



## Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General  
14 May 2020

Original: English

**For decision**

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### United Nations Children's Fund

Executive Board

**Annual session 2020**

29 June–2 July 2020

Item 8 of the provisional agenda\*

### Management response to the evaluation report

### Evaluation of the UNICEF Gender Action Plan

#### I. Overview

1. An independent evaluation was carried out in 2019 to assess the quality, implementation and results of two successive UNICEF Gender Action Plans during the period 2014–2019. UNICEF last evaluated its 1994 gender policy in 2008. Since then, it has developed a revised gender policy (2010); two successive Gender Action Plans (2014–2017 and 2018–2021), aligned to the two Strategic Plans for the same periods; and issued major reports on workplace gender discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment and abuse of authority and on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (2018). Both Gender Action Plans are aimed at addressing gender equality in UNICEF programmes as well as in institutional systems. Gender equality is a strategic priority for UNICEF and, every year, progress reports are submitted to the Executive Board.

2. Senior management and staff across the organization have responded positively to both the process and the outcomes of the 2019 evaluation, highlighting the extensive consultations with country, regional and headquarters teams and the in-depth review of the available documentation and data. Overall, the quantity and quality of evidence collected was found to be substantial and responsive to the evaluation's terms of reference.

3. The evaluation commends UNICEF on the significant progress made to achieve results as articulated by the Gender Action Plans. Both Plans helped to build important foundations for the work of UNICEF on gender equality. They were well aligned to normative frameworks and adopted a pragmatic vision for gender equality that was coherent with the UNICEF operating model. Programmatically, there have been marked gains, particularly evident in such areas as quality maternal care, increasing access to education for girls, addressing gender-based violence and dignified

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\* [E/ICEF/2020/6](#).

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

menstrual health and hygiene. Stronger global and national partnerships, the increasing use of multisectoral approaches and an emphasis on using innovation as a strategy to accelerate results have been critical to success. There has also been substantial progress on targets for adolescent girls, including around efforts to reduce child marriage and female genital mutilation, to accelerate human papillomavirus vaccination and to empower girls with skills for the future.

4. Institutionally, the Gender Action Plans helped to build the UNICEF gender architecture and systems from a limited base, and boosted investment in broader gender capacity development across the organization. The global partnership for learning with George Washington University — the GenderPro platform — is a first-ever accredited course for practitioners. To strengthen gender-responsive programming, UNICEF has developed such tools as the gender programmatic review and a gender action plan institutional standard to track gender integration in country programme documents. Regular resources for gender expertise, especially at the regional levels, supported by leadership commitment, helped to shift institutional thinking overall from “why” gender equality to “how” to achieve it.

5. The Gender Action Plans also succeeded in securing greater resources for gender programming, leading to gender-related expenditure approaching the 15 per cent benchmark recommended by the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. UNICEF consistently improved its performance on the System-wide Action Plan, reflecting the organization’s commitment to gender equality. UNICEF embraced independent reviews of its corporate policies and procedures to promote a gender-equitable workplace. Following an Economic Dividends for Gender Equality (EDGE) certification process in 2018, UNICEF developed an action plan to bridge gender gaps in the workforce and to promote a gender-responsive workplace culture. The global campaign to make flexible working arrangements a reality for UNICEF staff was one of the most tangible results of the EDGE action plan, contributing to a gender-responsive work culture within the organization.

6. The evaluation, however, also calls for bolder actions going forward. It recommends a more ambitious future gender policy and implementation/action plan, in keeping with the organization’s programmatic reach, impact and global mandate for women’s and children’s rights. It offers recommendations for improved programmatic action and institutional adjustments, particularly in terms of strengthening leadership, capacity and accountability to ensure that gender equality is fully institutionally owned.

7. Of the eight programming and policy recommendations offered (including an overarching one), UNICEF fully agrees with all but one recommendation. UNICEF agrees especially with the need for: (a) a more “transformative” approach to the UNICEF vision for gender programming to reflect evolving gender realities, particularly concerning gender and social norms; (b) more deliberate gender integration efforts in humanitarian response; (c) expanding innovative solutions to bolster areas in which gender results are lagging in gender mainstreaming; and (d) institutional reforms that position UNICEF as a leading agency for gender equality in the workplace as well as in its programmatic work for children and women. To respond will mean intensifying existing UNICEF efforts to improve knowledge, capacity and accountability to deliver on gender results in the field, while also bolstering leadership at all levels. It will also mean securing enough resources (both human and financial) to achieve gender-equality targets reflected in the current Gender Action Plan and Strategic Plan, as well as the next.

8. The evaluation recommends less focus on targeted gender programming and greater investments in gender mainstreaming. While UNICEF agrees that greater

investment in mainstreaming is imperative, programming in the targeted priority areas for adolescent girls in both Gender Action Plans has yielded substantial results, with an important bearing on progress towards mainstreaming overall. Furthermore, there is still limited evidence available about what definitively works in gender mainstreaming. Rather than an either/or approach, UNICEF proposes to continue investing in targeted gender equality programming, while simultaneously ensuring that good practices and lessons learned in gender mainstreaming are documented so that they can be replicated at scale through the new UNICEF gender policy and implementation plan.

9. Several of the evaluation's recommendations focus on improving internal accountability mechanisms. Given the considerable investment made by UNICEF, the response to the evaluation will prioritize actions to advance programming, with an emphasis on strengthening regional and country-level accountability, resourcing and capacity for transformative initiatives.

10. The analysis and recommendations provided by the evaluation will inform two important institutional processes taking place in 2020: the midterm review of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021 and the development of the next iteration of the UNICEF gender equality framework. Already, UNICEF has taken action to implement some of the recommendations as part of the midterm review. In the remaining period of the Strategic Plan, UNICEF will double down on investment in the targeted priorities of the current Gender Action Plan, while strengthening leadership, accountability and capacity to mainstream gender more deliberately across key sectors (education, health, nutrition and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for All). Finally, as 2020 will see the global community assess 25 years of progress since the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace, the evaluation will inform institutional thinking about how best to propel UNICEF to the next level, in terms of its global responsibilities for gender equality and its role within the global community as a gender equality champion and the concrete and necessary actions to which it must commit, commensurate with its status as guardian of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

11. The present management response is informed by consultations with the Global Management Team, deputy regional directors and regional offices, the global and programme gender action plan steering committees and Member States held between December 2019 and February 2020. UNICEF concurs with the eight overarching recommendations of the evaluation.

12. Elements of the proposed actions and next steps to address the recommendations are provided in section I.

13. Elements of a decision for consideration by the Executive Board are provided in section II.

## I. Key evaluation recommendations and UNICEF management response

<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><b>Evaluation overarching recommendation</b></p> <p>Upscale the UNICEF aspiration of its vision for gender equality, and proactively affirm its commitment as a global “gender equality champion” working in partnership with United Nations, national and other partners.</p> <p>The overarching recommendation of the evaluation is to significantly upscale the ambition and aspiration of the UNICEF vision for gender equality, commensurate with its mandate and status as the world’s defender of child rights. Doing so will greatly improve the scope of UNICEF for achieving gender equality results, creating substantive changes in the lives of children and adults around the world.</p> <p><b>Management response: Agree</b></p> <p>Building on the UNICEF Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (2010), UNICEF will develop a new gender policy which will outline a bold vision for the organization’s gender equality work over the next 10 years, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, the Beijing Platform for Action and the United Nations development system reforms. This will expand on progress made (including in areas noted in the evaluation), but also reflect current gender realities and the evolving gender equality landscape today. The gender policy will be accompanied by a Gender Action Plan – a time-bound implementation blueprint - developed in tandem with the next UNICEF Strategic Plan for 2022–2025. The new vision articulated in this policy is ultimately aimed at achieving wide-ranging, large-scale positive outcomes for women and girls as well as informing the way UNICEF conducts business at home as part of the global agenda to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and beyond. Actions will take a values-based approach to gender equality as fundamental to child rights, so that organizational transformation, and not just adaptation, will be at the core of the new policy and action plan. Throughout, UNICEF will emphasize actions to strengthen gender integration in all its inter-agency partnerships, aligned with United Nations development system reform, and expand efforts to improve its visibility and fortify its identity as a global champion for gender equality.</p>				
<p><b>Action 0.1</b></p> <p>Develop a new gender policy (replacing the existing 2010 policy), which will set the UNICEF vision for gender equality for the Decade for Action on the Sustainable Development Goals. The transformational vision in the new policy will be embedded across all future UNICEF strategic plans.</p>	<p>Gender Section on behalf of the Office of the Executive Director; Deputy Executive Director, Programmes; Deputy Executive Director,</p>	<p>June 2021</p>	<p>Not started</p>	<p>N/A</p>

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To implement the policy, a time-bound gender action plan will be developed, aligned to the next strategic plan, and reported on annually to the Executive Board. (Refer to recommendation 1, action 1.2 and 1.3).	Management; Programme Division			
<p><b>Action 0.2</b></p> <p>Strengthen gender integration in UNICEF inter-agency partnerships, aligned with United Nations development system reform at headquarters, regional and country levels. Specifically, UNICEF will:</p> <p>0.2 (a) Share concrete recommendations with the Development Coordination Office and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to strengthen gender analysis in United Nations country teams (UNCTs) and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs) in the context of United Nations reforms</p> <p>0.2 (b) Disseminate UNCT scorecards for the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women to UNICEF country offices to compliance at the country level</p> <p>0.2 (c) Provide guidance to country offices to integrate gender analysis in UNSDCFs.</p>	Gender Section; Public Partnerships Division; Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring	December 2020	Under way	N/A

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<p><b>Action 0.3</b></p> <p>Demonstrate UNICEF leadership on gender equality through visible campaigns for gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment, engaging UNICEF staff at all levels, as well as partners.</p>	<p>Gender Section; Division of Communication; Public Partnerships Division</p>	<p>December 2020</p>	<p>Under way</p>	<p>UNICEF Generation Equality Communications Strategy</p>
<p><b>Evaluation recommendation 1: Prepare a revised corporate policy for implementation 2022–2025</b></p> <p>The Gender Action Plan instruments have served a valuable purpose but are no longer adequately broad or high-level for a changing global environment. Rather than 'Gender Action Plan 3', the institutional framework should be replaced with a refreshed gender policy and associated implementation plan. It is recommended that UNICEF refresh the 2010 gender policy, commensurate with the status of UNICEF as the world's children's agency, the Beijing Declaration and the Sustainable Development Goals. The policy should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Be based on a comprehensive and broad-based consultation process;</li> <li>(b) Firmly define the UNICEF position on gender equality within the inter-agency system;</li> <li>(c) Contain a clear statement of aspiration, which positions gender equality centrally to the realization of child rights;</li> <li>(d) Define the high-level gender equality results to which UNICEF will contribute, allied the Sustainable Development Goals and the Beijing Declaration;</li> <li>(e) Encompass three pillars of action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Gender equality results – normative and programmatic, covering the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding continuum;</li> <li>(ii) The UNICEF workplace, including gender parity in staffing and organizational culture;</li> <li>(iii) Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse/sexual harassment and abuse, internally and externally;</li> </ul> </li> <li>(f) Support the achievement of results through a clear statement of planned institutional change to achieve results (see recommendation 2)</li> </ul> <p>Elements to include in the policy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Clear concepts and definitions that reflect current country gender realities;</li> <li>(b) A theory of change which links institutional results to transformative gender equality results;</li> </ul>				

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<p>(c) Defined accountabilities from UNICEF leadership downward (see recommendation 6);</p> <p>(d) A robust results framework including clear, time-bound and measurable gender equality targets, applicable in diverse operating contexts and geared to upstream work as well as service delivery;</p> <p>(e) A clear strategy for execution, centred on UNICEF country and regional offices;</p> <p>(f) A learning strategy for knowledge generation, distillation and sharing;</p> <p>(g) A commitment to periodic review, e.g., every four years.</p> <p><b>Management response: Agree</b></p> <p>The recommendations are timely and aligned with institutional assessment processes already taking place in 2020, as well as with both the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and the Secretary-General’s call for a Decade of Action on the Sustainable Development Goals. The next two years of the current Gender Action Plan will allow for increased learning and help to inform the development of the new gender policy and time-bound implementation plan (“action plan”). The following actions are intended to ensure that: (a) the entire strategic process benefits from consistent and systematic gender expertise internally and externally through a wide consultation process; (b) the new policy and action plan build upon current gains and knowledge globally about what works to promote gender equality in both programming and the workplace; and (c) resources are available for implementation, both in the short term during development of the new policy and action plan, and in terms of the sustainability of gender capacity and financing for future implementation.</p>				
<p><b>Action 1.1</b></p> <p>Establish a special advisory group to inform the development of the new UNICEF gender policy and gender action plan, including the results framework of the Strategic Plan, and to act as an advisory group to the global UNICEF Gender Equality steering committee.</p>	<p>Gender Section, UNICEF headquarters; Office of the Executive Director; Programme Division, with support from all headquarters divisions; Senior Coordinator, Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Workplace Abuse;</p>	<p>December 2020</p>	<p>Under way</p>	<p>Terms of reference for a special advisory group drafted</p>

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	Principal Adviser, Organizational Culture; regional and country offices			
<p><b>Action 1.2</b></p> <p>Building on the 2010 gender policy, develop a new gender policy with a 10-year vision and a clear theory of change. The new policy will reflect the key recommendations of the evaluation, including:</p> <p>(a) A clear statement of aspiration that positions gender equality centrally to the realization of children’s and women’s rights;</p> <p>(b) Three pillars of action:</p> <p>(i) Gender equality results, both normative and programmatic, covering the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding continuum;</p> <p>(ii) A gender-responsive workplace, including gender parity in staffing and an enabling, inclusive organizational culture;</p> <p>(iii) Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations staff and related personnel and of sexual harassment and abuse in the workplace, recognizing that sexual exploitation and abuse/sexual harassment are rooted in unequal power relations, abuse of power and gender bias.</p>	Gender Section, UNICEF headquarters, and Programme Division, with support from all headquarters divisions; Senior Coordinator, Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Workplace Abuse; Principal Adviser, Organizational Culture; Regional and country offices	September 2021	Under way	Timeline and process for the development of the gender policy and gender action plan in place.

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<p><b>Action 1.3</b></p> <p>Develop a time-bound gender action plan, with clear targets and gender results, aligned with the next UNICEF strategic plan, with annual reporting to the Executive Board on the operationalization of the new gender policy.</p>	<p>Gender Section, UNICEF headquarters, and Programme Division, with support from all headquarters divisions and regional and country offices</p>	<p>September 2021</p>	<p>Not started</p>	
<p><b>Action 1.4</b></p> <p>Continue to invest regular resources to fund the gender architecture and provide the coordination required to facilitate the development and implementation of the gender policy and the gender action plan. For sustainable funding, however, UNICEF will also work to institutionalize gender financing into other resource streams. Specifically, UNICEF commits to: (a) reaching the 15 per cent benchmark on gender-targeted expenditure; (b) making a concerted effort to increase the gender thematic fund, asking donors for increased, dedicated gender resources and leveraging other thematic fund pools; (c) leveraging dedicated funds for gender from sectoral thematic funds; and (d) including a gender-specific line item in the Humanitarian Action for Children appeals.</p>	<p>Office of the Executive Director</p>	<p>December 2020</p>	<p>Not started</p>	
<p><b>Evaluation recommendation 2: Support results by continuing institutional strengthening gains</b></p> <p>The Gender Action Plan built many valuable systems to help UNICEF identify and track its progress on institutional strengthening. However,</p>				

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<p>several of these would benefit from revision to ensure “fitness for the future”. UNICEF should support the realization of the policy through a phased institutional strengthening process, reflected in a comprehensive implementation plan. The plan should clearly link institutional change to the gender equality results of the policy including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Continued development of the gender architecture (see recommendation 5);</li> <li>(b) Refreshed key performance indicators for a stronger emphasis on results and to reward inter-agency partnerships;</li> <li>(c) A review of current corporate data systems for accuracy and validity;</li> <li>(d) Improved guidelines for the gender equality marker and gender tags, including a revised methodology for calculating aggregate-level gender-targeted expenditure and a requirement for quality assurance checks.</li> </ul> <p><b>Management response: Agree</b></p> <p>Building on work already under way, UNICEF is committed to strengthening its institutional monitoring systems to support programmatic work on gender equality. Intended actions will focus on strengthening corporate monitoring systems through more-comprehensive review to improve the accuracy and validity of results. Expanding on important capacity-building efforts from previous years, UNICEF will further enhance: (a) dedicated capacity-building efforts of country-level staff to better use these monitoring systems; and (b) a more deliberate accountability process for implementation that incorporates clear regional and country-level responsibility for results, improved feedback loops and opportunities for shared learning across all organizational levels. Wherever possible, guidance on gender equality monitoring and reporting will be integrated into broader system-wide guidance for efforts to be field-focused and support accountability at all levels. The need for a gender audit will also be reviewed. This is an important element in improving the performance of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.</p>				
<p><b>Action 2.1</b></p> <p>Review current corporate monitoring data systems to improve the accuracy and validity of gender results and develop specific guidance on improving feedback loops and usage by UNICEF country offices. This review will include the following tasks:</p> <p>2.1 (a) Review Results Assessment Module (RAM) standard indicators to assess the impact of gender-tagging coding on the</p>	<p>Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring; Gender Section, UNICEF headquarters; InSight team; regional offices</p>	<p>December 2020</p>	<p>Under way</p>	<p>The first part of the gender dashboard has been completed.</p>

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<p>representation of programmes and a mapping of non-standard indicators either to create missing standard indicators or retag appropriately;</p> <p>2.1 (b) Complete the ongoing update of the global gender dashboard to display standard indicators;</p> <p>2.1 (c) Undertake the capacity development of staff on RAM reporting and the sectoral application of gender analysis tools through structured outreach and training sessions.</p>				
<p><b>Action 2.2</b></p> <p>Review and undertake improvements in the calculation of gender expenditures and the guidelines for the gender equality marker and gender tags, including investing in an improved methodology for calculating aggregate gender-targeted expenditure and quality-assurance checks. Undertake the capacity-building of regional and country-office staff on the calculation of gender expenditures.</p>	<p>Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring; InSight team; Gender Section, UNICEF headquarters</p>	<p>December 2020</p>	<p>Not started</p>	
<p><b>Action 2.3</b></p> <p>Strengthen corporate accountability for monitoring, reporting and following up on gender equality results in programming and in the workplace, through the following measures:</p>	<p>Office of the Executive Director; Programme Division, and regional offices, with support from the Gender Section, UNICEF headquarters</p>	<p>December 2020</p>	<p>Not started</p>	

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<p>2.3 (a) Create a gender equality steering committee at the regional level and include a standing agenda item in Regional Management Team meetings. This will replicate the global UNICEF gender equality steering committee, which will take place in conjunction with all Global Management Team meetings biannually. A template for future gender equality sessions within global and regional management teams will be developed, with a focus on peer learning, sharing and results-orientation for more gender-transformative programmes and initiatives.</p> <p>2.3 (b) Review regional and country management scorecards to explore the inclusion of selected gender key performance indicators.</p>				
<p><b>Action 2.4</b></p> <p>Review the need for an organizational gender audit during the next work planning exercise for the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations.</p>	Office of Internal Audit and Investigation	September 2020	Not started	
<p><b>Evaluation recommendation 3: Improve gender equality integration in headquarters and multisectoral programming</b></p> <p>The targeted priorities of the Gender Action Plans have delivered some valuable issue-based results but have also consumed energy from core programming. Within the new policy framework, mainstreaming gender and undertaking empowerment-focused initiatives should be prioritized. For the new gender policy, integrate gender, including transformative initiatives that would move UNICEF as a key gender</p>				

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<p>equality ally, into core programming areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articulate within the policy an approach of integration of gender equality within core humanitarian and development programming, complemented by transformative initiatives, particularly for women and girls;</li> <li>• Promote the use of multisectoral programming, particularly through life-cycle approaches;</li> <li>• Prioritize the incentivization and capacity strengthening of external partners, from a transformative perspective;</li> <li>• Require (and check the conduct of) gender equality analysis for all programmatic designs at headquarters level;</li> <li>• Require the integration of gender equality into headquarters programme results frameworks and annual results reporting, as well as evaluations and programme cooperation agreements.</li> </ul> <p><b>Management response: Partially agree</b></p> <p>While we agree that greater investment in gender mainstreaming is crucial, it need not come at the expense of the continued prioritization of targeted areas in which substantial progress on gender results has been made. Over the next two years, in the remaining implementation period of the Strategic Plan and the current Gender Action Plan, UNICEF will strengthen its work in integrated programming, with deliberate actions to monitor progress across sectors and embed gender expertise in programming and advocacy efforts. Regional-level mechanisms to promote and track shared learning and multisectoral programming will be established and greater attention will be paid to investing in integrating gender equality more systematically in UNICEF humanitarian response through the revised Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action. Guidelines on gender integration in evaluations will also be implemented.</p>				
<p><b>Action 3.1</b></p> <p>In the remaining implementation period of the Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, ensure that the biannual meetings of the Gender Action Plan Programme Division steering committee at the global and regional levels, in conjunction with the mid-year and annual reviews, monitor progress against integrated results, including by identifying strategies for acceleration.</p>	<p>Programme Division, with support from Gender Section, UNICEF headquarters</p>	<p>December 2020</p>	<p>Under way</p>	<p>Summary report from the Gender Action Plan Programme Division steering committee consultation on integrated programming (February 2020)</p>

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<p><b>Action 3.2</b></p> <p>Articulate a clear vision and targets for gender-equality integration for humanitarian action in the revised Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action and develop a plan for raising awareness and implementation of them.</p>	<p>Office of Emergency Operations; Climate, Environment, Resilience and Peacebuilding Team; Gender Section, UNICEF headquarters</p>	<p>December 2020</p>	<p>Under way</p>	<p>Revised Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action include both targeted and integrated benchmarks for gender equality.</p>
<p><b>Action 3.3</b></p> <p>See also action 2.3 (a): Establish a regional-level steering committee to mirror the global Programme Division Gender Action Plan steering committee, comprising regional advisers, with a focus on learning and enhancing multisectoral gender programming.</p>	<p>Regional offices, with support from Gender Section, UNICEF headquarters, and Programme Division</p>	<p>September 2020</p>	<p>Not started</p>	
<p><b>Action 3.4</b></p> <p>Develop a checklist and guidance to facilitate the revision of partnership documents (humanitarian and regular programme documents, short-term funding agreements and partner progress reports) from a gender-equality lens.</p>	<p>Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring with support from Gender Section, UNICEF headquarters</p>	<p>December 2020</p>	<p>Not started</p>	
<p><b>Evaluation recommendation 4: Embed gender equality into country and regional planning and programming</b></p> <p>Ensuring that gender equality is addressed at field level requires defining what gender equality means to UNICEF in the context of the operating environment, what results are sought over a defined period and how these will be achieved. Some UNICEF country offices have already embarked on this journey, but for others it requires urgent attention. The evaluation recommends that UNICEF require all country and regional offices to integrate gender within their own country/regional programme documents, geared to gender realities on the ground;</p>				

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<p>and the priorities of the inter-agency system as reflected in UNSDCF's. This approach will help to define the role of UNICEF in the inter-agency system and allow many offices to capture work that is being undertaken currently, but which is not being reported under the Gender Action Plan.</p> <p><b>Management response: Agree</b></p> <p>Clearer requirements for gender analysis and integration in programming design, execution and monitoring will be articulated and more deliberately applied. Efforts will be aligned to existing tools and guidance, which are being systematized to be made more accessible for country offices. UNICEF will also use a best practice/modelling approach to share learning on what is working, by supporting “champion” countries to showcase their programming strategies and results.</p>				
<p><b>Action 4.1</b></p> <p>Develop a game plan for countries to undertake gender programmatic reviews as part of their country programme document (CPD) development and/or review processes, including during strategic moments of review and reflection. This includes identifying countries as “gender equality champions” within UNICEF, to be role models for programmatic gender results at scale. The lessons learned from these countries will be used to inform the development of the new gender policy and the next Gender Action Plan (refer to recommendation 1).</p>	<p>Gender Section, UNICEF headquarters, with regional offices</p>	<p>September 2020</p>	<p>Not started</p>	
<p><b>Action 4.2</b></p> <p>Clearly define UNICEF commitments to gender equality in the existing gender analysis tools being integrated into the updated internal online version of the UNICEF programme, planning and procedures manual</p>	<p>Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring and Gender Section, UNICEF headquarters</p>	<p>June 2020</p>	<p>Under way</p>	<p>PPPX site</p>

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(PPPX) which is also aligned to inter-agency cooperation frameworks, e.g., on data collection.				
<p><b>Action 4.3</b></p> <p>Ensure that the revised UNICEF procedure for CPDs and programme strategy notes articulates clear requirements for gender analysis and integration in programme design and monitoring and results frameworks.</p>	<p>Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring and Gender Section, UNICEF headquarters</p>	<p>December 2020</p>	<p>Not started</p>	
<p><b>Evaluation recommendation 5: ‘Bring gender home’: build gender capacities from a values-based approach</b></p> <p>The patchy awareness of gender equality concerns across UNICEF indicates a broad-based approach to capacity strengthening. Gender equality is an inescapably values-based concern which forms an essential foundation from which to build technical capacities and realize gender equality results. Undertake broad-based training across UNICEF to ensure that gender equality awareness and technical competence reaches all corners of the UNICEF “house”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a strategy for mandatory and targeted training for all staff, including at the D1 and D2 levels, on gender from a “rights and values” perspective rather than a “corporate compliance” perspective;</li> <li>• Build gender equality into induction courses for all new staff, as well as leadership and management courses;</li> <li>• Enforce the Gender Action Plan requirement of a gender specialist requirement for country programme budgets of more than \$20 million;</li> <li>• Professionalize the gender focal point network: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Require each UNICEF headquarters division and unit, regional office and country office to have an appropriately sized team of gender focal points working to corporately developed terms of reference;</li> <li>○ Require all gender focal points to undertake relevant GenderPro training;</li> <li>○ Allocate realistic time in workplans for gender focal points to undertake gender equality-focused activities</li> <li>○ Add gender responsibilities to gender focal points’ performance evaluation reviews and learning objectives;</li> <li>○ Require all country-level gender focal point networks to report to the deputy representative;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				

<i>Action</i>	<i>Responsible section(s)</i>	<i>Expected completion date</i>	<i>Actions taken and implementation stage:</i> <i>Not started</i> <i>Under way</i> <i>Completed</i> <i>Cancelled</i>	<i>Supporting documents</i>
<p>• Seek to work with other United Nations partners, particularly UN-Women, to build the gender equality capacity of partners, particularly Governments.</p> <p><b>Management response: Agree</b></p> <p>UNICEF has invested significantly in building a base gender architecture, resulting in a fully staffed team of gender specialists at headquarters and regional offices, and a growing cohort of sectoral and country-level specialists. The task now is to robustly secure and expand on this foundation. Further to a 2020 comprehensive strategic review of UNICEF-supported capacity development initiatives for gender equality, UNICEF will invest more consistently in dedicated capacity-development efforts for all staff, including leaders and managers, so that gender becomes “everybody’s business”. These actions will build on capacity development efforts already under way through GenderPro, the UNICEF gender-capacity and credentialing training programme. UNICEF will also promote the same at the United Nations country-team level, in tandem with UN-Women and the Development Coordination Office. More attention to ensure adherence to staffing guidelines for gender focal points will also be prioritized by managers, especially at the regional levels.</p>				
<p><b>Action 5.1</b></p> <p>Invest in a range of capacity-development initiatives tailored to different levels of staff, including:</p> <p>(a) Integrating gender-equality commitments in the induction processes for all UNICEF staff, including the revised Programme Planning Process training modules;</p> <p>(b) Incorporating specialized modules on gender equality and diversity into leadership trainings for country representatives and deputy representatives;</p> <p>(c) Integrating modules on gender and diversity in flagship learning programmes (such as the Management Master Class for staff at NO-C level and above, up to the Assistant Secretary-General level, and</p>	<p>Division of Human Resources; Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring; Gender Section, UNICEF headquarters</p>	<p>December 2020</p>	<p>Under way</p>	<p>PPPX outline</p> <p>UNICEF and the George Washington University Global Women’s Institute GenderPro training credentialing programme</p>

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<p>IMPACT+ skills-building programme for national staff);</p> <p>(d) Continuing to invest in specialized trainings for gender focal points and sectoral experts (such as through GenderPro) in partnership with research and learning institutes;</p> <p>(e) Fully integrating gender equality and human rights-based approaches into various results-based management trainings.</p>				
<p><b>Action 5.2</b></p> <p>Recirculate the Gender Staffing Guidance, which specifies roles and responsibilities for gender focal points.</p>	<p>Office of the Executive Director, with support from Gender Section, UNICEF headquarters</p>	<p>September 2020</p>	<p>Under way</p>	<p>Gender Staffing Guidance</p>
<p><b>Action 5.3</b></p> <p>Regional offices to follow up regularly with country offices to monitor adherence to gender staffing guidance, especially in CPDs and programme and budget reviews.</p>	<p>Regional offices (senior management) and country offices</p>	<p>December 2020</p>	<p>Not started</p>	
<p><b>Action 5.4</b></p> <p>Provide recommendations to Development Coordination Office and UN-Women for gender-equality principles, values and commitments to be included in trainings for resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators, including recommendations for strengthening United Nations country team</p>	<p>Public Partnerships Division and Gender Section, UNICEF headquarters</p>	<p>December 2020</p>	<p>Not started</p>	

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accountabilities on gender mainstreaming.				
<p><b>Action 5.5</b></p> <p>Develop a dedicated strategy for advancing female talent and leadership in UNICEF, building on current good-practice models in countries and regions, to be disseminated by senior leadership to regional and country offices.</p>	<p>Division of Human Resources and Principal Adviser, Organizational Culture</p>	<p>December 2020</p>	<p>Under way</p>	<p>Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office Female Talent Initiative</p>
<p><b>Evaluation recommendation 6: Ensure leadership and embed accountabilities for ownership</b></p> <p>Embedding gender institutionally requires clear and committed leadership to inspire staff; a directive approach; and to be supported by comprehensive accountability at all levels. The evaluation recommends that leadership accountability is clearly articulated and manifested in committed accountabilities at all levels.</p> <p><b>Management response: Agree</b></p> <p>The revised UNICEF Competency Framework launched in 2020 reflects commitments to gender equality applicable to all staff. Actions emphasize more-empowered leadership, promoting collective accountability — by managers and staff — for these gender-equality commitments, including through performance evaluation reviews, year-end appraisals, updated guidance for hiring managers and recognition for behavioural competence.</p>				
<p><b>Action 6.1</b></p> <p>Issue at least two leadership statements annually on the UNICEF mandate and commitments to gender equality, with specific reference to corporate accountabilities in the current Gender Action Plan (and subsequent policy frameworks).</p>	<p>Office of the Executive Director; Division of Communication; Division of Human Resources, with support from the Gender Section, UNICEF headquarters</p>	<p>December 2020</p>	<p>Under way</p>	

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<p><b>Action 6.2</b></p> <p>6.2 (a) Ensure that “champion” countries for gender equality and all sections/units within the Programme Division include specific commitments to gender equality in manager and staff performance evaluation reviews;</p> <p>6.2 (b) Ensure that content on addressing implicit gender bias in performance management is included in the different trainings and publications and in the Division of Human Resources-issued Performance Toolkit. Additionally, where relevant, it will be included in training materials, such as “Career conversations for supervisors”, “Giving and receiving feedback” and Performance Evaluation Report planning and year-end appraisal discussions. Sex-disaggregated performance data will be analysed to look for patterns of discrimination and remedial actions will be proposed when needed;</p> <p>6.2 (c) Ensure that the roll-out of the Competency Framework includes explicit guidance for managers to promote diversity, inclusion and gender equality in the workplace;</p> <p>6.2 (d) Organize a consultation with regional offices and deputy representatives to define the best way to include relevant gender results and indicators in the performance evaluation reviews of managers and staff.</p>	<p>Division of Human Resources; Office of the Executive Director; Principal Adviser, Organizational Culture; headquarters Gender Section</p>	<p>December 2021</p>	<p>Under way</p>	<p>The new UNICEF Competency Framework launched in February 2020 reflects commitments to gender equality.</p>

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<p><b>Evaluation recommendation 7: Reposition the corporate gender unit for greater influence and oversight</b></p> <p>The location of the gender unit within UNICEF constrains its ability to strategically influence. It should be moved to a more central organizational positioning. Going forward, it is critical that a repositioned gender oversight function actively engages in all areas of the work of UNICEF towards achieving gender equality objectives, including beyond programmes. In the context of the organization’s new emphasis on matrix arrangements, the gender oversight function should have a direct reporting relationship to both programme and management functions. To support this matrix management arrangement, gender mainstreaming should be promoted within headquarters structures by designating and training gender staff and/or focal points across all relevant divisions/offices (including but not limited to: Programme Division, Office of Emergency Operations, strategic planning, Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring, Evaluation Office, Division of Human Resources, and units responsible for prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment).</p> <p><b>Management response: Agree</b></p> <p>Using the new UNICEF matrix arrangements, the Gender Section, UNICEF headquarters, will be repositioned to report to both programme and management functions, and its function and responsibilities will be more clearly articulated. The gender architecture will also be strengthened in this regard, including by requiring gender focal points to be identified in all UNICEF organizational teams; maintaining the regional gender adviser positions, while clarifying their roles, responsibilities and reporting lines; and increasing dedicated gender staffing at the regional level.</p>				
<p><b>Action 7.1</b></p> <p>Specify the role and function of the Gender Section at headquarters within the Programme Division office management plan for the midterm review, and establish matrix reporting for the Principal Adviser, Gender and Development, to the Director, Programme Division, with regular reporting and linkages to the Director, Human Resources, and the Deputy Executive Director, Management.</p>	<p>Office of the Executive Director; regional offices</p>	<p>June 2020</p>	<p>Under way</p>	<p>Mandate and mission of the Gender Section, UNICEF headquarters, as the “gender action plan secretariat” articulated and submitted as part of the midterm review documentation (March 2020)</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>
<p><b>Action 7.2</b></p> <p>Clarify the roles and responsibilities of the regional gender advisers, with a focus on partnership, facilitation and coordination; and identify opportunities for the sustainable funding of gender-related expertise at the country level. Regional gender advisers will be maintained going forward and will be funded through regular resources.</p>	<p>Regional directors and Gender Section. UNICEF headquarters</p>	<p>June 2020</p>	<p>Not started</p>	
<p><b>Action 7.3</b></p> <p>Identify gender focal points in all headquarters and regional teams within the Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring, the Division of Human Resources, the Public Partnerships Division, the Office of Emergency Programmes and the Division of Private Fundraising and Partnerships following the Gender Staffing Guidance.</p>	<p>Office of the Executive Director</p>	<p>June 2020</p>	<p>Not started</p>	

## II. Draft decision

*The Executive Board*

*Takes note* of the following documents presented to the Executive Board at the annual session of 2020:

- (a) Annual report for 2019 on the evaluation function in UNICEF ([E/ICEF/2020/12](#)) and its management response ([E/ICEF/2020/13](#));
  - (b) Evaluation of the UNICEF Gender Action Plan, its summary ([E/ICEF/2020/14](#)) and its management response ([E/ICEF/2020/15](#)).
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