviewed, including for barriers to reporting, victim support and staff communications and awareness. Following this review, an action plan will be shared with the Global Management Team.	Division of People and Culture, Office of Internal Audit and Investigations	December 2026	Under way	

V. Draft decision

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the evaluation of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, its summary ([E/ICEF/2025/3](#)) and its management response ([E/ICEF/2025/4](#));
 2. *Also takes note* of the evaluation of the UNICEF Gender Policy and Gender Action Plans, its summary ([E/ICEF/2025/5](#)) and its management response ([E/ICEF/2025/6](#)).
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