UNICEF

REALIZING POTENTIAL: EVALUATION OF UNICEF'S GENDER ACTION PLANS

10 DECEMBER 2019

EVALUATION OFFICE

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CPD	Country Programming Document
EAPRO	UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office
ECARO	UNICEF Europe and Central Asia Regional Office
ESARO	UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office
FGM/C	female genital mutilation/cutting
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GBV	gender-based violence
GBViE	gender-based violence in emergencies
GEM	Gender Equality Marker
GPR	Gender Programmatic Review
HPV	human papilloma virus
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
HQ	UNICEF headquarters
LACRO	UNICEF Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MENARO	UNICEF Middle East and North Africa Regional Office
MHM	menstrual hygiene management
NGO	non-governmental organization
PSEA	protection from sexual exploitation and abuse
ROSA	UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIC	Specific Intervention Code
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN SWAP	United Nations System-wide Action Plan
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WASH	water, sanitation and hygiene
WCARO	UNICEF West and Central Africa Regional Office
WFP	World Food Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

1. This report evaluates the quality, implementation and results of UNICEF's two successive Gender Action Plans (GAPs) during the period 2014–2019. The evaluation's two main objectives were:
   - *(Primary objective)* To contribute to improving the organization's accountability for its performance and results on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.
   - *(Secondary objective)* To generate evidence and learning to guide effective action towards strengthening gender equality in programmes and systems.

2. The evaluation took place between February and October 2019. It was conducted by an independent team of four Gender Specialists. Its methodology analysed global data; gathered input from more than 32 programme countries; and reviewed a full range of corporate processes. The specialists studied more than 500 documents and conducted more than 360 interviews.

3. UNICEF last evaluated its 1994 Gender Policy in 2008. Since then, it has developed a revised (2010) Gender Policy; developed two successive GAPs (2014–2017 and 2018–2021), aligned to the two Strategic Plans, and issued major reports on workplace gender discrimination, sexual Harassment, harassment and abuse of authority, and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (2018).[1] The evaluation assessed the design and implementation of the Gender Action Plans, but also the internal environment for gender equality mainstreaming within UNICEF.

FINDINGS

4. **What did the GAPs seek to achieve?** Both GAPs focused on two areas: First, they sought to improve the internal environment for gender equality mainstreaming within UNICEF, including building the gender architecture and corporate systems for gender. Second, they aimed to enhance the integration of gender equality within programming. For the latter, UNICEF adopted a 'twin track' approach. This comprised (i) directly targeting five specific issues – promoting gender-responsive adolescent health; advancing girls' secondary education; ending child marriage, addressing gender-based violence in emergencies and (under GAP 2) improved menstrual health and hygiene; and (ii) enhancing gender equality integration across UNICEF's core programmatic areas linked to the seven outcome areas of the 2014–2017 Strategic Plan and the five goal areas of the 2018–2021 Strategic Plan.

5. **What was the quality of design?** The evaluation determined that both GAPs contained some of the critical elements for a quality strategic instrument, such as a clear definition of gender equality and (under GAP 2) a developed theory of change. They were also coherent with surrounding normative United Nations and other global gender equality frameworks, as well as closely aligned to the respective Strategic Plans over the period.

6. The GAPs, however, also had some limitations. The vision of gender equality provided was pragmatic rather than aspirational, focused on improving UNICEF's internal institutional

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[1] UNICEF, 'Report of the Independent Task Force on Workplace Gender Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Harassment and Abuse of Authority', 2019; UNICEF, 'Independent Panel Review of the UNICEF Response to the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse', 2018.

capacities and systems, rather than looking upward to structural change. This risked limiting UNICEF's gender equality ambitions to the organization's internal environment, particularly since links from institutional change to higher-level gender equality results were undefined. Both GAPs also contained many assumptions that were untested and untried. The programmatic structure adopted, while coherent with UNICEF's operating model, risked reducing the complex realities of gender equality to siloed programmatic results.

7. **How well did the GAPs reflect gender realities on the ground?** The breadth of both GAPs, and their alignment with the respective Strategic Plans, meant that much of UNICEF's programmatic work on gender equality fell within their scope. UNICEF country and regional offices, however, reported evolving gender realities, particularly concerning gendered social norms. This meant that the GAPs risked a growing incoherence with gender priorities on the ground. The GAPS also did not reflect some key areas of UNICEF's programming, such as various aspects of the humanitarian work, which accounts for half of UNICEF's programmatic expenditure globally.

8. **How well did UNICEF build the enabling environment for gender equality under the GAPs?** UNICEF made considerable progress in building the gender architecture and systems over the periods of the GAPs. The organization dedicated significant effort and financial resources (US$12 million) to building the gender architecture under GAP 1, successfully creating a dedicated cohort and network of gender staff, which helped improve attention to gender at country and regional levels. It also worked hard to build gender parity in staffing, with good results to date.

9. Nevertheless, several weaknesses persist in the institutional environment. Only small numbers of dedicated staff and others have been trained in gender mainstreaming to date, and GAP 2 did not see the commensurate commitment of financial resources, comparable to GAP 1. There is limited awareness of both GAPs at headquarters and regional and country levels, and they are perceived largely as 'the responsibility of gender staff'. Leadership have significantly engaged on specific gender-related issues, but there is still a need to step up senior management efforts to clearly reference and communicate existing corporate principles of gender equality for accountability purposes. Accountability systems at all levels are insufficient, being limited to a high-level collective approach rather than individuals holding responsibility (and being held accountable) for GAP implementation.

10. **How did UNICEF engage in partnerships for gender equality?** Within the inter-agency system, UNICEF has proactively engaged in global partnerships for gender equality, particularly at the corporate level. At the country level, the organization is not typically seen as a leader in gender equality, and its gender-related partnerships with civil society have tended to focus on project implementation rather than more strategic concerns. Private sector partnerships are growing. UNICEF has mostly strong and consensual relationships relating to gender concerns with its partner governments. Where it has needed to navigate complex gender-related issues at the country level, UNICEF was perceived to have adopted a consensual approach. There has been no concerted or consistent effort to build the capacity of external partners on gender equality.

11. **How well did UNICEF integrate gender in programming under the GAPs?** UNICEF increased its attention to gender equality in country- and regional-level programming during 2014–2017, and expenditure on gender-related issues has increased towards the 15 per cent target set internally. The most attention, however, was paid (and the strongest results generated) in the targeted priorities. Both attention to, and results in, the seven 'integrated' programming areas were more uneven. There is growing use of multisectoral approaches to address gender-related issues. The evaluation finds only patchy use (and inconsistent

understanding) of broader transformative approaches that would push UNICEF to significant advances as gender-equality ally, reflecting UNICEF's children mandate, but largely concentrated in some specific programming areas.

12. **What role did the GAPs play in gender equality programming and results?** Beyond the five targeted priorities, the GAPs played only a limited role in stimulating gender equality-related activity across UNICEF. Instead, most effort was driven by context, rather than the GAPs, and/or by individual staff recognition of, and commitment to, gender concerns. The main links to the GAPs were though the Gender Programmatic Review tool; through the dedicated gender staffing built up under both GAPs; and within the targeted priority of child marriage, which benefited from a funded global programme. The GAPs also served valuable purposes in helping UNICEF explain, advocate for and legitimize country- and regional-level work on gender equality.

SUMMARY MESSAGE AND CONCLUSIONS

13. **Overall,** the evaluation finds that the GAPs helped build some important foundations for UNICEFs gender equality work. They provided a valuable organizational framework for UNICEF's programmatic efforts on gender and helped build UNICEF's gender architecture and systems from a limited base. They also succeeded in securing resources for gender equality under GAP 1; and in enabling the organization to dedicate efforts and attention to some issue-based (targeted) priorities.

14. Nevertheless, the GAPs were developed in very different contexts to today. They were intended to serve a largely functional purpose, in an organization with little comprehensive experience of gender equality mainstreaming in either programmes or institutional capacity and systems. Moreover, in 2019, the GAPs risk a growing incoherence with current gender realities on the ground. Essentially, they were tools for their time.

15. Both GAPs were constrained by limited aspiration and by insufficient accountabilities, which in turn undermined broad-based ownership. Their design spoke to the UNICEF operating model, but they lacked sufficient drive or ambition to fully permeate UNICEF's core programming areas. They also lacked adequate tools to mainstream gender equality in accordance with UNICEF's mission, mandate, and its global commitments.

16. Overall, the evaluation urges UNICEF – based on the evidence presented – to significantly upscale its ambition for gender equality, commensurate with its status as the world's defender of child rights. Doing so will greatly improve UNICEF's scope for achieving gender equality results, creating substantive changes in the lives of children and women around the world.

17. Rising to the challenge requires not small-scale adaptation but a significant shift in UNICEF's aspirations for gender equality. It implies a much more assertive and comprehensive approach. UNICEF needs a firmer corporate framework, robust accountabilities and strong leadership – all within the context of inter-agency partnerships and the universality of the Sustainable Development Goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

18. **Recommendations:** The report makes seven recommendations, supported by specific proposed actions. If undertaken, these recommendations will support UNICEF in realizing its potential for gender equality in line with its mandate, in an increasingly complex world.

- **Recommendation 1:** Prepare a revised corporate policy architecture for implementation during 2022–2025.
  - o Refresh the 2010 Gender Policy, commensurate with UNICEF's status as the world's children agency; the Beijing Declaration; and the Sustainable Development Goals; and situated within the inter-agency context.
- **Recommendation 2:** Support the realization of the Gender Policy through a phased institutional strengthening process, reflected in a comprehensive Implementation Plan.
  - o Clearly link institutional change to the gender equality results of the Policy.
- **Recommendation 3:** Improve gender equality integration in headquarters and multisectoral programming.
  - o For the new Gender Policy, integrate gender, including transformative initiatives that would advance UNICEF as gender-equality ally, into core programming areas.
- **Recommendation 4:** Embed gender equality into country and regional planning and programming.
  - o Require country and regional offices to integrate gender equality within their own country/regional programme documents, geared to gender realities on the ground; and the priorities of the inter-agency system as reflected in United Nations cooperation frameworks.
- **Recommendation 5:** 'Bring gender home': Build gender capacities from a values-based perspective.
  - o Undertake broad-based training across UNICEF to ensure that gender equality awareness and technical competence reach all corners of the organization.
- **Recommendation 6:** Ensure leadership and embed accountabilities for ownership.
  - o Provide clear leadership statements, supported by committed accountabilities at all levels.
- **Recommendation 7:** Reposition the corporate gender unit for greater influence and oversight.
  - o In the context of the organization's new emphasis on matrix arrangements, the gender oversight function should have a direct reporting relationship to both programmes and management functions. To support this matrix management arrangement, gender mainstreaming should be promoted within HQ structures by designating and training gender staff and/or focal points across all relevant divisions/offices.

1. Introduction

> *'We envisage a world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity... A world which invests in its children and in which every child grows up free from violence and exploitation. A world in which every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality and all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed. A just, equitable, tolerant, open and socially inclusive world in which the needs of the most vulnerable are met.*[2]

19. In 1995, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action reaffirmed the fundamental principle that '*the human rights of women and of the girl child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights'*. Gender equality become firmly positioned at the heart of the world's development agenda.

20. Twenty-four years later, there is an increasingly complex gender landscape. Some countries have seen a sea of change in public debate, with social movements bringing discriminatory gender norms and practices into the limelight. In other countries, gender norms are experiencing re-traditionalization.

21. In fields and factories, camps and communities, boardrooms and offices across the world, however, gender inequalities – particularly for women and girls – continue to permeate all aspects of life. '*The achievement of full human potential and of sustainable development is not possible if one half of humanity continues to be denied its full human rights and opportunities. Women and girls must enjoy equal access to quality education, economic resources and political participation as well as equal opportunities with men and boys for employment, leadership and decision-making at all levels.*[3]

22. Gender equality is at the heart of UNICEF's mission and mandate. The organization is the prime international defender of the equal rights of <u>all</u> children, helping them to reach their full potential.

23. In an era of profound social, economic and political change, this evaluation of UNICEF's two successive Gender Action Plans – the incumbent framework for UNICEF's gender work since 2014 – is timely. The evaluation asks: Has UNICEF committed the effort required to ensure the realization of equal rights for all the children and adults it serves? Has it set in place the requirements, and delivered the results, which have enabled it to meet its global responsibilities for gender equality?

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[2] United Nations General Assembly, Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, A/RES/70/1, 2015.
[3] Ibid.

2. The Evaluation

2.1 Background and scope

24. This report evaluates the quality, implementation and results of UNICEF's two successive Gender Action Plans (GAPs), from 2014 to 2017 ('GAP 1') and from 2018 to 2021 ('GAP 2'). The evaluation's full Terms of Reference can be found in Annex 1. Its two main objectives are:
    - *(Primary objective)* To contribute to improving the organization's accountability for its performance and results on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.
    - *(Secondary objective)* To generate evidence and learning to guide effective action towards strengthening gender equality in programmes and systems.[4]

25. The evaluation is explicitly *not* an evaluation of UNICEF's Gender Section and its work, but rather of corporate engagement in, and commitment to, both successive GAPs. Human resource and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) issues, being separately addressed by a parallel Gender Task Force exercise, are not directly evaluated, though parity in staffing is considered as a factor supporting or constraining GAP implementation.

26. Given the current heightened interest in gender issues, and UNICEF's high global profile, a wide range of stakeholders and partners have an interest in this evaluation, as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: Evaluation stakeholders

Direct users	Indirect users
- UNICEF stakeholders at country, regional and headquarters levels, including the Gender Section and senior management - Executive Board members - Partner governments	- Partner United Nations and donor agencies - UNICEF cooperating partners, including international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations

2.2 Methodology and principles

27. The evaluation took place between February and October 2019. It was conducted by an independent team of four Gender Specialists. The full methodology is provided in Annex 2, and definitions applied are included in Annex 3.

28. **Evidence base:** This evaluation examined many parts of UNICEF. It analysed global data; gathered input from more than 32 programme countries; and reviewed a full range of corporate processes. The Gender Specialists studied more than 500 documents and conducted more than 360 interviews. The evidence base of the evaluation was built from the components below (Figure 1; Box 1):

Figure 1. Evaluation evidence base

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[4] Terms of Reference: See Annex 1.
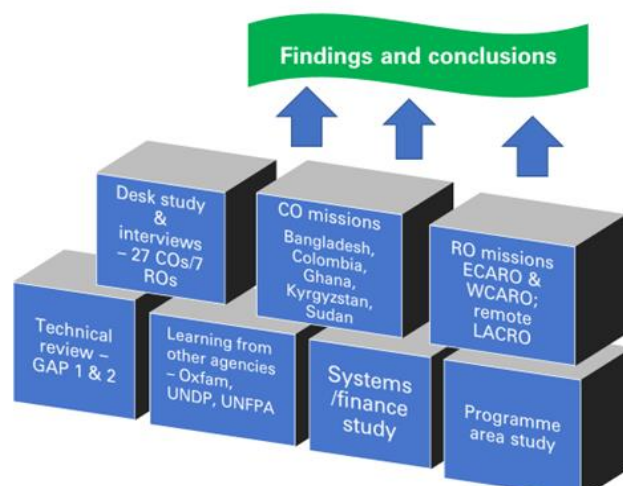
Box 1. Evidence base

- Technical review of the two GAPs, including their design, theories of change and resource allocations; and annual GAP reports from 2015 to 2018.
- Institutional appraisal, including internal structures and processes for gender mainstreaming.
- Review of UNICEF programme areas, including child protection; health; education; water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); nutrition; HIV; humanitarian programming; and social inclusion; and interviews with key New York-based stakeholders.
- Desk review of key programme information from 27 UNICEF country offices, and telephone interviews with 20 such offices.
- Field study in five countries: Bangladesh, Colombia, Ghana, Kyrgyzstan and Sudan, of five days in each location.[5]
- Review of a sample of UNICEF business processes against United Nations System-wide Action Plan (UN SWAP) indicators, including accountability systems; audit; budgeting and financial reporting; etc.
- Analysis of UNICEF human resourcing in terms of gender parity.
- Missions to two regional offices – the Europe and Central Asia Regional Office (ECARO) and the West and Central Africa Regional Office (WCARO), with interviews conducted with the remaining five such offices.
- Learning from other agencies, specifically the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) UN Women and Oxfam.

29. Combining these multiple 'blocks' of evidence allowed for analysis across sources and perspectives, including the 'view from headquarters (HQ)' and from country and regional Offices. Emphasis was placed on including diverse UNICEF operating environments.

30. Main limitations include: the limited data available on results, particularly against GAP 2 given the early stage of its implementation period; and different understandings and interpretation of the term 'gender equality' across UNICEF. Corporate reporting systems, on triangulation with the evaluation's own evidence sources, also showed considerable weaknesses.[6] The report is careful to calibrate its findings to the strength of its evidence base.

31. The evaluation applied GAP 2's own underlying intervention logic, or theory of change, to assess progress (Figure 2).

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[5] See Annex 2 for sampling methodology.
[6] Notably, UNICEF's global dashboard data on the GAP, a new initiative in 2019, whose data showed limitations when triangulated with that from field visits, document review and phone interviews.

Figure 2. Intervention logic of GAP 2
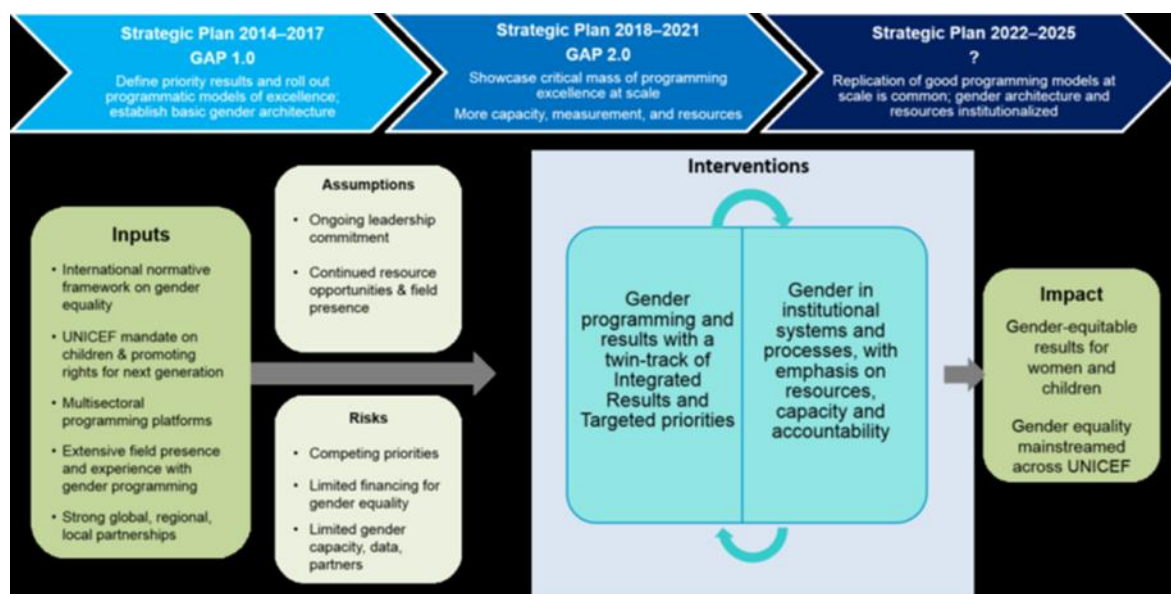
Source: GAP 2.

32. To ensure a fully transparent and systematic approach, an evaluation matrix was applied at all stages of the evaluation, against which data were gathered and analysed. The matrix is presented in Annex 4.

33. In the spirit of a participatory approach, consultations were held in September and November 2019 to present the preliminary findings of the report to key stakeholders within UNICEF, including UNICEF HQ and regional office management. The meeting helped to test and refine the report's content, and shaped the recommendations presented in its final section.

3. The UNICEF GAPs and their environment

34. UNICEF's 2014–2017 and 2018–2021 GAPs were developed, and have been implemented, in a period of significant external and internal momentum on gender equality. This section of the report briefly describes this backdrop.

3.1 The external environment

35. **The international policy context:** Both GAPs sit within a strong framework of international policy commitments. These include the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, the 1995 Beijing Declaration, the 2000 United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security and Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 3 (2000) on promoting gender equality and empowering women.

36. The inclusion of gender as a dedicated Goal (5) within the 2015 Agenda for Sustainable Development reinforced the primacy of gender equality as a global objective. The 2018 outcome report for Goal 5 highlighted the need to address structural norms and attitudes, and to develop progressive frameworks promoting gender equality and achieve women's empowerment.[7]

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[7] <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/14383SDG5format-revOD.pdf>.

37. **Gender equality in the inter-agency system:** Following the 2006 United Nations System-wide Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, General Assembly resolutions in 2012 and 2016 emphasized the continued promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment, e.g., through country-level gender-responsive activities.[8] The 2012 SWAP for gender equality was updated in 2018 (UN SWAP 2.0) along with accompanying tools, while the 2017 System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity set clear expectations on staffing parity.[9] Gender equality also features heavily in guidance for the new United Nations Cooperation Framework[10] and is highlighted in the Common Chapter of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women.[11]

Figure 3. External momentum on gender
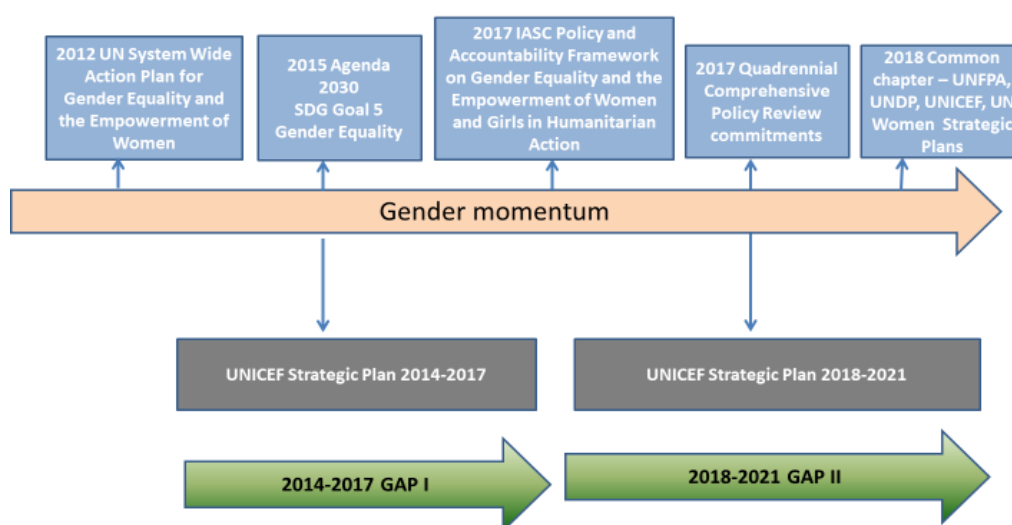
Source: Evaluation team.

3.2 The internal environment

38. **UNICEF mission statement:** UNICEF's 1996 mission statement provides an explicit commitment to the 'rights of women and girls' – if not for 'gender equality' more broadly: *"UNICEF aims, through its country programmes, to promote the equal rights of women and girls and to support their full participation in the political, social and economic development of their communities".*

39. **UNICEF Strategic Plans:** Successive UNICEF Strategic Plans articulate gender equality commitments, including the 'empowerment of girls and women' under Strategic Plan 2014–2017 and as a 'cross-cutting priority' under the 2018–2021 Plan (Box 2).

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[8] General Assembly resolution A/RES/67/226: Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. General Assembly resolution A/RES/71/243: Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. <https://undocs.org/A/RES/71/243>.
[9] <www.un.org/gender/content/strategy>.
[10] Previously the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, <www.universal-rights.org/blog/gender-and-the-un-reforms-an-update/>, accessed 3 September 2019.
[11] Common Chapter Annex 2017; UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018–2021:3.

> **Box 2. UNICEF Strategic Plan commitments to gender equality**
>
> - Strategic Plan 2014–2017: '*Gender equality is integral to the Strategic Plan as a normative principle… The Strategic Plan emphasizes the empowerment of girls and women as well as addressing gender-related needs and actions of girls, boys, fathers, mothers and communities… The Strategic Plan will promote gender-sensitive interventions as a core programmatic priority.*'
> - Strategic Plan 2018–2021: '*Gender is one of two cross-cutting priorities: 'Building on UNICEF's Gender Action Plan, 2018–2021, as well as system-wide efforts to promote gender equality, the Strategic Plan integrates gender in each of its five goal areas.*'

40. **UNICEF's gender policy frameworks:** UNICEF has had two successive gender policies; the 1994 Gender Policy and the incumbent 2010 Gender Policy: Working for an Equal Future, accompanied by a Strategic Priority Action Plan.[12] A 2008 evaluation of the 1994 Policy concluded that UNICEF had strong potential for effective gender mainstreaming, due to high credibility with partners, strong field presence, staff commitment to social justice, the use of life cycle and rights-based approaches, and individual leadership that was actively engaged in programmatic gender mainstreaming. The evaluation noted, however, that this potential had not yet been realized, due to limited resourcing; gaps in leadership and accountability; lack of formal learning systems; and reduced staffing for gender.

41. The 2010 Policy officially remains in force. However, this evaluation found it to have little or no institutional awareness or recognition.[13] Instead, the two Gender Action Plans – successors to the 2010 Policy and Action Plan, and the subject of this evaluation – have become the main institutional framework for gender.

3.3 UNICEF's Gender Action Plans (GAPs)

42. GAPs 1 and 2 were approved by UNICEF's Executive Board in 2014 and 2018, respectively. They provide the main vehicle for integrating gender equality concerns into UNICEF's policies, operational processes and programmes at all levels.

43. Institutionally, GAP 1 sought to build a core gender architecture across UNICEF, while GAP 2 continued to emphasise institutional support and capacity strengthening. Both GAPs adopted a twin-track approach to programming, seeking to integrate gender equality in programmatic results, as well as targeted priorities (Figure 4).[14] Under GAP 2, menstrual hygiene management (MHM)[15] was added as a fifth targeted priority and the framework of adolescent girls applied across all five.[16] GAP 2 sought increased depth and breadth of gender-equitable results and delivery at scale with partners and national stakeholders, as per Agenda 2030.

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[12] <www.unicef.org/gender/files/Working_for_an_Equal_Future_UNICEF_Gender_Policy_2010.pdf>. The Strategic Priority Action Plan ran from 2010 to 2012, and it was extended by one year to cover 2013.

[13] Interviews across UNICEF HQ, and regional and country offices.

[14] Rationale set out in GAP 1: 'significant evidence shows that successful integration of gender in field level programming and action requires both targeted efforts and mainstreaming gender in programmes.' Interviews with former UNICEF staff and management involved in the development of both GAPs reiterated this conscious choice.

[15] The term 'menstrual hygiene management' (MHM) has been reframed subsequent to the GAPs as 'menstrual health and hygiene' (MHH) in UNICEF. The evaluation report applies the term as utilized in both GAPs and in the majority of country and programmatic documentation reviewed.

[16] Other nuances include: In the 2018–2021 GAP, gender-responsive adolescent health is both more specific and streamlined, and skills, especially STEM, are emphasized in addition to secondary education. Early unions are addressed along with child marriage.

Figure 4. GAPs 1 and 2
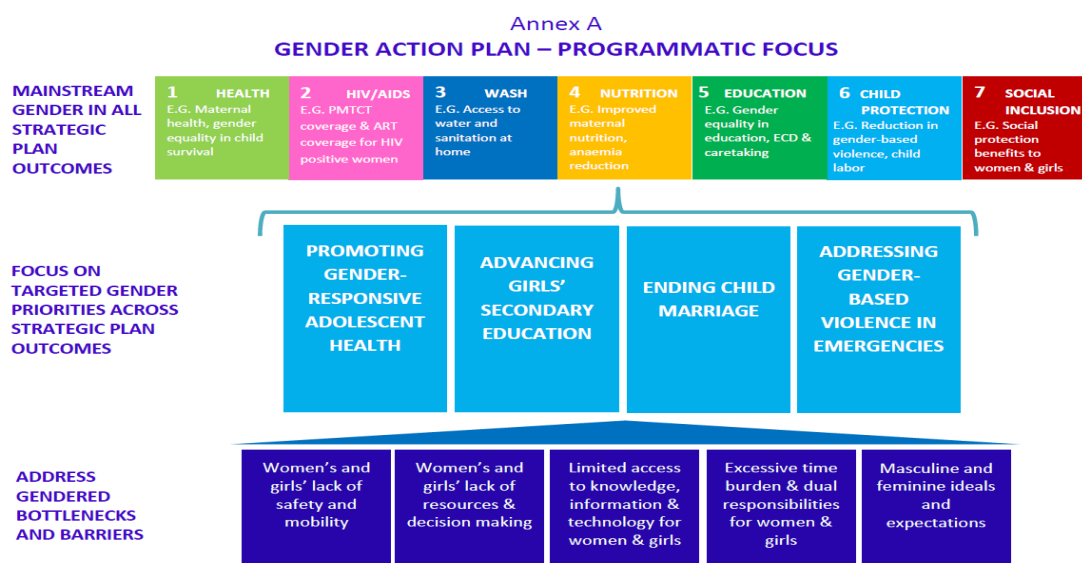
Source: GAP 1.
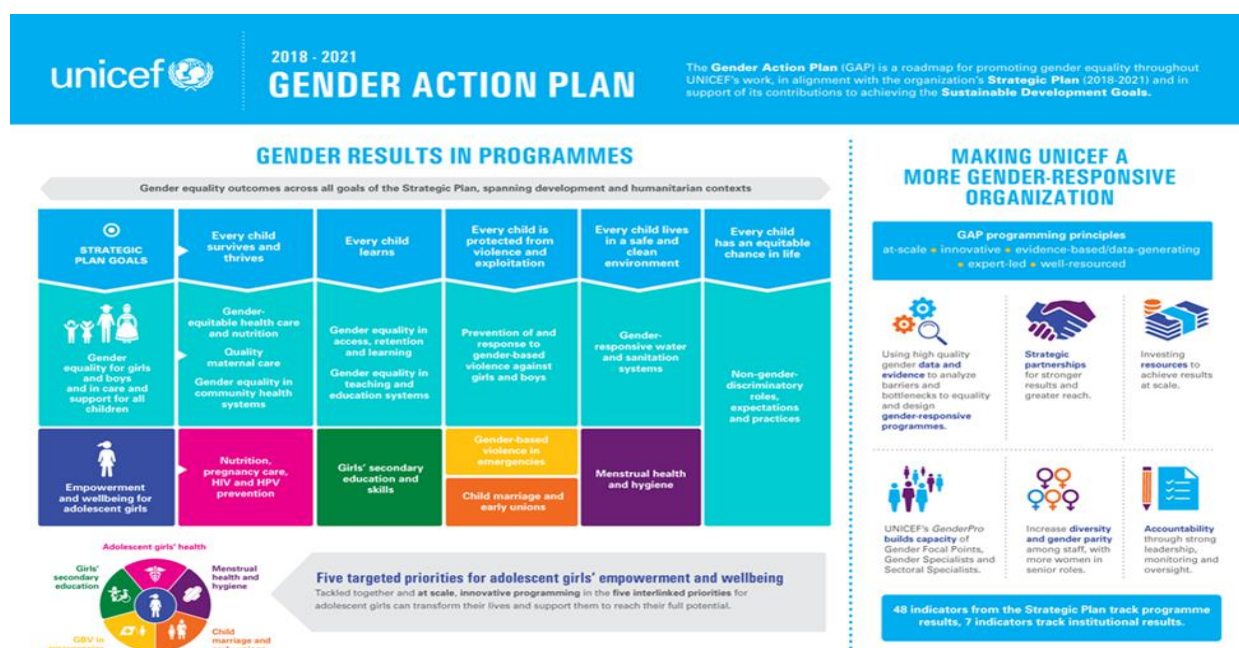
Source: GAP 2.

44. The choice to implement a Gender Action Plan instead of rewriting the 2010 Policy was stated by stakeholders involved at the time to be a conscious choice. The rationale was to bring gender equality into the realm of the programmatic, in keeping with an organization whose main results are delivered at field level and where gender work can be driven by contextual factors (*see para. 166*).[17] The appropriateness of this choice, and its current relevance, are discussed in Section 4 below.

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[17] Interviews with key staff and management involved in the development of GAP 1.

4. Evaluation findings

45. This section of the report presents the main findings of the evaluation. It assesses the evidence in five areas: 1. the quality of design of the GAPs; 2. how UNICEF built the enabling environment for gender mainstreaming; 3. UNICEF's partnerships for gender equality; 4. integrating gender equality into programming; and 5. results delivered. It is followed by conclusions and recommendations for the future.

4.1 The quality of the GAPs

> **Summary narrative**
>
> The GAPs were well aligned to relevant normative frameworks and adopted a pragmatic vision for gender equality. They were highly coherent with the UNICEF operating model. GAP 2 also contained a theory of change.
>
> Both GAPs, however, lacked several key elements of a robust corporate gender instrument. This includes an aspirational vision defining 'what UNICEF wanted to achieve' for gender equality; clear concepts; and strategies linking institutional change to higher-level gender equality results. They also included many assumptions. The conscious choice to focus UNICEF's approach to gender on programme delivery aligned with UNICEF's way of working at the country level, but risked reducing the complex realities of gender equality to siloed programmatic results.
>
> The breadth of the GAPs and their alignment with the respective Strategic Plans meant that most of UNICEF's programmatic work on gender fell within their scope. However, some key gaps arose, notably humanitarian activity, which accounts for half of UNICEF's programmatic expenditure globally. Country and regional offices also reported some incongruences with evolving gender realities on the ground, mostly related to gendered social norms.

46. The critical ingredients of a quality strategic instrument include: a consultative design process; clear strategic positioning in relation to the organization's mission or mandate; a clear vision and concepts; alignment with wider normative frameworks; a clear intervention logic or theory of change; strategies geared to operationalizing the vision/objectives; and clear concepts.[18] It is also critical that the strategic instrument reflects real-world conditions and realities on the ground. The evaluation has assessed the presence of these components within the UNICEF GAPs.

47. **Varying consultation in design:** GAP 1 benefited from extensive consultation regarding its design, reflecting its status as an institutional 'first'. Internal consultations included a large-scale meeting in Bangkok in 2013, which collated UNICEF staff and management views on proposed content. Extensive external consultations included partner governments, civil society, academia and Executive Board members. Those involved at the time recollect a broad-based and responsive approach to consultation.[19]

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[18] See, e.g., Patrizi, P., and M. Patton, eds., *Evaluating Strategy: New directions for evaluation*, no. 128, 2010, pp. 5–28.
[19] Interviews with current and former UNICEF staff involved in GAP 1 development.

48. For GAP 2, consultation took place while GAP 1 implementation was gaining momentum in 2016.[20] Internal UNICEF staff and key external partners were also consulted.[21] However, staff involved in the development of both GAPs reported a more concise and less extensive consultation process under GAP 2. Some staff in HQ units reported receiving draft content for GAP 2 that had not been formulated with their full participation (though in most cases this was subsequently negotiated satisfactorily).[22]

49. **Strong alignment with normative frameworks:** Both GAPs closely reflect the principles and intent of surrounding normative frameworks. These include the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Both highlight the interdependence of children's rights with women's rights and well-being, and both are also closely geared to relevant international (MDG and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)) ambitions for the period. The Common Chapter of the UNICEF 2018–2021 Strategic Plan (*see section 4.3 on partnerships*)[23] addresses five areas of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: violence against women and girls, the economic empowerment of women and girls, sexual and reproductive health and rights (including ending child marriage), resources for gender-equality programming; and ending all forms of discrimination against all women and girls.

50. **Strong alignment with UNICEF mission and Strategic Plans:** UNICEF's mission statement (*see para. 20*) positions gender equality as a 'rights of women and girls' issue. This aligns with the Beijing Declaration, though does not explicitly reflect the role of men and boys in gender equality concerns. Both GAPs reference the mission statement as formulated, though both also specify the role of men and boys in gender equality (*see para. 53*).

51. Both GAPs are positioned as supporting the realization of Strategic Plan goals for the period.[24] There is considerable narrative interlinkage between both the relevant Strategic Plans and the GAPs. Both GAPs apply the results frameworks of the relevant Strategic Plan for the period, as well as Strategic Plan outcome and output indicators (*see the example from GAP 2 in Figure 5 below*).

Figure 5. GAP 2 alignment with the Strategic Plan

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[20] Resources for GAP 1 implementation were received in November 2014, nearly six months after GAP 1 had been approved (Annual session June 2014). The directive to embark on the development of GAP 2 was provided in 2016, leading up to approval at the Executive Board session of June 2017, while GAP 1 was still under implementation (Ibid.).

[21] Ibid.

[22] Interviews with HQ-level programmatic staff and management.

[23] Common Chapter Annex 2017; UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018–2021:3.

[24] Despite a time lag for GAP 1: the 2014–2017 Strategic Plan was approved at the second regular session (September 2013), while GAP 1 was approved at the annual session in June 2014. Both the Strategic Plan 2017–2021 and GAP 2 were approved at the second regular session in September 2017.
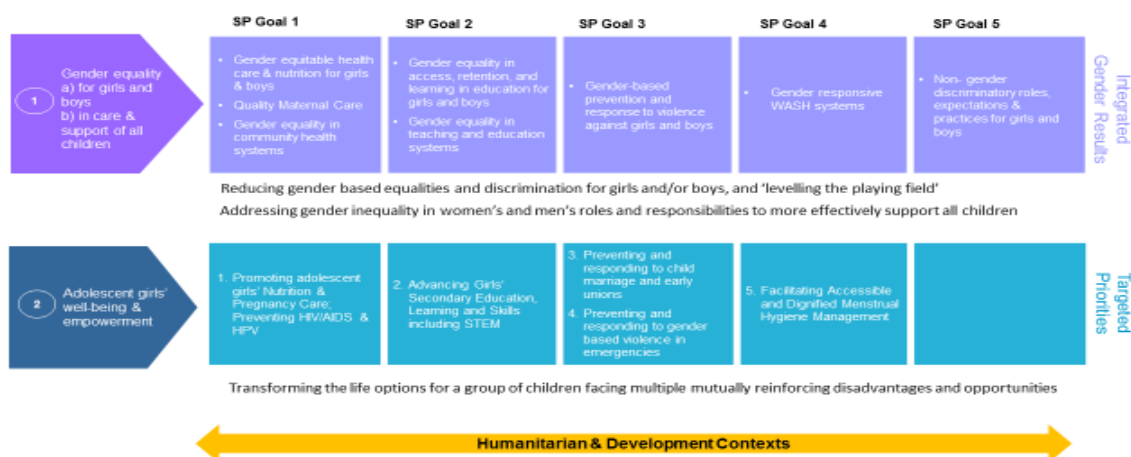
Source: GAP 2.

52. This strategic alignment was considered by staff and management to have 'given force' to gender equality as an issue within UNICEF,[25] positioning it as a corporate priority.[26]

53. **A pragmatic vision for gender equality:** The vision contained within a corporate instrument sets the level of organizational aspirations. It articulates the level of ambition and provides the drivers and incentives to motivate and guide programmatic action and internal change.

54. UNICEF's 2010 Gender Policy articulates a high-level vision: *'The goal of UNICEF work in pursuit of gender equality and the equal rights of girls and boys is to contribute … to poverty reduction and the achievement of the MDGs through result-oriented, effective and well-coordinated action that achieves the protection, survival and development of girls and boys on an equal basis.'* The accompanying narrative speaks of addressing structural barriers, power dynamics and transformational change, moving UNICEF as a greater gender-equality ally.

55. By contrast, both GAPs articulate pragmatic rather than aspirational aims. Both cite the UNICEF mission statement and are geared to the goals of the respective Strategic Plan (though they only provided limited tools for broader gender mainstreaming goals).[27] However, they focus primarily on improving UNICEF's programme environment. For example, the impact statement of GAP 2 under its theory of change is *'Gender equality mainstreamed in UNICEF programmes and institutional systems'*.

56. This limited aspiration was reflected in evidence across the evaluation. Neither management nor staff were consistently able to articulate a clear or cohesive vision for *'where UNICEF aims to be'* on gender[28] in terms beyond the institutional/programmatic. The evaluation noted that staff who had 'grown up' in UNICEF more frequently tended to express satisfaction with the pragmatic 'gender equality vision' of the GAPs, seeing it as an appropriate cultural fit for the organization's operating model. By contrast, staff who had joined from other organizations tended to more frequently critique its limited ambition.

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[25] Regional Director interviews, corporate analysis and programme analysis.

[26] Interviews with headquarters, regional and country offices.

[27] For example, Goals 1 (health), 2 (child protection) and 4 (WASH) prioritize equity of access rather than addressing structural barriers to change. Associated indicators follow a similar pattern.

[28] According to staff and management involved in GAP 1 and GAP 2 development, this was a conscious choice at the time of the development of both GAPs, in line with the desire to 'take gender into programming'. However, staff consulted during the evaluation acknowledged the limited level of ambition this presented.

57. **Limited theory of change/many assumptions:** The theory of change within a corporate strategic instrument provides the underlying chain of reasoning – what results are intended; why; and how they will be achieved. It is a key component of rigour.

58. GAP 1 did not contain an intervention logic.[29] GAP 2 corrected this, providing the theory of change presented in Figure 2 above. Critically, however, neither GAP 1 nor 2 set out how the realization of the GAP – in the form of the institutional impacts intended – would lead to upward structural changes in societies and in the lives of children, women and girls. The pathways from institutional reform to gender equality results were *assumed* rather than *defined*.

59. This core assumption – that institutional effort and programmatic improvements combined[30] would automatically lead to improvements in gender equality on the ground – went unexplored and untested by both GAPs. For example, the four Key Performance Indicators on Change Strategies in GAP 2 do not indicate any forward linkages to real-world gender equality results.

60. Additional *assumptions* – unrecognized and untested – also undermine the robustness of both GAPs as an instrument of change. These include assumptions that:
    - *sufficient organizational commitment* existed across UNICEF (including within senior management) for both GAPs to be prioritized and implemented;
    - UNICEF's *corporate accountability systems* were sufficiently developed to enable the integration of a gender equality perspective into country-level results; and
    - *sufficient capacity* would be developed under GAP 1 to enable the expansion of attention to gender equality in programmatic action and, accordingly, the scale-up of intended results intended under GAP 2.

61. Along with some technical weaknesses in results frameworks,[31] these assumptions posed threats to GAP implementation, as this evaluation subsequently explains.

62. **Programmatic coherence but strategic limitations:** Strong implementation strategies support the delivery and realization of results. UNICEF adopted the 'twin track' approach[32] to consciously integrate gender equality into traditional programming areas, while also tackling specific issue-based concerns.

63. This approach reflects in the broadest sense the dual model promulgated by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination of both mainstreaming and 'women-focused activities'[33] (though not all targeted areas were necessarily empowerment-focused, as per the Board's intent). Staff involved in the development of GAPs 1 and 2 voiced a largely pragmatic rationale: the four (and subsequently five) targeted approaches were both areas of evident need and areas where UNICEF was well positioned to 'make a difference'. In some cases, such as MHM, programming was already expanding in those areas.[34]

64. This programmatic approach is coherent with UNICEF's operating model at the field level. It also, however, centred UNICEF's approach to gender equality firmly on programme delivery,

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[29] See UNICEF (2017) Literature Review; Gender Action Plan 2018-2021 (internal document, March 2017)
[30] The Theory of Change for GAP2 presents the institutional and programmatic dimensions as a two-way flow- with each influencing the other.
[31] For example: Demonstrable results for GAP 2 are broad statements of intent, rather than defined results statements supported by dedicated timebound targets. Inconsistencies also occur between demonstrable results and associated indicators, with some 'demonstrable results' lacking indicators and some indicators not capturing the extent to which interventions may or may not foster gender equality. Some narratives areas also reference issues which are not subsequently reflected in indicators e.g. Child protection, which references birth registration in Gap 1, but which does not occur as an indicator or intended result.
[32] Paragraph 18 GAP 1; Paragraph 16 of GAP 2
[33] CEB (2006) United Nations system-wide policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women: focusing on results and impact CEB 2006/2.
[34] Review of Annual Reports for key programming areas.

rather than gearing UNICEF's work upward to tackle the structural barriers that perpetuate gender inequality.[35] Moreover, the programmatic/goal areas and four/five targeted approaches' model failed to facilitate a multisectoral gender mainstreaming objective, a concern voiced by multiple UNICEF staff interviewed in offices around the world.[36]

65. Lastly, the content of both GAPs – in their narratives and associated results frameworks – was largely geared to programmatic service delivery.[37] The GAPs provided only limited guidance on the incentivization of partners for gender equality work, evidence-generation and knowledge-sharing, and policy influencing[38] – all major aspects of UNICEF's programmatic work. This incongruence was noted by UNICEF staff working in countries at all stages of economic development and reflects a relatively narrow approach to strategizing.

66. **Inconsistent/unclear concepts:** Clear terminology is critical for common understanding – and particularly in a large and highly decentralized organization such as UNICEF, where staff come from highly diverse cultural and professional backgrounds.

67. The GAPs define 'gender equality' consistently: '*Gender equality means that women and men, and girls and boys, enjoy the same rights, resources, opportunities and protection… Because power structures in societies across the world mostly privilege boys and men, advancing gender equality most often requires addressing disadvantages faced by girls and women.*'[39]

68. However, other gender-related concepts and terms within the GAPs either lack definition – such as '*empowerment',* which is not defined in either GAP – or are inconsistently defined, such as '*transformational',* which has different definitions applied in supporting guidance and materials.[40]

69. The evaluation found the definition of gender equality articulated in paragraph 67 poorly operationalized across UNICEF. Sometimes 'gender' was interpreted as 'equity', 'equal numbers' or 'vulnerability' and/or undertaking sex-disaggregated analysis. Parity in programming and staffing, as well as the PSEA agenda, were also common confusions. Overall, there was no clearly understood or agreed organizational concept of 'what gender equality means' for UNICEF in its different offices around the world.

70. **Not all programming areas are reflected in the GAPs:** The breadth of the 'seven mainstreamed plus four/five targeted priorities' approach aligned to the Strategic Plan meant that most areas of UNICEF's gender equality-related programming that were assessed fell within their scope (*see sections 4.4 and 4.5*). The extent to which the GAPs had influenced programmatic choices was, however, questionable (*see section 4.5*). Moreover, some key areas of UNICEF programming were not fully encompassed by either GAP, as follows:

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[35] While both GAPs reference the root causes/structural barriers to gender equality, in neither are strategies comprehensively promoted to address these across programmatic areas, limiting these to thematic area discussion – e.g., GBV and HIV under GAP 1.

[36] For example, formulizing GBV prevention targets under the 'humanitarian context', as per GAP 2.

[37] For example, one line in GAP 2: 'Evidence-based communication and advocacy for legislative and policy shifts, and especially for increased domestic financing, are important for advancing gender equality and children's well-being and rights.' There is a focus on upstream work by theme such as health, but this is limited.

[38] Interviews with country offices, although staff also recognized that this was a wider challenge in terms of UNICEF's results management system generally.

[39] UNICEF, 'Gender Action Plan' ('GAP 2'), 2018.

[40] For example, different definitions of 'transformative' exist in a) The Gender Programmatic Review toolkit (2018): 'Explicitly seeks to redress gender inequalities and empower the disadvantaged population' and b) Agora monitoring and evaluation course, which defines gender as 'Transforms gender stereotypes and gender norms and relations for gender equality and an enabling environment'.

- ***Humanitarian action,*** which represents half of UNICEF programmatic spend,[41] and is a cross-cutting area of the Strategic Plans, is mentioned in both GAPs but lacks dedicated attention or specific strategies. This was reportedly a conscious choice at the time, given the complexities of defining 'what gender equality means' for UNICEF within humanitarian work,[42] but was perceived as both an incongruence and a major risk by many UNICEF country offices addressing emergencies. Fieldwork in five countries and interviews with 20 country offices and all seven regional offices found gender equality awareness and approaches in humanitarian programming notably lacking, with few references beyond 'equal participation of men and women in programming (*see section 4.4*). Review of corporate documentation on humanitarian programming[43] also reflected very limited attention to gender equality, although UNICEF had in early 2019 recruited an Emergency Response Team Specialist with gender expertise.
- ***Female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C)*** is present in GAP 1 under health targeted actions but has limited visibility in GAP 2.[44] Nevertheless, UNICEF works extensively on the issue, including through the longstanding UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on FGM/C in 17 countries.[45] Country offices interviewed for the evaluation demonstrated significant attention to the issue where the context demanded, such as in Ghana, Kenya, Somalia and Sudan, but staff engaged on the issue regretted its lack of prominence within the current GAP.

- ***Release and reintegration of girls and boys from armed groups*** is located as a 'boys' issue' in GAP 1. However, 40 per cent of such children in such conflict-affected settings are girls. The issue is not mentioned at all in GAP 2.[46] Fieldwork and review of country office documentation/interviews found, however, that several country offices were implementing programmes to address the issue, driven by contextual demands. In all cases, programmes targeted both boys and girls. Examples include work in UNICEF Philippines, Somalia, Sudan and Colombia, where attention was being paid to the reconstruction of gender norms post-reintegration. Alternative livelihoods were being provided for girls as a vehicle to expand their options beyond their traditional caring roles within the family.

71. **Some incongruence with current gender realities:** Fieldwork and interviews also identified perceived incongruences in some country and regional offices between the GAPs and current gender realities and priorities on the ground. Mainly, these centred around areas of gendered social norms. For example, the role of men and boys in gender equality, which was recognized in GAP 1[47] but only lightly referenced in GAP 2, was also considered insufficiently defined. In the view of many UNICEF country offices, even GAP 1 did not approach the issue in a sufficiently nuanced way, either in terms of the role of masculinities in shaping gender inequalities, and/or the specific vulnerabilities faced by men and boys.[48] Accordingly, some staff perceived a risk of perpetuating the 'gender equality equates to (vulnerable) women and girls' fallacy in the minds of UNICEF staff and programming. In turn, this risked a simplistic 'equal participation' approach to gender in programming, rather than aiming for structural changes in gender-related norms. Where gender-related social norms were changing, staff thought that a more explicit and principled UNICEF positioning on gender equality was necessary, reflecting gains made over time.

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[41] UNICEF, *Annual Report 2018*, <www.unicef.org/media/55486/file/UNICEF-annual-report-2018%20revised%201.pdf>.
[42] According to interlocutors engaged in the design of both GAPs.
[43] Annual Results Reports, Humanitarian Action 2015 and 2018; interviews at HQ, regional and country levels.
[44] FGM/C is mentioned under the GBV mainstreamed section of GAP 2 and briefly under 'Partnerships', but not as an action/strategy, and the term does not appear as a Demonstrable Result.
[45] See <www.unfpa.org/unfpa-unicef-joint-programme-eliminate-female-genital-mutilation>.
[46] United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, <www.un.org/youthenvoy/2015/02/4-10-child-soldiers-girls/>.
[47] For example, GAP 1 acknowledges male vulnerabilities such as 'adolescent boys who have sex with men' and 'definitions of masculinity that promote risk-taking behaviours' and acknowledging that 'Gender is about the relationships between and among women and men, girls and boys; transforming these relationships requires the involvement of all the people, not just half of them'.
[48] Such as stunting, education access in some settings, and child labour.

72. Programming/research was under way in all these areas within many country and regional offices, given their perceived status as critical priorities for the future, and given UNICEF's mandate and collaborative advantage. The importance of building national capacity to work on these priorities was also signalled extensively in interviews with country and regional offices (*see section 4.3: Partnerships*).

4.2 Building the enabling environment

Summary narrative

Under GAP 1 particularly, UNICEF dedicated significant effort and resources to building the gender architecture, with a dedicated cohort of gender-focused staff now in place. This commitment has significantly improved attention to gender equality within relevant offices. It was not, however, matched by broad-based staff capacity development, with training to date reaching only a small proportion of staff. Good progress was made in improving staff gender parity, as well as in raising awareness of gender issues through information-sharing, and in starting to address issues of organizational culture.

Leadership's approach to gender equality has mainly focused on specific gender-related issues, with less prevalent commitment to corporate communications of the existing core principles of gender-equality mainstreaming. There is limited awareness of the current GAP 2 across UNICEF and accountabilities are collective rather than individualized. Responsibility for GAP implementation mostly rests with a committed few, and it is frequently perceived as the remit of dedicated gender-focused staff, rather than as an organization-wide responsibility.

73. Both GAPs were posited under the '*enabling environment*' theme. Their central assumption was that institutional reform and improved attention to gender issues in programming would generate demonstrable results for gender equality (Figure 6):

Figure 6. The enabling environment theory
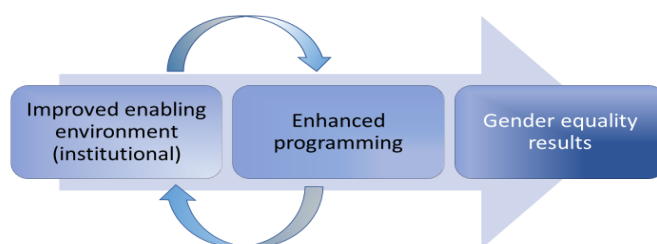
74. This section of the report assesses the extent to which UNICEF reformed its capacities, systems and processes under both GAPs to enable successful gender mainstreaming across the institution. It has taken note of UNICEF's own internal reporting against the UN SWAP (*detailed in Annex 8*), but provides its own analysis against key areas of institutional functioning.

75. Figure 7 below summarizes progress on GAP implementation to date in some key areas of the enabling environment, mindful of the relatively limited implementation period for GAP 2.

Figure 7. GAP implementation progress
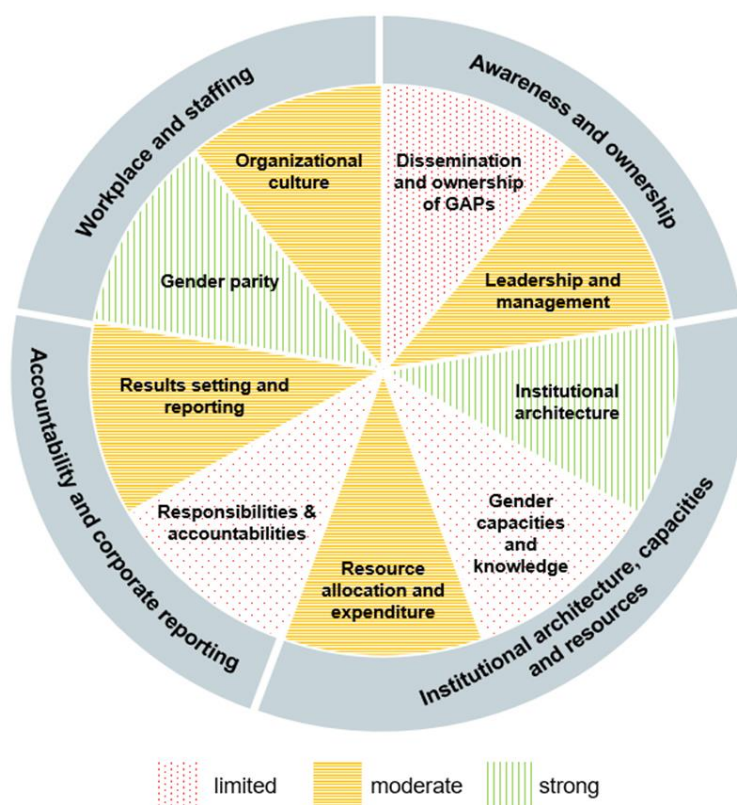
Source: Evaluation team.

Dissemination and ownership

76. **Effort to 'make the GAPs known':** For GAP 1, a comprehensive dissemination strategy was applied,[49] involving webinars, documentation, field visits and internal platforms. Staff recollected the dissemination process as a major factor in bringing gender equality to UNICEF's corporate attention.

77. The roll-out strategy for GAP 2 was less well recollected, though Regional Gender Advisers, by then in place, played a major role in sharing its content.[50] A wide range of information sources on GAP 2 is currently available, including a "GAP Info Portal', which includes brochures, posters, PowerPoint presentations and other information.[51] Channels to disseminate GAP 2 to staff have included webinars, WhatsApp and Yammer as well as gender trainings and newsletters.

78. **Limited institutional ownership:** Despite such information availability, the evaluation found limited awareness of GAP 2 across UNICEF, particularly at the field level.[52] Some committed/interested individuals had actively sought out its content, while others had been directed to it by gender-dedicated staff or engaged management. These were, however, exceptions rather than the rule. Overall, even where staff could reference the GAP, most had

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[49] Knowledge Sharing Plan of Action (2014), GAP Talking Points (n.d.).
[50] Interviews with staff involved in the development of GAP 1 and 2.
[51] <https://unicef.sharepoint.com/sites/PD-Gender/SitePages/GAP-Info-Center.aspx>. See also the section on Knowledge Management and Communication for further elaboration.
[52] Interviews across UNICEF HQ, and regional and country offices.

little grasp of its content and/or its applicability to their work[53] and even fewer were familiar with its associated tools and guidance.[54]

79. **Issue-based leadership statements and inconsistent management commitment:** The United Nations Leadership Model[55] requires all United Nations leaders to promote and protect gender equality along with other United Nations norms and standards. UNICEF leadership has made a wide range of public statements in relation to gender issues.[56] These statements, however, address specific dimensions of gender, such as adolescent girls, GBV in emergencies (GBViE), PSEA, violence against women, and gender parity in the workplace. Leadership have actively participated in external gender-related events,[57] but a statement is not yet available articulating the organization's commitment to gender equality as a key organizational principle of child rights, manifested through the vehicle of the GAPs.

80. Staff at field and HQ levels also indicated variable awareness of/commitment to gender equality among senior managers. Such commitment was often individualized, arising from contextual needs, professional experience elsewhere and/or personal commitment. Gender equality was repeatedly described as something that *'comes in waves'* across the UNICEF 'house', and which was likely to recede at some point. Field-level interviewees repeatedly expressed a lack of confidence that the 'next round' of country and regional office management would sustain any ongoing commitment to gender equality, if this existed.

Institutional architecture and capacities

81. **An expanded institutional architecture for gender equality:** GAP 1 focused strongly on the establishment of the institutional architecture for gender equality within UNICEF. GAP 2 did not explicitly commit to its continued development but rather *assumed* that the core institutional architecture was already in place (although in practice, build-up continued into the implementation of GAP 2).

82. In practice, building up the institutional architecture has taken time. Five years on from GAP 1 and following initiatives such as a talent pool exercise and recruitment package development,[58] UNICEF's 'gender architecture' is now more firmly established. From seven gender-dedicated staff within the organization in 2013,[59] UNICEF in April 2019 reported a staff of 46, including 34 dedicated Gender Specialists in regional/country offices and 12 sectoral Gender Specialists. In addition, 117 Gender Focal Points were in place (Figure 8).[60] Some country offices had also formed Gender Task Forces, bringing together focal points across units/sectors, such as in Argentina, China, Ghana and Nepal.

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[53] Interviews at HQ, regional offices and country offices.

[54] Such as the 2018 Gender Programmatic Review Guidance, which contains the required statement of prioritization – 1-3 targeted and 1-3 mainstreamed priorities – which UNICEF COs are expected to undertake.

[55] <https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/The-UN-Leadership-Model.pdf>.

[56] For example, in 2018, Executive Director Fore delivered keynote speeches at the Social Good Summit (on family-friendly workplaces of the future), and at the UNICEF-EU High-level Event on Gender-based Violence in Emergencies during the United Nations General Assembly; Deputy Executive Director Shanelle Hall spoke at the United Nations General Assembly on 'Addressing the Rights and Needs of Adolescent Girls in Crisis'; Deputy Executive Director Fatoumata Ndiaye delivered a speech at the High-Level 'Empowerment of Women and Girls in Africa' event, and the Second African Girls Summit in Ghana.

[57] Examples from 2018 include: Participation in annual days such as the International Day of the Girl Child and the 16 Days of Activism against GBV; the World Data Forum on approaches to closing SDG gender data gaps; hosting an event on 'Women Leaders for Girls' during the United Nations General Assembly.

[58] The gender talent pool initiative at the P4/P5 levels identified qualified candidates for direct selection in gender posts (GAP Annual Report 2016).

[59] Three at HQ and four at country office level.

[60] GAP Annual Report 2019.

Figure 8. Gender dedicated staffing

UNICEF GENDER STAFF

Gender specialists/advisers ▪ Gender sector specialists ▪ Gender focal points

2014: 9, 11, 10
2015: 9, 13, 76
2016: 15, 17, 78
2017: 20, 17, 86
2018: 34, 12, 117
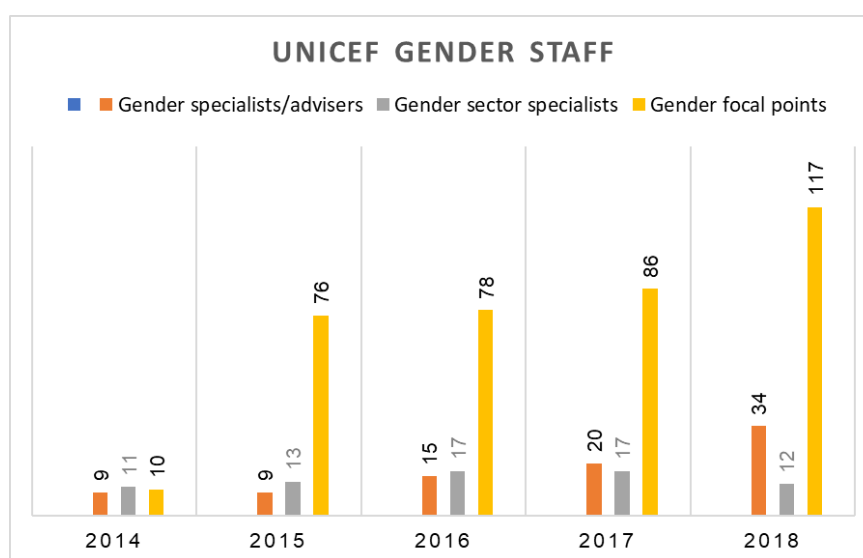
Source: GAP Annual reporting 20142019.

83. **Gaps and challenges in the gender architecture:** UNICEF's gender architecture is not yet fully built, with gaps and challenges remaining, including:

84. *HQ:* The establishment under GAP 1 of a dedicated specialized Gender Unit provided a focal point for gender work (and the GAP) within UNICEF. The decision to locate the Unit within the Programme Division was a conscious choice, in keeping with the determinedly programmatic approach of both GAPs.[61] As the GAPs were gradually implemented, however, and experience grew, this location reduced scope for the Gender Unit to influence corporate-level strategic planning and decision-making, accountability, research and data systems.[62]

85. *Regional level:* Regional Gender Advisers, appointed during the period of GAP 1, have played a major role in raising awareness of gender equality across UNICEF. Their highly valued activities include (Box 3):[63]

Box 3: Roles of Regional Gender Advisers
- Raising gender equality awareness across programme teams and advocating internally/externally
- Providing technical assistance, guidance and training to country offices and regional office staff, including Gender Focal Points
- Conducting research and mapping
- Quality checking documents/proposals for gender equality sensitivity
- Reporting on gender equality to external partners including governments, donors and United Nations agencies
- Engaging in inter-agency and other external forums on gender equality
- Providing access to global resources and knowledge
- Convening country offices around core issues such as child marriage
- Brokering regional partnerships/networks for gender equality

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[61] Interviews with UNICEF staff and management involved with GAP 1 and 2 development.
[62] Interviews with UNICEF management and the Gender Unit; review of corporate strategies and plans. Both Gender Unit staff and senior management referenced the limited influence of the Gender Unit over key corporate functions that sit outside the Programme Division, including planning, management and research functions, as well as accountability mechanisms such as audit.
[63] Interviews with UNICEF regional management and staff; fieldwork in WCARO, ECARO and UNICEF Sudan, Kyrgyzstan, Bangladesh, Colombia and Ghana.

86. Regional Gender Advisers, however, also faced the growing risk of a diluted gender equality focus, with staff increasingly required to expand their remit to also cover PSEA issues. The continuity of the Regional Gender Adviser posts once incumbents' four-year terms were over was also cause for concern in at least three regions.[64]

87. **Country Gender Specialists:** Under the GAP, country offices require a funded Gender Specialist for budgets of more than $20 million and designation of Gender Focal Points for offices not meeting this budget threshold.[65] Corporate data reported show progress over time in meeting requirements, with 99 out of 128 country offices reportedly meeting the corporate gender staff standard as of August 2019,[66] but improvements could be made to achieve greater performance.

88. Fieldwork for this evaluation highlighted the critical and essential role played by Gender Specialists in bringing gender to the forefront of UNICEF country programming and policy dialogue. Key success factors included: a) having scope to focus on comprehensive mainstreaming, rather than being tasked wholly with programme management – e.g., under the 'targeted priorities'; and b) reporting to the Deputy Representative, who is responsible for the programmatic portfolio. Few Gender Specialists, however, had resources available to support gender mainstreaming, and their degree of influence across programme areas was largely dependent on the willingness and interest of sectoral areas to engage. Their influence was also constrained by a lack of mandatory gender-related procedures and processes in country offices.

89. **Gender Focal Points:** The weakest link in UNICEF's gender architecture is the current system of Gender Focal Points. Despite strongly motivated and committed individuals, fieldwork and interviews found little clear rationale for the appointment of Gender Focal Points, with some lacking any background or experience in gender equality at all. Gender Focal Points reported significant capacity challenges and, despite corporate data showing the contrary,[67] few of those interviewed for the evaluation had undertaken relevant training. Almost none had a time allotment for gender equality within their workplan and gender was not reflected in their Performance Evaluation Reports. Many Gender Focal Points were also assigned as PSEA focal point, reflecting a common blurring of the gender and PSEA agendas observed at field level. The higher-profile PSEA work often constrained time to work on gender issues.

90. Based on information gathered from interviews with Gender Focal Points, there was consensus around the perception of the scope for improved positioning of their role, with a cross-cutting/cross-sectional role providing greater scope for leverage with UNICEF programme staff. Several pointed to the value that a national Gender Focal Point can bring to the office; credibility with national partners; knowing cultural gender equality dynamics well; and the retaining of gender capacity within the country.

91. **Devolving responsibility:** Fieldwork and interviews for the evaluation found a risk of devolving (or offloading) responsibility, with a Gender Specialist or Focal Point being assumed to '*take care of that'*, in line with the limited wider ownership of the GAP, as described above. Frequently, this resulted in gender equality often being perceived as '*someone else's*

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[64] Interviews with RGAs and senior management in the seven UNICEF regions.
[65] 2016 (updated 2019) Guidelines for Country Office gender staffing.
[66] Global Dashboard data 2019.
[67] According to corporate data, 81 per cent of 86 UNICEF country office Gender Focal Points completed the GenderPro training in 2018 (UN SWAP Reporting, 2018).

business', both at HQ and field levels – rather than being a responsibility of all members of staff.

Capacities and knowledge

"It doesn't matter how good the GAP is if there is not the capacity to implement it." Gender specialist interview

92. **Limited attention to gender competencies:** UNICEF conducted a needs assessment survey of dedicated gender staff in 2016 to inform intended training activities.[68] No broad-based gender capacity assessments of staff have been conducted, however, and gender features only lightly within UNICEF's competency framework, as '*respect for diversity and inclusion (including gender)*' as a core value.[69] This is in contrast to some other agencies (Box 4).

Box 4. United Nations agencies gender competency requirements
- UNHCR Competency Framework (2012) mainstreams gender across four of its values and competencies.
- UNDP includes as a core competency for all staff: 'Ensures an organizational environment that respects diversity, gender equality and cultural sensitivity and fosters openness to diverse perspectives'.

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93. **Building the capacities of the few:** UNICEF's gender training has focused mainly on upskilling the organization's dedicated gender staff and other key stakeholders though specialized courses, on the assumption that skills will be subsequently diffused. Various forms training are available, according to role and position, through the GenderPro capacity-building and credentialing programme (Box 5).[70]

Box 5. GenderPro

Developed with George Washington University, GenderPro aims to enhance the skill sets for, and formalize/professionalize gender capacity in organizations. The theory relies on trained professionals to effect change in their own areas and diffuse to peers over time.

Several different models of GenderPro are currently available, targeting different audiences:
- The 'GenderPro GWU' option, run by George Washington University, and piloted in early 2019. Participants choose either public health or social development, and gain practical skills on how to apply a gender analysis in programme design, monitoring and evaluation. A total of 38 UNICEF staff members participated in the 15-week pilot programme, which took approximately five hours of participants' time per week in addition to a residential component.
- GenderPro for UNICEF Gender Focal Points: A facilitated programme held once or twice per year that includes online learning, webinars and digital communities of practice.
- GenderPro Gender Focal Point Credential: This option provides recognition of competency of the Gender Focal Point skill profile. Credentialed Gender Focal Points are profiled in a roster in the Human Resources Talent Management System, and receive an official notification from the system.
- GenderPro Global Development Professional: This provides for a globally recognized credential in gender and development – planned for launch late 2019.

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[68] 'Conducting a Strategic Review of UNICEF Gender Capacity-Building and Credentialing Initiatives', August 2019. Training is now available for Gender Focal Points; see <www.unicef.org/sites/default/files/2018-10/UNICEF_GenderPro_Flyer_FINAL.pdf>.
[69] <www.unicef.org/about/employ/files/UNICEF_Competencies.pdf>.
[70] UNICEF GenderPro Credentialing and Capacity Development Programme Terms of Reference, N.D., UN SWAP Reporting 2016–2018; interviews HQ and country offices.

94. As of September 2019 (and with piloting starting only in 2018), 49 staff had completed the GenderPro Gender Focal Point training, and 38 had completed the pilot GenderPro GWU[71] – a small proportion for a global workforce of 14,000. The efficacy of the training under GenderPro has yet to be assessed.

95. **No mandatory training for non-dedicated staff, but individual initiatives:** Unlike some sister United Nations agencies, and also unlike UNICEF PSEA training, gender training is not mandatory[72] and opportunities within UNICEF's systems (outside GenderPro) are limited. External capacity development opportunities are rarely pursued in professional development plans.[73] Nevertheless, the evaluation identified several areas of training opportunities available, albeit unsystematized. Examples include (Box 6):

Box 6. Examples of gender training opportunities	
HQ	- A 90-minute session on gender equality within the induction process for senior managers. - Gender-based budgeting and planning and operationalizing gender equality in strategic planning as part of results-based management training. - A Gender Equality in Education Toolkit, developed by the UNICEF HQ Education section and the Brookings Institute, to be made available on UNICEF's training website, AGORA.[74]
Regional	- In the Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office (LACRO), a collaborative workshop to build regional gender capacities was under way at the time of the evaluation.[75] - In the Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA), three days of practical gender training was provided to more than 400 staff in the region in 2018. - In the East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO), gender trainings of two to three days were delivered to more than 300 staff in nine country offices.
Country	In Kenya, 126 UNICEF country office staff were trained in gender equality mainstreaming by the Gender Specialist.

96. These initiatives, however, were not linked to accountabilities, as described below. Moreover, the evaluation encountered diverse levels of gender knowledge and capacities across UNICEF, with heavy reliance on dedicated field-level gender staff, where available, to provide technical support and quality controls across programming (*see para. 73*). Field-level staff cited a strong desire for practical *'how to'* gender equality training, with clear definitions and guidance.[76] Fieldwork and interviews also found confusion among staff between the mandatory PSEA training course – which many staff considered as 'gender training' – and GAP, or gender equality mainstreaming, training.

97. **Guidance available but unsystematized:** UNICEF's gender architecture has produced a wide range of technical guidance materials (Box 7):

Box 7. Guidance and tools
The Gender Team intranet site provides tools to support Gender Programmatic Reviews (GPRs), integrating gender in Country Programming (Situation Analysis, Strategy Notes and Country Programme Documents); GAP Monitoring and Reporting Guidance.

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[71] Another 38 staff have completed some GenderPro course materials. Source: Staffing Results – RGAs Feedback, internal Excel document, 25 February 2019; GAP Data Companion 2019.

[72] Despite its inclusion within UN SWAP standards. UN SWAP Reporting 2014–2018.

[73] Interviews at country, regional and HQ levels.

[74] Education Annual Results Report 2018.

[75] <https://unicef.sharepoint.com/sites/ICON/SitePages/LAC-RO-integrated-Gender-and-Humanitarian-Response-in-a-pilot-workshop.aspx>.

[76] Fieldwork and interviews with country and regional offices.

- An external Gender Equality website,[77] launched in 2018, offers information and resources on UNICEF work on gender issues.
- A Gender, Violence and WASH toolkit was introduced in 2015 to address the needs of girls and women, including in humanitarian situations.
- ROSA developed a 400-page gender toolkit[78] and EAPRO developed Practitioner Guides for Articulating Gender in Results and Reporting.
- Specific guidance was developed by some country offices, e.g., Pakistan (shared globally and taken up in the East Asia and the Pacific region), Argentina and Nepal.
- The Evaluation Office developed 2019 guidance on integrating gender equality into evaluations.

98. However praiseworthy, these exceptions are inadequate in volume to serve an organization of 14,000 staff. Some key guidance gaps also remain, including:
- Despite the programmatic emphasis of both GAPs, there is still no overarching corporate guidance on how to operationalize GAP priorities in programming; and
- A space holder for 'Gap Implementation Notes' explains that briefs on each result area of the GAP will be forthcoming. Draft technical notes on 'Quality Maternal Care' and 'Gender Equality in Community Health Systems' have been developed but are not yet finalized. Some other guidance is available, drawn from other organizations or programming areas, but gaps persist.[79]

99. A planned strategic review of capacity development initiatives by the HQ Gender Unit in late 2019 offers the opportunity to prepare new approaches going forward.

100. **Building a community of practice/knowledge transfer:** A growing community of gender equality-related practice is being built across UNICEF. The HQ Gender Unit Knowledge Management and Communications strategy (updated in 2018)[80] supports annual and biannual global and regional gender network meetings, respectively, as a means of sharing information, assessing progress and identifying future priorities.[81] Senior gender team members also participate in a large number of network and strategic meetings internally.[82]

Responsibilities and accountabilities

101. Clear collective and individual responsibilities and accountabilities are needed if a strategic instrument or issue is to be taken up, 'bought into' and progress reported upon. Responsibility for delivery needs to sit institution-wide, rather than resting with an individual unit.

102. **Strong collective but limited individual responsibility/accountability:** Both GAPs locate implementation responsibilities in a chain from the Office of the Executive Director to Regional Directors to Country Representatives. The GAP Steering Committee, chaired by the

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[77] <www.unicef.org/gender-equality>.
[78] <www.unicef.org/rosa/sites/unicef.org.rosa/files/2018-12/Gender%20Toolkit%20Integrating%20Gender%20in%20Programming%20for%20Every%20Child%20UNICEF%20South%20Asia%202018.pdf>.
[79] For example, Joint UNICEF-UNFPA Global Programme guidance; Columbia University and International Rescue Committee, 'A Toolkit for Integrating Menstrual Hygiene Management into Humanitarian Response', New York, 2017; World Health Organization, *INSPIRE: Seven strategies for ending violence against children*, WHO, Geneva, 2016; UNICEF, 'Gender-Responsive Water, Sanitation and Hygiene: Key elements for effective WASH programming', UNICEF, New York, 2017.
[80] Gender Section Communication and Knowledge Management, internal document, 2015; Gender Equality Team, Internal Communication Strategy, internal PowerPoint, n.d.
[81] GAP Annual Reports, 2015, 2016, 2017; GAP Data Companion and Scorecard 2018.
[82] Examples from 2018 include a WASH network meeting in the Middle East and North Africa region; and other sectoral network meetings with Education, Social Policy and Child Protection.

Deputy Executive Director of Programmes and including regional and HQ-level Directors,[83] reports annually to the Executive Board.

103.   Neither GAP, however, specifies the processes by which individual (non-gender-dedicated) managers or staff should take up and apply the GAP in their designated areas of responsibility. Nor are managers or staff actually held *accountable* for GAP delivery e.g. through inclusion in Performance Evaluation Reports (PERs), Country Office Annual Reports or Representative performance plans. This sits in contrast to some other UN agencies (Box 8):

Box 8: Other agencies: Staff accountability for gender:

- The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) requires 100 per cent of staff at all levels to set a work and learning objective on gender.
- Since 2009, all UNDP managers have been required to report on one mandatory key result on gender equality and gender parity in the UNDP Result Competency Framework.
- The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations includes gender equality in its Performance Evaluation Management System for Assistant Director-Generals, Directors and Gender Focal Points in decentralized offices and at HQ – with mandatory activities and a set of performance indicators against which to measure progress.
- Under Oxfam's Global Performance Framework, project staff report annually on generic output data in six thematic indicator areas, one of which is women's empowerment.

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104.   For a highly decentralized institution such as UNICEF, this presents a significant gap. While collective responsibility for delivery is named in both GAPs, and carried forward into performance reporting, below, little *individual* accountability exists beyond gender-dedicated staff. By contrast, the 2010 Gender Policy specifies clear expectations for management, as follows:
- Make clear their intention to implement the Gender Policy as appropriate to their unit, explaining this commitment to ensure understanding and action;
- Identify the ways in which the Gender Policy is relevant to their units and how their units will contribute to the achievement of its defined results;
- Define the gender equality outcomes that they wish their staff to achieve, and ensure that these are reflected in the activities and outcomes of unit and individual workplans and in the result statements of programmes; and
- Track progress towards the achievement of results as a distinct and routine part of collective and individual performance monitoring and evaluation.[84]

105.   This specific directive drives home both individual and collective responsibility and accountability.

106.   **The committed few:** The evaluation found some individual staff and management powerfully committed to (and taking individual responsibility for) gender equality concerns. Nevertheless, currently unsupported by accountability systems, and with excellence in gender equality unrewarded,[85] this commitment and enthusiasm remained largely vested in the individual. It resulted in a sense of being isolated, or 'battling against the tide' – part of a small group of a committed few, but not sharing in a comprehensive and sustained organizational commitment.

Resource allocation

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83 Namely, the Deputy Executive Director for Field Results, the Deputy Executive Director for Partnerships, two Regional Directors, Directors of the Programme Division, Director of Division of Human Resources, and the Gender Principal Adviser.
84 UNICEF, 'Gender Policy: Working for an equal future', 2010.
85 Despite the commitment in GAP 2 to learn from UNDP's Gender Seal to reward countries exceeding standards on the GAP's Key Performance Indicators for programme excellence (GAP 2, para. 86).

107.   **Reduced core resources GAP 1-GAP 2:** Figure 9 below reflects resources available for GAP 1 and 2 implementation. In summary, $19 million of core resources were made available under GAP 1 to help build regional and HQ gender capacity.[86] This was not followed by a similar dedicated financial commitment under GAP 2, other than for 'catalytic resources'. Only 13 of the organization's 41 designated gender positions were integrated into the institutional budget by this point.[87] However, non-grant core resources of $400,000 for HQ and $100,000 for each region are provided for programming expenditures annually.[88]

Figure 9. GAP resource allocations
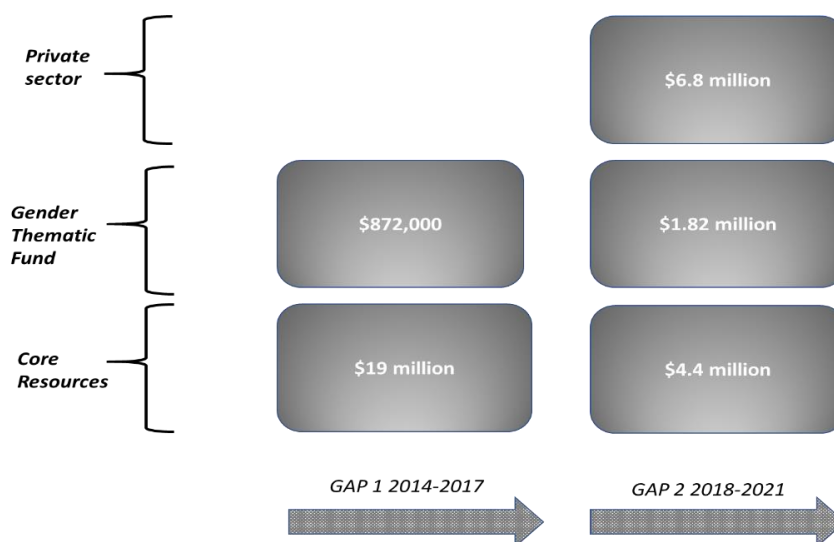
Source: Evaluation Team, based on information supplied by the Gender Unit.

108.   **Few flexible funds:** The central gender thematic fund,[89] which aimed to generate flexible resources for gender mainstreaming, received scant contributions, with just $872,000 provided over the lifetime of GAP 1 and $1.1 million in 2018 for GAP 2[90] – less than 1 per cent of all contributions to thematic funds. No specific budgets were identified for gender equality mainstreaming at the country level – even where a Gender Specialist was present. Field study found, however, that even relatively small resources – such as those available to Regional Gender Advisers – demonstrated strong catalytic and leverage power, being used to conduct research or studies; commission gender reviews; and awareness-raising and programmatic initiatives.[91]

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[86] GAP 2014–2017; Gender Annual Results Report 2015, p. 43.
[87] Of dedicated Gender Specialists in August 2019, 13 are paid under the institutional budget, (nine at regional level and four at HQ). The other 28 are project-based. Seventeen of the project-based positions are funded from regular resources, and 11 from other resources. GAP 2018–2021, p. 15; DHR Gender Development Functional Area, internal Excel sheet, 23 July 2019.
[88] Information received from the Gender, 5 September 2019.
[89] The Strategic Plan 2014–2017 had nine thematic funds, and the Strategic Plan 2018–2021 had 10.
[90] UNICEF received US$386 million to thematic pools in 2018, of which US$1.1 million (0.26 per cent) was provided to the gender pool. Reportedly, limited contributions were due to donor hesitation to funding gender as a separate category, and a preference for UNICEF to utilize programme sector funding to mainstream gender. Additional reasons provided were that fundraising divisions are not held accountable for the GAP, and have limited technical understanding of how to position UNICEF with donors vis-à-vis gender (an untapped potential for UNICEF). The establishment of a Gender Focal Point within the Public Partnership Division in 2018, however, has helped to ensure that gender experts have supported integration in approaches. Private Fundraising and Partnerships and Public Partnership Division Annual Reports 2015 and 2018; interviews with staff at HQ and regional offices.
[91] Field study in WCARO and ECARO, as well as Bangladesh, Colombia, Ghana, Kyrgyzstan and Sudan.

109.   **Growing private sector resources:** Private sector resources are a growing area of financing for gender equality, with $6.8 million contributed during 2018–2021. This included contributions to GenderPro from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in 2016; and to the Girls' Empowerment Initiative from Gucci, Dove, Chloé and Clé de Peau Beauté in 2018–2019.[92] These resources, however, are dedicated to specific initiatives, rather than providing UNICEF with flexible financing that supports institutional mainstreaming.

Performance monitoring systems

110.   Performance monitoring is an integral part of the architecture surrounding a corporate instrument, both for accountability and learning purposes.

111.   *Improved performance monitoring:* Monitoring systems have been gradually augmented over the duration of the GAPs. However, many systems are new, with some being launched in 2019, and their utility is yet to be tested. They are summarized in Figure 10.

Figure 10. Performance monitoring systems
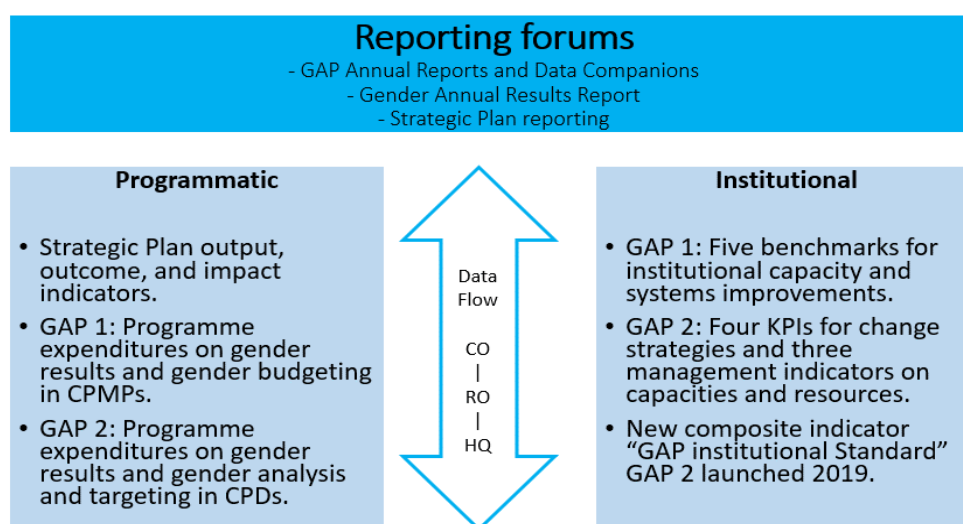
Source: Evaluation team.

112.   *Programmatic allocations and expenditure to gender.* UNICEF moved to track an overall estimate of the actual expenditure on gender equality results prior to GAP 1, introducing a Gender Equality Marker (GEM) in 2010.[93] The rating denotes activities with gender equality as having a *principal, significant, marginal* or *no* gender objective (coded 3–0).[94] The gender marker methodology, systems and guidance have been refined over the lifespan of the

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[92] 'Gucci and UNICEF's Girls' Empowerment Initiative', Gucci Update, July 2019;
<https://chime.gucci.com/raising-leaders/gucci-and-unicefs-girls-empowement-initiative/>.
[93] GEM is a tool used by UN organizations to track planned or actual investments in gender equality within programmes or projects. All outputs are marked with a GEM rating at the beginning of a CPD or when funds are obtained. UNICEF, Monitoring Gender Results and Expenditure at UNICEF, March 2018.
[94] Country offices are guided that the percentage of activity expenditures linked to gender under a given output should be taken into account when deciding on a GEM code, as follows:
GEM principal/3 – 60% to 100% of expenditures are for gender activities
GEM significant/2 – 60% to 40% of expenditures are for gender activities
GEM marginal/1 – 40% to 25% of expenditures are for gender activities
GEM none/0 – 0 to 25% of expenditures are for gender activities
Source: Gender Unit.

GAPs,[95] with a gender tagging system introduced under GAP 2 for all activity-level Specific Intervention Codes (SICs). This applies pre-assigned 'yes-no' codes to standard output indicators and activities. 'Yes' codes denote gender-responsive or gender-transformative (in fact, gender-targeted) activity.[96] The GEM at the output level and the SIC at the activity level are the two main parameters used in calculating gender expenditure in UNICEF.[97]

113. Despite ongoing improvements, two key technical challenges were identified. First, a lack of flexibility of the fixed tagging system so that some SIC 'yes' codes reflect activities that are not inherently gender-responsive unless they are intentionally conducted in a gender-responsive manner, while automatic 'no' codes are generated for some activities that may be gender-sensitive.[98] Second, there are challenges with the correspondence between the level of the marker given to an output-level GEM code and the actual gender equality intensity of the intervention itself.[99] Quality and accuracy concerns raised by country office staff were validated by a review of programme output-level GEM codes assigned for Country Programme Documents (CPDs), which were found to be of variable accuracy in application – in one CPD, less than 50 per cent accurately reflected the correct GEM designation.

114. UNICEF also generated, for the first time in 2018, an aggregate-level figure for resources expended on gender-mainstreamed and 'gender-transformative' programming (*see also para. 140*), drawn from GEM coding. Figures are reached in two different ways: Gender-mainstreamed expenditures are calculated based on outputs where gender equality is either a significant or a marginal objective.[100] So-called gender-transformative expenditure is calculated by weighting the gender-tagged activities that fall under outputs where gender equality is the principal or a significant objective.[101] These improved expenditure tracking systems are providing new levels of depth and detail for data analysis, but issues remain with ensuring the accuracy of gender markers applied at field level, as noted in para. 112.

115. ***Programmatic results monitoring:*** For programmatic results, the GAPs apply UNICEF's corporate Strategic Plan monitoring systems, from which GAP indicators and intended results (including the eight GAP 2 demonstrable results) have been drawn. Progress is reported in

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[95] UNICEF, 'Gender Equality, Global Annual Results Report 2018', p. 61; UNICEF, 'Gender Equality Marker and Gender Tag Guidance Note', internal document, N.D.

[96] Approximately one fourth of the standardized activities are tagged 'yes' to denote they are either gender-responsive or gender-transformative.

[97] UNICEF, 'Gender Equality Marker and Gender Tag Guidance Note'.

[98] While the guidance advises that country offices have the opportunity to unselect automatically generated gender tags, this did not seem to be well understood as an option at the country level. The guidance states: "SICs will be given a gender tag. The gender tag will be pre-filled with the option for COs to "uncheck" the tag if it is not applicable." UNICEF, 'Gender Equality Marker and Gender Tag Guidance Note'. According to interviews with the UNICEF Gender Unit, this was a known risk, but the fixed tag system was a response to a fully flexible tag strategy that led to countries severely under-tagging activities for gender. That said, a correction course could be a mixed approach: reducing the fixed tag to activities that are by default gender in practice and using a flexible tag for other activities.

[99] GEM codes are assigned by country offices, so the discrepancy observed is a matter of consistently attributing gender objectives and outputs by country offices (Interviews: UNICEF Gender Unit). The guidance for country offices states that, "Country offices should ensure that during their specification of RAM indicators, they choose at least one indicator tagged at the same level as the Gender Equality Marker for the output PIDB code. For instance, an output tagged as "3" must select a RAM standard output indicator tagged as level "3"; an output tagged as "2" must select a RAM indicator tagged as "2" and so on." UNICEF, 'Gender Tag for RAM Standard Indicators Guidance Note', Internal document, January 2018.

[100] UNICEF, 'Gender Equality, Global Annual Results Report 2018', p. 61.

[101] This calculation is a three-step process: 1. Selection of expenditures for country office outputs marked GEM 2 (significant) and GEM 3 (principal); 2. Filter to only keep SICs that are tagged as gender SICs; and 3. Count 100 per cent of SIC expenditures under GEM 3 outputs and 50 per cent of SIC expenditures under GEM 2 outputs. Source: Gender Unit. According to UNICEF's Gender Unit, this double filter avoids any over-estimation, but there may be an under-estimation. UNICEF, 'Gender Equality, Global Annual Results Report 2018', p. 61.

Annual Implementation Reports on the GAP (alongside a detailed data companion) and a broader Gender Annual Results Report, which highlights the organization's gender equality results to Member States and broader stakeholders.[102]

116. Although this system provides full alignment with the Strategic Plan corporate reporting systems, a few challenges were identified, including:
- The inability of some Strategic Plan indicators (*see para. 37*) to assess transformational or structural changes in gender equality;
- The lack of encompassing of more strategic or 'upstream' gender equality work, such as policy influencing and advocacy (*see para. 47*);
- Some initial inconsistencies exist between Strategic Plan and GAP targeted area monitoring, although 'GAP Priority M&E Packages', issued in 2019, aim for better alignment between GAP requirements and UNICEF data systems.[103]

117. ***Institutional results monitoring:*** Considerable effort has been dedicated to improving institutional performance monitoring systems. GAP 1 specified five benchmarks for monitoring improvements in institutional capacity and systems.[104] By GAP 2, systems were considerably more sophisticated, with four key performance indicators for change strategies and three management indicators on capacities and resources (Table 2):

Table 2. Indicators for institutional results monitoring

Key performance indicators on change strategies	• Country offices undertaking robust gender analysis; • Country programme documents meeting or exceeding standards of excellence on gender equality; • Country offices meeting or exceeding standards on gender in programme implementation and accountability; and • Compliance with United Nations SWAP performance indicators.
Management indicators on organizational enablers	• Gender parity in posts P5 and above; • Percentage of eligible staff completing gender training; and • Percentage of expenditures on programming with a primary focus on gender equality.

118. A new composite indicator, labelled the 'GAP Institutional Standard', was launched in 2019. This applies nine institutional indicators (Box 9)[105] on which country offices self-report:

Box 9. The GAP Institutional Standard

1. Gender Programmatic Review
2. Gender integration into Programme Documents
3. Identification of gender results in CPD results framework:
    3a) integrated results
    3b) adolescent girls' priorities
4. Gender-tagged standard indicators
5. Accountability structure for implementing gender priorities
6. Definition of responsibility for gender results
7. Gender expenditure
8. Gender staffing

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[102] GAP 2 2018–2021; GAP Data Companion 2019; UN SWAP Reporting 2019.
[103] The frameworks were developed for each GAP priority area, and they lay out the linkages between the gender tags and the specific areas of interventions and standard output indicators.
[104] 1. Effective knowledge sharing and communications for promoting gender equality; 2.Gender staffing and capacity across the organization; 3. Gender performance of country programme management plans; 4. Gender performance on evaluations of UNICEF programmes; and 5. Programme expenditures on gender results.
[105] Data derived from country self-reporting against Strategic Monitoring Questions as well as VISION, 'M&E GAP Standards' PowerPoint, 5 May 2019.

119.   Methodological challenges, such as category labelling,[106] are not yet fully resolved. Country offices score as 'meeting' if they meet six or more criteria; 'approaching' if they meet 4 or 5 criteria, and 'lagging' if they meet three or fewer criteria. Global Dashboard Data reported that 73/128 (or 57 per cent) of countries met the standards in 2019; 34 per cent are 'approaching' and only 9 per cent are 'lagging' – however, more than 50 per cent of country offices already met this standard on the first round of (baseline) data gathering.

120.   *Limited data use:* Despite the considerable progress made in tracking institutional progress particularly over time, the evaluation found limited awareness at field level of the data available for use.[107] Currently, the flow of data is mainly from country office level up to HQ for aggregate reporting.[108] Feedback loops are not yet sufficiently mature, or understood at country level, to enable maximum use of available data to drive performance enhancement for improved gender equality results.

Oversight mechanisms

121.   Embedding gender equality into institutional oversight mechanisms provides a powerful safeguard for accountability. For UNICEF, integrating gender equality into evaluation and audit – two of the main oversight functions – remains a challenge.

122.   *Evaluation:* Despite an increase in the percentage of evaluations rated as 'outstanding' or 'highly satisfactory' in addressing gender equality (combined with human rights-based approaches and equity) in 2014,[109] performance has otherwise remained mostly static over time (Figures 11 and 12). In 2018, UNICEF reported an improvement from 50 per cent in 2016 to 65 per cent in 2018 of evaluations approaching UN SWAP requirements (Figure 12), although the criterion was overall still not fully met.[110] UNICEF's Evaluation Office is seeking to address the outstanding gap through a staff development programme for evaluation managers,[111] though this was not finalized at the time of writing. In partnership with the Gender section, the UNICEF Evaluation Office has also developed guidance for staff and consultants on integrating gender equality into evaluations.[112]

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[106] The terminology lagging, approaching and meeting is not in alignment with UN-SWAP, which uses a four-point scale of 'missing', 'approaches', 'meets' and 'exceeds'.

[107] Field visits to Colombia, Ghana, Sudan, Kyrgyzstan and Bangladesh.

[108] Interviews with UNICEF country office.

[109] 2011–2015 Categorized as 'methods, gender, human rights and equity' and graded Outstanding/Highly satisfactory/Mostly satisfactory/Unsatisfactory, <www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/UNICEF_GEROS_Meta_Analysis_v2_1(print).pdf; 2016–2017>. Categorized as 'HRBAP, gender equality and equity' and graded Highly satisfactory/Satisfactory/Fair/Unsatisfactory.

[110] UNICEF, 'UNICEF Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System Meta-Analysis', 2018, <www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/GEROS_Meta-Analysis_2018.pdf>.

[111] UNICEF, 'Evaluation Office Annual Report 2019', 2019.

[112] UNICEF, 'Guidance on Gender Integration in Evaluation', 2019.

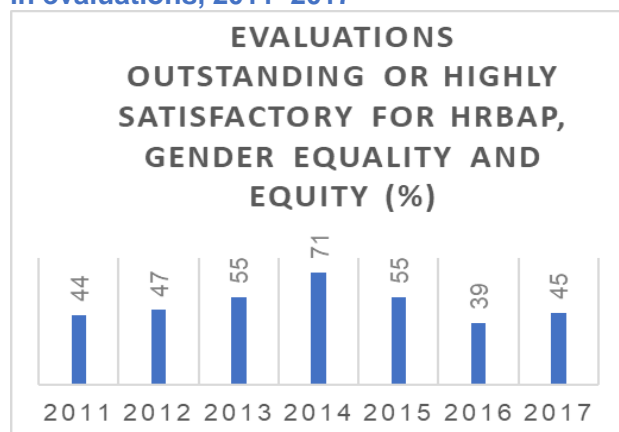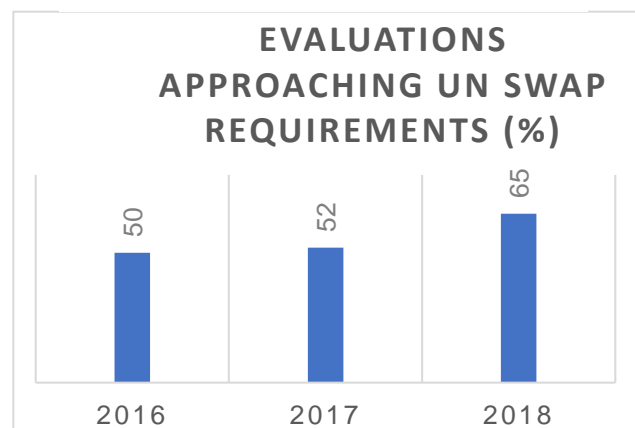**Figure 12. Gender, human rights and equity in evaluations, 2011–2017**

EVALUATIONS OUTSTANDING OR HIGHLY SATISFACTORY FOR HRBAP, GENDER EQUALITY AND EQUITY (%)

2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
44	47	55	71	55	39	45

Figure 11. Evaluations approaching UN SWAP requirements, 2016–2018

EVALUATIONS APPROACHING UN SWAP REQUIREMENTS (%)

2016	2017	2018
50	52	65

Source: Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System reports, 2014–2019.

123. ***Audit:*** Neither GAP targets or monitors gender equality integration in audits. UNICEF's Office of Internal Audit and Investigation includes gender in risk-based planning for each audit engagement.[113] Although it participates in United Nations Representatives of Internal Audit Systems, which adopted in 2018 a mini-guide for UN SWAP 2.0 Indicator Auditing based on best practice gender audit methodology,[114] UNICEF had not undertaken a gender audit of its internal systems and procedures as of August 2019.[115]

Workplace and staffing

124. Reflecting internally the core values of gender equality is key to providing a conducive environment for gender equality programming and policy dialogue. *'If we cannot sort our own house out, how can we preach to others?' (Country office interview)*.

125. **Good progress on staffing parity:** Both GAPs commit to improvements in gender parity in the workforce[116] and significant improvements have been made over time,[117] reflecting wider international and United Nations trends. Global data for 2019 show that 48 per cent of staff are female (7,089 female; 7,777 male), despite some regional variations.[118] Parity at senior staff levels – from a high starting point – has remained largely stable since 2016 (Figure 13), though slippage in female representation at the P5 level since 2017 may pose risks to the sustainability of gains.[119] UNICEF reached gender parity in the Senior Staff Rotation cadre for the first time in 2018.[120]

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[113] OIAI Annexes to Office of Internal Audit and Investigation 2018 Work Plan.
[114] United Nations Representatives of Internal Audit Services, 'Guidance Document: Mini-Guide to UN-SWAP 2.0 Indicator Auditing', 2018.
[115] UNICEF, OIAI Workplan and Office Management Plan 2018; HQ interviews.
[116] GAP 1 commits to applying gender balance as one of the key selection criteria for recruitment, with senior managers responsible for operationalizing this principle.
[117] The 2007 Gender Parity and Equality Policy (CF/EXD/2007) emphasizes gender balanced staff representation across all categories and grades, and includes monitoring and accountability mechanisms. It also mandates the appointment of a Special Advisor on Gender and Diversity.
[118] For example, the Europe and Central Asia region has 63 per cent female staff, while West and Central Africa has only 37 per cent female staff.
[119] UNICEF UN SWAP Reporting 2017 and 2018; Division of Human Resources Annual Report 2018, pp. 7–8.
[120] Division of Human Resources Annual Report, 2018, pp. 7–8.

Figure 13. Gender parity in staffing

STAFF GENDER PARITY

■ Female - all staff %　　■ Female - P5 and above %

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Female - all staff %	48	47	48	48	48
Female - P5 and above %	45	46	46	45	44
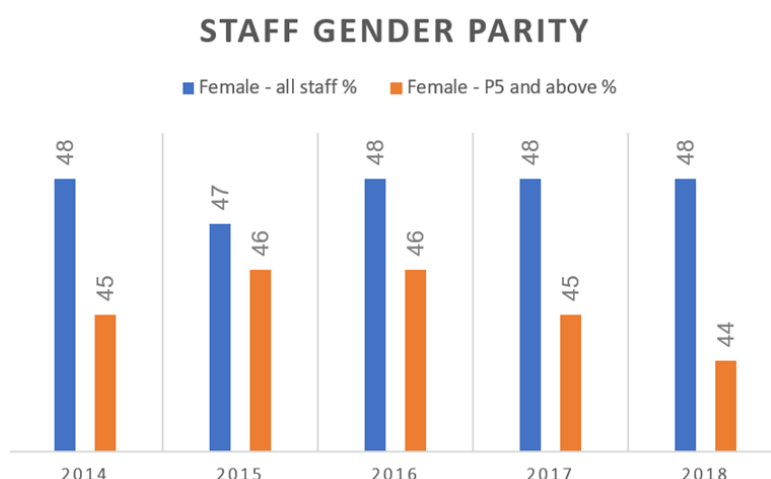
Source: Department of Human Resources.

126.   The evaluation found UNICEF's commitment to staffing parity well understood and appreciated across the organization.[121] Some units, such as WASH, have implemented their own gender parity in staffing initiatives.[122] Initiatives such as the New and Emerging Talent Initiative aim to help fill talent gaps around gender, diversity and provide career opportunities for external talents as well as for national and general service staff.[123] UNICEF is now discussing how to increase diversity along multiple parameters, recognizing the importance of diversity and gender inclusion in positive employee experiences.[124]

127.   **Challenges in the internal culture:** GAP 1 does not speak directly to organizational culture, but GAP 2 notes that UNICEF aims to be a more gender-responsive workplace, including family-friendly policies such as maternity and paternity leave and flexitime.[125] These concerns are not reflected in GAP 2's accountability framework, however.

128.   Despite notable steps for, and improvements in, staffing parity, there remains a sense across the organization that UNICEF remains a culturally male-dominated domain. Gender differences in levels of satisfaction – with women notably less satisfied than men – have repeatedly emerged in staff workplace surveys.[126] UNICEF staff and management have taken a series of measures to better identify and address these concerns (Box 10), though their effectiveness remains to be proven.

Box 10. Efforts to improve the gender culture in UNICEF

- UNICEF management have commissioned and published some key reports including: the Independent Panel Review of the UNICEF Response to PSEA (2018) and the Independent Task Force Report on Workplace Gender Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Harassment and Abuse of Authority (2019).
- UNICEF scored in the top 11 per cent of Economic Dividends for Gender Equality-certified countries and institutions in 2018.[127] The certification assesses policies and practices across gender-specific platforms including pay, recruitment and promotion.

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[121] For example, UNICEF's Staff Selection Policy promotes gender considerations in rotations and assignments at each duty station (CF/AI/2016-005).

[122] Women in WASH initiative; interviews, HQ and country offices.

[123] Division of Human Resources, Annual Report, 2015.

[124] Division of Human Resources Annual Report, 2018, p. 20.

[125] GAP 2018–2021, p. 15.

[126] Women respondents were less positive than men across all subjects. UN SWAP Report, 2019; Division of Human Resources Annual Report 2018, p. 22; Global Staff Survey Report 2017; interviews HQ.

[127] UNICEF Division of Human Resources Annual Report 2018; UN SWAP Reporting 2019; interviews HQ.

- Internally, the staff-led vehicle of Gender Push (dating from 2017) focuses on family-friendly rotation policies, childcare, inclusive parental leave policies, spouse employment, and ensuring respect and security for LGBTIQ staff.
- Staff in ESARO launched a Female Talent initiative, while WCARO's Transforming our Workplace Initiative aims to enhance gender equality in the workplace.

4.3 Partnerships for gender equality

Summary narrative

Substantive partnerships are an essential component of gender equality work, particularly in the context of United Nations reform. The evidence indicates that UNICEF is an active partner in global partnerships for gender equality, particularly at HQ level. At country level, it is not typically seen as taking a strongly proactive approach in the inter-agency system for gender equality, and its gender-related partnerships with civil society have tended to focus on project implementation rather than strategic concerns. Private sector partnerships are growing.

UNICEF has mostly strong and consensual relationships on gender equality with its partner governments and has needed to navigate some complex gender-related issues at country level. Where sensitivities exist, UNICEF is perceived to have largely cohered with government positions, without always taking an explicit or principled stance on gender equality. There has been no concerted effort to incentivize government partners on gender or to build the capacity of external partners more broadly on gender equality.

129.   The development of substantive partnerships is an essential component of all work for gender equality, helping create synergies and efficiencies. It is particularly key in the current context of United Nations inter-agency reform. This section of the evaluation considers four types of partnerships: United Nations, government, civil society and the private sector.

130.   **The inter-agency context:** United Nations partnerships for gender equality are becoming increasingly critical as current directives seek greater rationalization and harmonization at country, regional and HQ levels under the new United Nations Cooperation Framework.[128] Even prior to current reforms, both GAPs made strong commitments to increase global partnerships on gender equality.[129] The same commitments continue in GAP 2.[130]

131.   As part of a move towards increasing inter-agency harmonization, UNICEF has formal partnerships under a Common Chapter for its 2018–2021 Strategic Plan with UNFPA, UNDP and UN Women. The Common Chapter commits UNICEF to working on at least six common SDG indicators, including legal frameworks for equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex; gender-based violence; early marriage; FGM/C; and political participation.[131] GAP 2 accordingly includes reference to all these areas, although to differing degrees.[132]

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[128] The Cooperation is the current moniker for the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.

[129] For example, GAP 1 commits to continued UNICEF global engagement with the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Gender Task Team, and the IASC gender reference group – GAP 2014–2017, p. 25.

[130] GAP 2018–2021, p. 14.

[131] GAP 2018–2021; Common Chapter Annex 2017.

[132] Child marriage and early unions, as a targeted priority, receives greatest attention, and a focus on legal framework reform and political participation. GBV as a targeted priority is focused on GBViE.

132. At **HQ level,** key strategic and programmatic United Nations partnerships include (Box 11):

Box 11. United Nations partnerships for gender equality

- Global lead for the International Day of the Girl Child;
- Global partnership with UNFPA on ending child marriage and FGM/C;[133]
- Member of Inter Agency Network on Gender Equality and Women (IANGWE), the UNDG Task Team on Gender; and the United Nations Task Force on Violence Against Women;
- Member of working groups of the High-Level Task Force on Financing for Gender;
- Member of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics;
- Observer status within the global Spotlight Initiative on Violence Against Women (implementing partner at country and regional levels);
- Partner in the Global Partnership for Education (which has a focus on girls' education and gender equality); and
- Member of the technical advisory group to Equal Measures 2030, a global partnership that has developed an SDG Gender Index to link gender data with country-level advocacy.[134]

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133. *At country/regional level,* UNICEF participates in Gender Theme Groups, working groups and the GBViE cluster – all relevant inter-agency processes. Fieldwork and interviews for this evaluation found, however, that UNICEF had the capacity and could had taken a more proactive supportive role on gender equality issues within United Nations Country Teams or regional partnerships.[135] Indeed, findings suggest that in some countries where UN Women was either not present, or present to an only limited degree, UNICEF had 'stepped up'.

134. **Civil society:** UNICEF's partnerships with civil society on gender equality are not a major feature of its gender-related efforts. Engagement with civil society organizations centrally was focused largely around information-sharing, rather than UNICEF playing an active role in global civil society advocacy and lobbying on gender equality.[136] At the country level, partnerships with civil society were found to be mostly functional, oriented to the role of civil society organizations as implementing partners, rather than as strategic partners in the 'gender equality dialogue' at country level, though information-sharing was common. There were scant examples found of UNICEF training civil society partners on gender-equality principles and programming.[137]

135. **Governments:** Fieldwork and interviews found that UNICEF has mostly strong and consensual relationships on gender equality with its partner governments. UNICEF has needed to navigate some complex issues on gender at country level, particularly where political sensitivities exist on issues surrounding gender equality, and/or where re-traditionalization of gender social norms is taking hold.

136. UNICEF had in some countries successfully advocated for the inclusion of gender equality in national policies and plans.[138] Where sensitivities existed around gender issues, however,

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[133] <www.unicef.org/protection/unfpa-unicef-global-programme-accelerate-action-end-child-marriage; https://www.unfpa.org/unfpa-unicef-joint-programme-eliminate-female-genital-mutilation>.
[134] UNICEF Division of Data, Research and Policy Annual Report 2018, p. 10; interviews HQ.
[135] Field study reports.
[136] Review of HQ gender workplans and Annual GAP Reports; interviews at HQ and regional office level.
[137] Fieldwork in five countries; review of country office documentation; interviews with 20 country offices.
[138] In Colombia, for example, UNICEF and UN Women held summits in 2013 and 2016 to include the voices of women in the peace process; they also succeeded in adding early unions into the national development plan. In Nepal, as a result of UNICEF advocacy and support to GBV-related interventions, the Government increased its annual budgets for women development programmes for the fiscal year 2015/16 by 27 per cent. UNICEF has also sought to build national capacities on gender, such as in Myanmar, where it boosted gender expertise in the

and/or where the external environment for gender equality was becoming constrained, UNICEF was perceived to have largely cohered with government positions, without always taking an explicit or principled stance in line with a human rights-based approach. There was no concerted or consistent effort to incentivize government partners to address gender equality or to provide capacity strengthening for governments on gender-related concerns.[139] For staff and some external partners interviewed, this caused frustration, given UNICEF's status as the global standard-bearer for child rights.

137.   **Private sector:** Private sector partnerships on gender equality have grown over time. Examples include Gucci's involvement in the Girls' Empowerment Initiative, which has funded such projects as period trackers in Mongolia and Indonesia in 2019 and supported a girl-designed digital menstrual health and hygiene 'chatbot' in Pakistan being scaled in Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire and Bangladesh. The financial sums involved are not vast, but these partnerships illustrate the potential for UNICEF to highlight gender equality more explicitly within its global 'brand' as well as to develop potentially scalable initiatives.

4.4 Gender integration in programming

Summary narrative

Attention to gender equality in country programming has increased over time, although it remains patchy and inconsistent. Where GPRs were implemented, attention to gender equality in country planning increased. Expenditure on gender-related issues also increased over time, approaching the 15 per cent self-determined target in 2019. Greatest attention was dedicated to the set of five (four under GAP 1) targeted priorities, with programmatic approaches evolving over time. Within the seven integrated programming areas, attention to, and understanding of, gender equality remain uneven, although areas such as child protection, education and social inclusion presented a significantly gender-transformative vision by 2019. There is growing use of multisectoral approaches to address gender-related issues, whether through a life cycle or issue-focused approach. Significant progress was also made in engaging in innovation initiatives for gender equality.

138.   The institutional reforms in section 4.3 above were accompanied by the major programmatic thrust of the GAPs, operationalized through the 'twin track' approach of targeted and mainstreamed/integrated priorities. This section of the report assesses the extent to which gender equality was enhanced in UNICEF's programming over the lifetime to date of the GAPs.[140]

139.   **Gender Programmatic Reviews:** Under GAP 2, Country Offices are required to undertake a GPR once in a programme cycle. In 2018, corporate data show that 43 per cent of UNICEF country offices had undertaken a GPR, up from a baseline of 11 per cent in 2016.[141] Fieldwork

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Department of Social Welfare, and jointly conducted a gender mainstreaming training for 50 front-line workers from civil society organizations, faith-based organizations and government staff.

[139] Fieldwork and interviews with regional and country offices.

[140] The evaluation applied three layers of analysis here: (i) review of corporate data on gender integration in country-level strategic planning documents, supported by interviews with relevant HQ staff; (ii) detailed analysis of country programming in a sample of 27 countries supported by 20 interviews; and (iii) fieldwork in five countries. Annex 4 provides the sampling methodology and list of country offices. For the purpose of the analysis, programming was included that was explicitly gendered according to the documentation. The years assessed were 2015 and 2018 to present a basis for analysis across the first year of implementation across both GAPs (though much additional documentation supplied was also analysed, and assigned to the relevant GAP for the period). To recognize the fact that documents may present an only limited view of UNICEF's gender work in a given country, interviews were also conducted with 32 designated UNICEF staff in 20 country offices.

[141] GAP Data Companion 2019.

and interviews found, however, that some country offices were unaware of this requirement; and that even where they were, GPRs may not have been conducted. Where implemented, subsequent programmatic adjustment in most countries was considerable.

140. **Inconsistent gender equality recognition within country plans:** Corporate data reveal that 83 per cent of CPDs approved in the 2018 reporting year met or exceeded standards of gender equality excellence,[142] while 74 per cent of UNICEF country offices included a gender-tagged standard indicator in their CPD. However, deeper analysis raised questions about this data:

- Based on SMQ self-reporting, only 37% of Country Offices in 2018 integrated gender equality into CPDs and Programme Strategy Notes.[143]
- Division of Analysis, Planning and Monitoring quality reviews of CPDs and Programme Strategy Notes found that gender equality scored the lowest among all dimensions assessed.[144] Almost all such Notes aligned with at least one of the GAP priorities, but few articulated the significance of the GAP within the programme context.[145]
- The evaluation's own analysis of a sample of CPDs, Programme Strategy Notes and annual country office plans supports this; finding some coherence with GAP targeted priorities, but limited gender equality recognition within main programmatic approaches (*see below*). Gender equality analysis was often a) lacking in depth[146] and/or b) not followed through with programmatic strategies – and those strategies present tended to be limited in nature.

141. **Increased programmatic expenditure over time:** According to corporate data, UNICEF expenditure on gender-transformative results in 2018 was 14.1 per cent of all expenditures (US$760 million) – approaching its self-determined target of 15 per cent (Figure 14).[147]

Figure 14. Percentage of programme expenditure allocated to gender programmatic results.

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[142] 'Excellence' is defined based on Field Results Group annual quality assessment of CPDs (Fox 2016, 2017, 2018). The gender equality aspect assesses: 1) How well does the CPD present a gender analysis and explanation for differences between men and women (and boys and girls) with regard to their rights, needs, vulnerabilities, and capacities as agents for change; 2) Does the Gender Analysis presented in the CPD provide an evidence base for the choice of programme component priorities? 3) Has the CPD result framework identified at least one measurable gender output or outcome aligned to the GAP 2018–21; 4) Does the CPD results framework include gender indicators to measure progress of gender results of the identified targeted/mainstreaming GAP priorities?

[142] 'M&E GAP Standards' PowerPoint, 5 May 2019.

[143] Based on 2018 Global Dashboard data. Strategic Monitoring Question-CS-02-H2. a.3-4 asks: Has the CO programme identified at least one measurable gender output or outcome aligned to the GAP 2018–21 in the CPD result framework?

[144] The Gender focus QRC scored the lowest of all Strategic Intent QRCs, with an overall score of 67.8 per cent; this continues a pattern witnessed in CPDs from the first Quality Review in 2007 (Fox Quality Review 2017, p. 42).

[145] Fox Quality Review 2017, p. 55.

[146] See also Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System report 2018: 'Gender analyses are often included in evaluations but lack the depth needed to make useful contributions towards challenging gender disparities.' <www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/GEROS_Meta-Analysis_2018.pdf.>

[147] Source: UN SWAP reporting 2018. Figure for 2019 reports data to August 2019.

Bar chart showing values by year: 2013: 8.3, 2014: 9.1, 2015: 9.3, 2016: 8.9, 2017: 10.7, 2018: 14.1
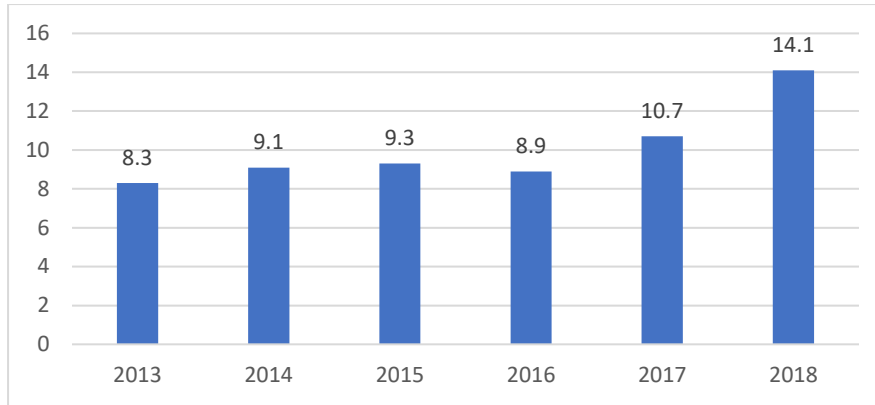
Source: GAP Annual Reporting 2014–2019.

142.   UNICEF also reported an estimated 63 per cent of total expenditure in 2018 (approximately US$3.3 billion) contributing towards gender mainstreaming. Recent estimates are currently being processed, and they are expected to maintain consistency and comparability with prior estimates, despite recent changes in the methodology (*see para. 113 for reference*).

143.   **Targeted priorities – increased attention and evolving approaches:** Corporate dashboard data of the number of UNICEF country offices engaging in GAP 2 targeted priorities,[148] when triangulated with evidence from fieldwork and documentary review, also showed some incongruencies.[149] Nonetheless, the evaluation concurs that the number of UNICEF country offices with programming on the five targeted priorities increased significantly between 2015 and 2018, particularly on adolescent girls' secondary education and child marriage.[150] Moreover, UNICEF's programmatic *approaches* to the five targeted priorities had significantly evolved during the period of the GAPs. Highlights include:

144.   ***Expanded programmatic breadth under adolescent girls' nutrition/pregnancy/HIV/HPV:*** Many country offices were undertaking work on adolescent health even prior to GAP 1. By 2018, however, the breadth of gender equality-focused programming increased, with increased attention to the prevention of adolescent pregnancy, human papilloma virus (HPV) and gender-focused mental health.[151] Box 12 provides examples.

Box 12. Heath, nutrition and HIV

In Haiti, UNICEF worked in close collaboration with UNAIDS on 'All In' – a global initiative for eliminating HIV among adolescents by 2030, with a gender lens built in to design.

In Nepal, UNICEF sought to address adolescent health from a gender-equality perspective by supporting the implementation of the National Adolescent Health and Development Strategy.

In Mongolia, UNICEF's adolescent health programme provided gender-responsive services including mental health, reproductive health and non-communicable diseases.

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[148] Based on Strategic Monitoring Question reporting.
[149] Based on analysis against fieldwork and desk review countries, which revealed a) some country offices not working on the targeted priority identified in corporate reporting; and b) conversely, other country offices working extensively on a targeted priority not reflected in corporate reporting.
[150] For example, programming on adolescent girls' secondary education was being undertaken in 30 of the sample 32 countries; and 23/32 and 24/32 country offices, respectively, were undertaking programming on child marriage and adolescent girls' nutrition/pregnancy/HIV/AIDS/HPV, suggesting stronger prevalence than in the corporate self-reported data.
[151] Ghana, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Zimbabwe.

145. ***Increased emphasis on the structural barriers to girls' secondary education:*** In education, analysis of recent documentation showed increased attention to addressing the structural barriers to education and learning for adolescent girls – for example, through social norms work and teacher education, rather than purely functional approaches (Box 13).

Box 13. Girls' secondary education

UNICEF Burkina Faso created 'Male Ambassadors' to sensitize men to the benefits of girls' education. This was combined with work to strengthen men's and women's understanding of gender roles.

UNICEF Mali worked to reinforce gender equality in education sector plans in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, integrating a gender equality module in teacher training and reviewing pedagogy for gender-responsiveness.

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146. ***Multisectoral and multi-level approaches to child marriage/early unions:*** Programming on child marriage/early unions showed increased adoption of multisectoral approaches over time, often combining work on FGM/C, GBV and/or health and education. One example of this approach is the Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage that UNICEF leads, along with UNFPA, in 12 countries. This Programme includes an important component on girls' education and makes links with MHM.[152]

147. ***Extensive normative progress on GBViE inconsistently reflected in country programming:*** UNICEF's contributions to normative developments on GBViE include revision and roll-out of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)'s Guidelines for Integrating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action and related activities.[153] However, country programming did not consistently reflect this, with limited recognition/treatment of the issue in some relevant country programmes, though some strong examples in others (Box 14).

Box 14: Gender Based Violence in Emergencies

In Lebanon, UNICEF contributed to development of guidance tools on GBViE, strengthening national systems, engaging religious leaders; providing safe spaces for women and girls; and preparing life-skills tools for adolescent girls.

In Afghanistan, UNICEF mainstreamed gender and GBV in its work on WASH in emergencies[154] and is working with the United Nations Mission in Afghanistan to address the sexual exploitation of young boys.

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148. ***An emerging social norms and empowerment approach to menstrual health and hygiene (MHH):*** Although UNICEF had been undertaking MHH programming for many years, recent (2018) programming documentation saw a shift from the provision of sanitary materials in schools to a focus on empowering girls with information about menstrual health and hygiene, and a shifting of negative cultural norms about menstruation (Box 15).[155]

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[152] Annual Results Report Education 2018.
[153] Annual Results Report Child Protection 2018. UNICEF also helped develop the 2018 inter-agency GBV Case Management Guidelines and accompanying training materials and develop the GBV information management system (GBVIMS+) currently active in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Nigeria.
[154] UNICEF Gender Responsive WASH Programming in Afghanistan Action Plan 2018–2019.
[155] There was little evidence to suggest that MHM programming takes into account the specific needs of girls with disabilities, despite an explicit commitment to this in GAP 2.

> **Box 15. Menstrual health and hygiene**
>
> In Pakistan, UNICEF launched the 2018 No Chutti ('no break') campaign, engaging more than 1 million girls and boys to help dispel myths around physical and dietary restrictions imposed on menstruating women.
>
> In Kyrgyzstan, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Education to develop and distribute educational materials on MHM to all schools in the country, including for children with visual and hearing disabilities.
>
> In Honduras, UNICEF prepared educational materials on clinical and health aspects of the menstrual cycle, and training on fabrication of reusable sanitary pads using recycled materials.
>
> In the East Asia and Pacific region, UNICEF has developed a digital menstrual health and hygiene tool –the Oky Period Tracker App for Girls – designed with and for girls.

149.   **Integrated approaches – Growing but uneven attention:** Both corporate reporting and the evaluation's own analysis found increased attention to gender equality mainstreaming within core programmatic areas over the period of both GAPs.[156] Headline statements, however, mask uneven approaches to gender equality across programme areas. As summarized in Table 3 below, overall both the degree of attention to gender equality and the approaches adopted are inconsistent across programming areas. *Child protection* has presented a significantly gender-transformative vision since 2015, while *education* and *social inclusion* had followed suit by 2018 (though programming in social inclusion had not yet caught up). *WASH* and *health and nutrition,* where gender equality is addressed*,* remain mainly focused on equity of access, with the exception of HIV programming, which has adopted a highly nuanced approach to gender equality (Table 3).

Table 3. Gender equality in integrated approaches

	Approach over time	**Examples**
Health, HIV, nutrition	Where gender equality is recognized, mostly a sex-specific approach continues in, e.g., maternal and child health care and nutrition. The exception is HIV programming, which presents a nuanced analysis of intersectional factors that shape gendered vulnerabilities to HIV and long-standing approaches to involving men and boys.	*Maternal and child health care and nutrition:* In Haiti and Bhutan, UNICEF used communication for development approaches to promote 'conducive social norms', involving men and boys. *HIV:* In Myanmar, UNICEF supported the Government to engage men in the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS, resulting in more men and pregnant women coming forward for HIV testing.
Education	Evolved over time, from an emphasis in 2015 on tackling gender equality-related barriers to access and retention to include in 2018 an emphasis on gender socialization and sociocultural bias. An increasingly explicit link between the role of teaching and positive	*Quality learning*: In the Dominican Republic, UNICEF is supporting the Government to build an education policy that eliminates gender stereotypes.

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[156] From 2015 to 2017 (under GAP 1), corporate reporting states that the percentage of country programmes with gender mainstreaming rose from 80 per cent to 87 per cent globally, despite regional variations). Annual report on the implementation of the UNICEF Gender Action Plan, 2014–2017, UNICEF, 2018, p. 10. Under GAP 2, the number of country programmes including gender-integrated results increased from 92 to 101 between 2017 and 2018. These figures could not be fully validated by the evaluation, but the overall trend of increase was validated by documentary review of a sample of country documents from 32 programme countries/interviews with 20 and fieldwork in five.

	gender socialization.[157] Child-friendly schools mostly adopted a gender-sensitive (rather than transformative) approach.[158]	*Child-friendly schools*: In Burkina Faso, UNICEF's EQUAME (child-friendly) schools include a focus on i) MHM; ii) gender equity in school clubs; iii) building girls' and boys' capacity on gender-based violence in schools; and iv) fighting unwanted pregnancies, puberty, life skills and other gender-related themes.
Child protection	Suffers from confusion around terminologies, and particularly how concepts such as violence Against children, Violence Against Women, sexual and gender-based violence and GBV(iE) intersect. Has consistently presented, however, a strongly transformative vision for addressing gender equality since 2015, seeking to address social norms to tackle GBV and child marriage.[159] Strong focus on social and behaviour change communication to influence gender and social norms,[160] continued into programming.	*GBV:* UNICEF Somalia worked with partners to develop a customized safety audit tool for the Somalia context, used in 47 locations in 2018. *FGM/C:* In Kenya, UNICEF and partners successfully advocated with the Anti-FGM Board, Gender Directorate and the Office of the Public Prosecution to develop a handbook on the anti-FGM law for practitioners from various professional groups.
WASH	Where gender equality is present, mostly focused on equal access to WASH services,[161] though also engaging women and girls in community WASH committees/gender equality analysis in design. Normative and country-level work reflects this approach, though with growing emphasis on multisectoral approaches (particularly education/nutrition).	*Women's role in WASH*: In Haiti, UNICEF used a gender justice approach to ensure equal participation of men and women in community health management. *Community-led total sanitation*: In Myanmar, UNICEF engaged women in identifying their community's sanitation needs.
Social inclusion	Strong evolution over time, from a largely equity-focused model in 2015, to an emphasis on gender-transformative approaches in 2018, including the addressing of discriminatory norms and practices through the GAP flagship result of 'positive gender socialization'.[162] But programming not yet caught up.[163]	In Gabon, UNICEF supported the National Fund for Social Action to reduce gender inequalities (such as by changing the criteria for grants). In Honduras and Morocco, UNICEF promoted the use of a gender focus in municipal-level planning.

150.   **Humanitarian programming:** Despite representing more than half of UNICEF corporate spend annually,[164] attention to gender equality in humanitarian action analysed was notably

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[157] Applying vocabulary taken from the Strategic Plan Goal Area 5.

[158] Also supported by interviews with country offices and regional offices.

[159] Child Protection Annual Results Report 2015.

[160] However, the gender aspects of child protection are strongly associated with the two targeted priorities of child marriage and GBV, rather than with other aspects of child protection such as violence against children, birth registration, child labour, justice for children, etc.

[161] Though the 2016–2030 WASH Strategic Framework was informed by gender analysis recognizing the effects of limited access to WASH facilities for women and girls, and the Strategy's two key objectives are universal access to safe/affordable drinking water for all and access to adequate sanitation and hygiene for all/ end open defecation (with special attention to needs of women and girls). GAP 2 acknowledges that 'women and girls are disproportionately responsible for collecting and using household water', but does not propose strategies to address the norms/power relations behind this burden.

[162] Social Inclusion Annual Results Report 2018.

[163] The 2018 Annual Results Report for Social Inclusion finds that while almost all UNICEF country offices (151/157) were implementing programmes that address gender-discriminatory roles and norms across all Goal Areas, only 43 out of 157 country offices found evidence of change in gender-discriminatory norms and roles as a result of UNICEF's work. Only 36 out of 128 country offices had implemented gender socialization programming at scale across regions, and as of 2018, only 25 country programmes had identified gender socialization as a priority gender result.

[164] UNICEF, *Annual Report 2019*, UNICEF, New York, 2019.

lacking, with few references beyond 'equal participation of men and women in programming' and some references to GBViE, as formulated under GAP 2.[165] This reflects the findings of a UNICEF-produced Synthesis of Humanitarian Evaluations in 2017, which noted consistent gaps in equity and gender within humanitarian responses, identified across 76 evaluations 2010–2016.[166]

151.   **Innovation:** Lastly, although not part of its reporting areas, innovation is identified as a cross-cutting opportunity for delivering and scaling up programmatic GAP targets, particularly in GAP 2. Significant progress has been made here: UNICEF co-leads the International Development Innovation Alliance's Gender Working Group and has supported the development and launch of the recent publication 'Toward Bridging Gender Equality and Innovation'. Initiatives such as the Venture Fund, Girls' Empowerment Initiative and Youth Innovation also have a gender and innovation focus, and UNICEF has developed workstreams to link gender and technology.[167]

152.   **Increasing use of multisectoral/intersectional approaches:** The evaluation found a growing value placed on multisectoral approaches, whether through a 'life cycle' approach, where task teams are coordinated around, e.g., early childhood or adolescence, or an 'issue-focused' approach, such as around child marriage or FGM/C. Table 4 contains examples. Such intersectional approaches are key in reaching the most vulnerable children at risk of multiple discriminations, including gender inequalities and disability (including children affected by conflict/released from armed groups).

Table 4. Multisectoral approaches

Area	Description	Examples
Early childhood development	Links the provision of health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, education and protection services for a child's optimal development, with a focus on the first 1,000 days. Gender equality dimensions addressed by country offices included the differential rates of stunting/child mortality for boys and girls, and positive parenting involving fathers.	UNICEF offices in Bangladesh, the Dominican Republic, Ghana, Kenya, Myanmar, Nepal and Zimbabwe have adopted holistic approaches to early childhood development. For example, in Nepal, early childhood development is the focus of one of five cross-cutting task teams, the others being on gender equality, adolescents, disability and disaster risk reduction.
Adolescent programming	Combines nutrition to prevent anaemia, HIV prevention and care, child protection in the prevention of GBV, child marriage and FGM/C, WASH in the provision of MHM and support to school attendance of girls, and education.	UNICEF Bangladesh is piloting a comprehensive package of adolescent and gender-friendly health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, WASH and MHM, and formal and non-formal education services.
Child marriage	Combines education, communication for development, child protection approaches and, increasingly, health and nutrition as part of preventing early pregnancy.	The global UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage adopts a fully multisectoral approach.
School-related GBV	Combines health, education and child protection approaches. Strategies include: building teacher, parent and student awareness and capacity, policy dialogue and advocacy to promote policy reform, while strengthening the availability of	In Gabon, UNICEF linked sexual and gender-based violence with broader adolescent/reproductive health issues.

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[165] Analysis of country office documentation in 27 offices; fieldwork in Sudan, Colombia and Bangladesh.
[166] UNICEF (2017) Towards Improved Emergency Responses – Synthesis of UNICEF Evaluations of Humanitarian Action 2010 – 2016 New York, UNICEF.
[167] Led by UNICEF's HQ Gender Unit and EAPRO, these include work on the gender digital divide, girls' digital skills, and gender-smart innovative finance

	evidence about prevention strategies, and strengthening data collection and reporting systems.	In Honduras, UNICEF worked with the Ministry of Education on a strategy to prevent school-related gender-based violence working with justice and health sectors.

4.5. The GAPs and gender equality results

Summary narrative

Methodological challenges constrain rigorous assessment of results, but strongest progress has been made in the 'targeted priorities' of GAPs 1 and 2. The uneven integration of gender equality into core programming areas is (mostly) reflected in inconsistent results achieved. There is only patchy use (and inconsistent understanding) of transformative approaches that would move UNICEF as a stronger gender-equality ally, concentrated in some programming areas.

Much gender equality-related work was driven by context, rather than the GAPs, although the Gender Programmatic Review, dedicated gender staffing and child marriage areas formed clear and consistent linkages. The GAPs also helped UNICEF explain, advocate for and legitimize country and regional-level work on gender equality. Overall, however, the GAPs had only limited influence on programmatic results, and did not consistently act as a direct strategic driver for programmatic choices.

153.   The evaluation analysed the results reported by both GAPs. It also assessed the extent to which these results are a) transformative[168] and b) linked to the GAPs. The main source for this information has been GAP Annual Results Reports 2015 to 2018, triangulated through analysis of programme documentation, interviews and fieldwork.[169]

154.   Several methodological challenges arose with regard to the results assessment. Annex 6 presents a full discussion, but in summary:
- Changed reporting mechanisms between GAP 1 and GAP 2, which make comparison challenging;[170]
- A lack of baselines in some areas, or baselines developed in different years;
- Inconsistent gender sensitivity/use of sex-disaggregated data in indicators, with some being gender-blind;[171]
- Some indicators, e.g., for GBViE and MHM, relating mainly to inputs; and
- A lack of availability of results in some of the newer areas of GAP programming (HPV vaccination/GAP 2).

155.   **Overview of gender results:** The following provides an overview of gender equality results achieved under both GAPs in targeted and mainstreamed/integrated programming areas, subject to the caveats above (*see annex 6 for more detail*). It applies the relevant output

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[168] Applied as per the UNICEF Agora monitoring and evaluation course: 'Transforms gender stereotypes and gender norms and relations for gender equality and an enabling environment'.
[169] See Annex 2 for a full description of the methodology employed
[170] GAP 1 indicators are commonly country-focused (e.g., 'countries targeting anaemia among adolescent girls', (GAP 1)), while GAP 2 indicators are commonly population-focused: e.g., 'Number of adolescent girls provided with services to prevent anaemia and other forms of malnutrition through UNICEF-supported programmes'. The benchmarks for institutional strengthening for gender also changed significantly between GAPs 1 and 2.
[171] See annex 6, Measurement of Results, and annex 9, Mapping of Demonstrable Results to GAP Indicators on Integrated Gender Results.

target and results set by the GAP results frameworks (aligned to the Strategic Plan) for the period, using the following descriptors:

- *'Strong progress* [ ] where the target was either achieved (under GAP 1) or on track to be achieved (GAP 2);
- *'Moderate progress'* [ ] where progress had been made towards the target, but where either the target had not been fully met (GAP 1) and/or considerable distance still remained to reach the target (GAP 2); and
- '*Limited/no progress'* [ ] where the target had been missed (GAP 1) and/or was unlikely to be met (GAP 2).

156.   **Targeted priorities:** Strongest progress has been made in *Promoting adolescent girls' nutrition, pregnancy care, and prevention of HIV/AIDS* (and HPV under GAP 2); *Adolescent girls' secondary education*; and *Preventing and responding to child marriage* and (under GAP 2) early unions. Some progress has been made on GBViE, while MHM shows understandably limited results to date given its recency as a targeted priority under GAP 2.

157.   Table 5 below provides the main results reported in targeted priority areas, as recorded in 2018.[172] The *degree of influence* of the GAPs on these results areas, however, is highly variable (*see para. 157 below*).

Table 5. Targeted gender equality results

Summary results	
Promoting gender-responsive adolescent health (GAP 1) *Promoting* **adolescent girls' nutrition, pregnancy care, and prevention of HIV/AIDS (and HPV) (GAP 2)**	• Inclusive, multisectoral and gender-responsive national plan to achieve targets for adolescent health and well-being: **Doubled from 25 in 2016 to 50 in 2018** • Costed plans to reduce adolescent pregnancy: **Increased from 83 in 2013 to 101 in 2017** • Policy or plan targeting anaemia reduction in girls: **Increased from 27 in 2013 to 56 in 2017 (GAP 1)** • Number of adolescent girls provided with services to prevent anaemia and other forms of malnutrition through UNICEF-supported programmes: **Increased from 20 million in 2016 (baseline) to 27.9 million in 2018** • Sex-disaggregated data on HIV testing and counselling: **Increased from 18 in 2013 to 31 in 2017** • National policies to implement sexuality or life skills-based HIV education in upper primary school: I**ncreased from 28 in 2013 to 35 in 2017**[173] • Number of adolescent boys and girls tested for HIV: **Increased from 13.3 girls and 9.1 million boys (2017) to 13.4 million girls and 9.2 boys (2018)** • HPV and adolescent pregnancy: **No data available** • Out of the 17 countries participating in the UNFPA/UNICEF Joint Programme on FGM/C, trend data are available for 7. Of these, three have seen a **10 per cent or more reduction in the proportion of girls aged 0–14 years undergoing FGM/C**.
Advancing adolescent girls' secondary education, learning and skills development,	• Education-sector policy or plan that specifies prevention and response mechanisms to address GBV in and around schools: **Increased from 28 per cent in 2013 to 38 per cent in 2017**

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[172] Data Companion and Scorecard to the UNICEF Gender Action Plan, April 2019.
[173] Under GAP 2, the indicator changed to measure 'Number of countries having initiatives to strengthen availability of gender-responsive evidence for the All In framework for prevention of HIV' – which increased from 20 countries in 2017 to 23 countries in 2018.

including STEM (GAP 2)	• Enrolment, retention and completion of girls' secondary education and recognized, targeted and budgeted education priority: **Increased from 27 per cent in 2013 to 35 per cent in 2017** • Attendance of boys and girls from the poorest quintile: **Increased between 8 per cent and 10 per cent (boys and girls) in upper and lower secondary levels** • Learning outcomes: **Increased by 5 per cent girls/7 per cent boys from 2016 to 2018** • Adolescents not in employment education or training: **Decreased by 3 per cent boys/1 per cent girls** • Transition rates from primary to lower secondary education above 75 per cent: **Increased by 3 per cent (boys and girls)**
Preventing and responding to child marriage and (under GAP 2) early unions	• Costed national strategies or plans to end child marriage (with prevalence of 25 per cent or more): **Increased from 1 in 2013 to 12 in 2017** • Implementation of a costed national action plan/strategy to end child marriage: **Increased from 3 in 2016 to 15 in 2018**
Preventing and responding to GBViE	• Girls and boys in humanitarian situations provided with psychosocial support: **Increased from 71 per cent in 2015 to 83 per cent in 2018** • Unaccompanied and separated girls and boys registered with family tracing and reunification services and family-based care or appropriate alternative services: **Increased from 54 per cent in 2017 to 61 per cent in 2018**
Facilitating accessible and dignified MHM (GAP 2)	• MHM in Wash in Schools included in programming: **Increased from 22 in 2013 to 51 in 2018** • Number of girls in humanitarian situations provided with MHM materials: **Decreased from 1.7 million in 2014 to 33,740 in 2018**[174]

158. **Variable achievement in integrated/mainstreamed approaches:** Table 6 below provides the main results in integrated/mainstreamed programmatic areas. Given the shift in lenses between GAP 1 and GAP 2, with GAP 2 applying eight 'Demonstration Results' linked to the 2018–2021 Strategic Plan, as well as the early stage of GAP 2 implementation, it applies the GAP 1 framework of seven mainstreamed areas. Overall:

• The uneven *integration of gender equality into mainstreamed/integrated areas* is (mostly) reflected in results achieved, with inconsistencies across programme areas;

• The main areas of progress have been in *education and social inclusion*, where most targets have been met or nearly met;

• In *nutrition and WASH,* some targets have been missed; and

• In some areas – e.g., health – there is incongruence between the degree of gender equality 'integration' into the programmatic area and targets achieved; this largely reflects the nature of the indicators and targets set for the area (e.g., focused on disaggregation within health).

Table 6. Integrated gender equality results

Summary results	
Health	• (GAP 1) Analysis of sex-differentiated infant and child mortality estimates: **Remained at 42 countries between 2014 and 2017, not reaching the 2017 target of 62** • (GAP 2) Institutionalized community health workers into the formal health system: **Increased from 16 countries in 2016 to 24 in 2018 (2021 target of 25 countries)**

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[174] Difficulties noted in collecting data for this indicator; GAP 2 Annual Report 2018.

	• (GAP 1) Number of UNICEF programme countries with at least 80 per cent coverage of skilled birth attendance: **Rose from 51 in 2014 to 98 in 2017, exceeding the target of 60**[175] • (GAPs 1 and 2) 52 countries provided antenatal coverage of more than 80 per cent in 2017, compared with 18 in 2013: **By 2018, 57 per cent of the target population received at least four antenatal visits, compared with the 2016 baseline of 51 per cent**
HIV	• (GAP 1) Percentage of HIV-positive pregnant women (of those targeted by UNICEF) in humanitarian situations treated to prevent mother-to-child transmission: **Increased from 54 per cent in 2013 to 81 per cent in 2017 (meeting the 80 per cent target)** • Gender review within national policies and plans for HIV: **Declined from baseline of 18 countries (2013) to 13 in 2017** • (GAP 1) National policies to implement sexuality or life skills-based HIV education in upper primary schools: **Increased to 34 countries in 2016, from 28 in 2013, but not reaching the 2017 target of 38** • (GAP 2) Number of countries having an inclusive, multisectoral and gender-responsive national plan to achieve targets for adolescent health and well-being: **Increase from 46 countries in 2017 to 50 in 2018**
Nutrition	• **(**GAP 1) UNICEF programme countries with policies or plans targeting anaemia reduction among women: **Increased from 70 in 2013 to 91 in 2015 – although not reaching the target of 100** • (GAP 1) UNICEF programme countries undertaking a gender review of the nutrition policy/strategy in the current national development plan cycle with UNICEF support: **Rose to 35 in 2017 from 16 in 2013, although not reaching the target of 40** • (GAP 2) Percentage of children being admitted for treatment for severe acute malnutrition: **Decreased slightly (from 9 per cent in 2016 to 8.4 per cent in 2018** (although no sex-disaggregated data are available) • Percentage who recovered: **Decreased slightly, from 84 per cent to 82.2 per cent over the same period**
Education	*(All under GAP 2)* • Percentage of countries showing improvements in learning outcomes for girls and for boys: **Increased from 62 per cent for girls in 2016 to 67 per cent in 2018; and from 60 per cent for boys in 2016 to 67 per cent in 2018** • Out-of-school rates for boys and girls in primary and lower secondary school: **No change except for girls at primary school (declined by 1 percentage point, from 10 per cent in 2016 to 9 per cent in 2018)** • Percentage of countries with gender disparities: **For girls at lower secondary, decreased to 23 per cent in 2018, compared with 31 per cent in 2016** • Gender-responsive education systems: **Increased from 25 per cent of countries in 2017 to 32 per cent in 2018** • Gender-responsive teaching and learning systems that integrated gender equality principles and practices into education programming, training and measurement activities: **Increased to 31 per cent of countries, from 16 per cent in 2016**
Child protection	• (GAP 1) Revised or improved child protection policies on the basis of a gender review supported by UNICEF: **Increased to 51 countries in 2017, compared with 33 in 2013, but not meeting the target of 70 countries** • Increased number of countries where at least 75 per cent of targeted at-risk population has the capacity to identify, prevent and/or report sexual violence: **Increased from 9 countries in 2014 to 31 in 2017** • (GAP 2) Percentage of girls and boys who have ever experienced any sexual violence and sought help from a professional: **Slight increase in 2017, to 5 per cent from the 2016 baseline of 4 per cent**

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[175] The indicator for GAP 2 focuses on the population (with no baseline); in 2018, 75 per cent of live births attended by a skilled health personnel.

WASH	• (GAP 1) Increased number of countries with at least 50 per cent of primary schools having access to adequate sanitation facilities for girls: **Increased from 32 in 2013 to 37 in 2015, but not meeting the target of 65** • (GAP 1) 2017 target (70 per cent) for 'the number of countries where one third or more of the population practices open defecation': **Not met (65 per cent)**
Social Inclusion	• (GAP 1) Revised domestic legislation and administrative guidance in line with the concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: **Increased from 55 countries in 2013 to 91 in 2017 – although not meeting target of 110** • (GAP 2) National social protection plan that included gender elements: **Increased from 78 countries in 2016 to 87 in 2017** • (GAP 2) At-scale capacity development programmes for front-line workers that focus on gender equality: **Increased from 15 per cent in 2016 to 25 per cent in 2018** • (GAP 2) Percentage of countries with at-scale programmes addressing gender discriminatory roles and practices among children: **Increased from 23 per cent in 2015 to 28 per cent in 2018**

Transformative results

159.   **Growing awareness, but inconsistent use of, transformative approaches:** Highly variable understandings of the term 'transformative' exist across UNICEF.[176] Definitions available internationally relate transformative approaches to transforming gender norms, relations and stereotypes, and to empowerment (Box 17).[177]

Box 17. Transformative definitions

UNFPA: 'A gender-transformative approach in programming implies that promoting gender equality — the shared control of resources and decision-making — and women's and girls' empowerment are central to an intervention and programme. It means that while working to meet the main objectives of the programme, the approach also helps challenge underlying, harmful gender norms and stereotypes in the process.'[178]

UN Women: 'Transformative results contribute to changes in social norms, cultural values, power structures and the root causes of gender inequalities and discrimination.'[179]

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160.   Nonetheless – applying 'transformative' approaches as per one of its UNICEF definitions[180] – the evaluation found increased adoption of transformative concepts and approaches within the child protection, social inclusion and education programming areas. In child protection and education, results delivered (*see above*) sought to tackle structural barriers to access and where feasible to change norms. In social inclusion, transformative programming was just gaining momentum.

161.   Analysis found the term 'transformative' frequently applied to describe activities when these lacked a fully transformative intent. Nonetheless, Box 18 includes examples of transformative programming identified:

Box 18: Transformative approaches in programming

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[176] Drawing on the Gender Programmatic Review toolkit and Agora monitoring and evaluation training for gender.
[177] See, e.g., UN SWAP 2.0 Framework and Technical Guidance, 2018, pp. 27–28. Also UNDP, *Evaluation of UNDP's Contribution to Gender Equality*, 2015.
[178] UNFPA, 'Gender Equality Strategy 2018–2021', 2018.
[179] UN Women, 'UN SWAP 2.0 Framework and Technical Guidance', 2018, pp. 27–28.
[180] 'Transforms gender stereotypes and gender norms and relations for gender equality and an enabling environment', UNICEF Agora monitoring and evaluation course.

- UNICEF is a member of the Unstereotype Alliance, a private sector initiative convened by UN Women to address harmful gender-based stereotypes in marketing and promote gender-progressive portrayals of people.
- UNICEF is working with UNFPA and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Kyrgyzstan to target social disparity and gender inequality as root causes of emerging conflicts, focusing on the empowerment of women and girls as a means to peaceful communities.
- In Somalia and South Sudan, UNICEF implements the Communities Care Programme – a flagship GBViE programme that has demonstrated results in social norms change using longitudinal community-based evaluation design.

162. At the **normative level,** the 'upstream' work by UNICEF to help strengthen policy frameworks and plans that aim to remove gender discrimination – although not explicit within the GAPs (para. 59) – has become an increasingly prominent area of its work over time. UNICEF's 2019 annual reporting states that the institution supported 73 countries to develop national gender equality strategies or policies, 25 countries to develop national-level vision documents, 17 countries to develop national women's machinery, 15 countries to link women's machinery to sectoral line ministries and 10 countries to legislate on family and parental leave policies.[181] The evaluation's own analysis validated these achievements, noting that offices with a Gender Specialist in place were more likely to engage in normative-level gender equality work.

Links from the GAPs to programming

163. Establishing the links between the GAP and gender-equality results at various levels of the organization proves challenging, given a) limited results in some areas of mainstreaming particularly (above) and b) the GAP's mostly limited ownership across the organization (*see section 4.3 above*). Nonetheless, the evaluation sought to identify and track where linkages had occurred, and the kinds of roles the GAPs had played in influencing programming (and by extension, results).

164. **Growing recognition in documentation of the GAPs over time:** Despite the limited staff ownership of the GAP (para. 60), analysis of corporate and country planning and programming documents showed increased recognition/referencing of the GAPs in the period 2015–2018, although with variations. Social inclusion policy and guidance consistently referenced both GAPs throughout the period; while in education and child protection, recognition increased over time. Few links to the GAPs at all were made in health, WASH, nutrition or HIV. Sample country-level programming documentation also saw gradually increased reference to the GAP between 2015 and 2018.[182] Some country offices had also applied the corporate GAP to help create their own specific versions.[183]

165. The three main links from the GAP through to programming were the GPR, gender-dedicated staffing and the targeted priority of child marriage.[184] Specifically:
- *GPRs:* Analysis found that GPRs or similar analyses provided a key stimulus for enhanced attention to gender within Country Programme Documents and Programme Strategy

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[181] GAP 2 Annual Report 2019.

[182] For example, from 9/32 sample country offices including a reference to it in 2015, through to 18/32 country offices in 2018.

[183] Examples include UNICEF Serbia, Dominican Republic (under way); Afghanistan; Haiti (under way); Burkina Faso; Pakistan, Nepal, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan.

[184] GAP results management did not prove a strong driver for programming, being perceived by staff at all levels mostly as simply 'collected' from results in main programming areas.

Notes.[185] Interviews with country office staff reported that GPRs were also a valuable form of capacity-building/advocacy for gender equality in the country office.

- ***Dedicated gender staffing:*** Where a Gender Specialist, Regional Gender Adviser or committed Gender Focal Point/other gender advocate was present, this intensified the recognition of gender equality within country planning and programming. Key supporting factors were: A direct reporting line to the Deputy Representative, who manages the programmatic portfolio; and a workplan focused on broad mainstreaming across programme areas, rather than being focused on programme management – e.g., for a targeted priority.
- ***Child marriage:*** The targeted priority of child marriage, which was linked to a global programme, was explicitly connected to GAPs 1 and 2. The same linkages did not consistently occur from the other targeted priorities to programming.

166. **Gender-equality work driven by context:** Conversely, much gender equality work undertaken was being driven less by the GAPs and more by factors in the external context. These included:
- *Substantive needs* – gender inequalities as clear impediment to realizing humanitarian/development results, and threats of re-traditionalizing inequitable gender norms/roles;
- *Donor influence*, particularly where donors took a strong position on gender equality, e.g., Canada;
- *Common UN processes* such as Common Frameworks and Gender Theme Groups; and
- *Government prioritization* of gender equality.

167. **Roles of the GAPs:** Nonetheless, the evaluation found that the GAPs had played some valuable roles in helping country and regional offices in particular shape their gender equality response. These included:
- *Drawing attention* to key gender issues, particularly within the five targeted priorities;
- *Providing legitimization*, to justify approaches to gender equality with internal management and external stakeholders; and
- *Offering advocacy and communication tools,* which served to articulate UNICEF's corporate position on gender equality to external stakeholders in particular.

168. Overall, however, the limited/inconsistent intersections between the GAPs and key strategic/programmatic documentation, combined with limited awareness of the GAPs across UNICEF, points to only limited influence on programmatic results. While much of UNICEF's programmatic action *aligned with* the GAPs – by dint of alignment with the Strategic Plans and the breadth of the GAPs – the GAPs have not consistently acted as a direct *strategic driver* for programmatic choices, nor, by implication, have they consistently influenced UNICEF's broader programmatic results.

5. Conclusions

169. In 2020, the global community will meet in Paris to evaluate 25 years of progress after the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. In the lead-up to that event, this evaluation asks, based on the evidence found: In its development and promulgation of the GAPs, did UNICEF commit the effort required to ensure the realization of equal rights for <u>all</u> the children and adults

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[185] Some CPDs or Country Office Annual Reports explicitly referenced the GPR (Haiti, Lebanon) or its findings (Ukraine). In other cases, staff reported at interview that country office programming on gender had been informed by the GPR (Georgia, Afghanistan).

it serves? Did it set in place the requirements, and deliver the results, which have enabled it, as the world's children's agency, to meet its global responsibilities for gender equality?

Summary

170.   This evaluation has reviewed six years of GAP implementation. Its summary findings are below.

> **Summary message**
>
> UNICEF developed its successive Gender Action Plans in very different contexts to today. Intended to serve a largely functional purpose, in an organization with little comprehensive experience of gender mainstreaming, the GAPs were oriented to the UNICEF institutional environment as a means to bring gender equality to the UNICEF table.
>
> Both GAPs focused consciously on the organizational and the programmatic, as a means of achieving change. This provided internal coherence and a constituted useful organizational framework under which to locate UNICEF's gender equality efforts. The GAPs sought to build the gender architecture from a limited base, to commit resources, and to dedicate effort and attention to some focused (targeted) priorities. In this, they largely succeeded.
>
> With limited aspiration, and weak accountabilities undermining ownership, however, the GAPs failed to permeate UNICEF's organizational 'bloodstream'. They spoke to programmatic realities but lacked the drive and ambition to fully mainstream gender across UNICEF's core programming areas. Moreover, in 2019, the GAPs risk growing incoherence with gender realities on the ground.
>
> Building on the foundations set to date, a bolder, more aspirational and comprehensive approach is needed to meet the challenges of the future. This implies a firmer corporate framework, supported by robust accountabilities and strong leadership. A clear voice and an explicit position, focused on UNICEF's role in the inter-agency system and the universality of the SDGs, will help UNICEF realize its potential for gender equality in the future.

Main conclusions

171.   The 2008 evaluation of the 1994 Gender Policy in UNICEF found that:
   a.   UNICEF had not implemented the Policy systematically, had significantly under-resourced the gender mainstreaming process, and had not built in effective accountability mechanisms;
   b.   UNICEF had generated many good practices in gender equality programming but had no system in place to ensure their sharing throughout the organization or scaling up;
   c.   UNICEF was seen as an important ally in the promotion of gender equality within the United Nations system, but there is still room for important improvement in its leadership, commending senior management to clearly communicating the organization's commitment to gender equality to managers and staff; and
   d.   Gender staffing levels had been increasing, but they have observed a slight reduction in the recent year.

172.   In 2019, this evaluation of UNICEF's Gender Action Plans 2014–2019 finds resonance with the challenges identified in 2008, though with progress made in some key areas.

173.   Overall, both GAPs moved the 'gender equality agenda' forward within UNICEF. As instruments to guide corporate action, they had a number of successes. These were mainly – as intended by the GAPs – related to UNICEF's institutional structures and systems. Guided by the GAPs, UNICEF expanded its gender architecture, from an initially nascent status. It successfully built dedicated gender expertise across the organization, with the role of the Regional Gender Advisers notably enhancing regional attention to gender equality. The GAPs also enhanced UNICEF's own internal systems for monitoring and reporting on gender equality

performance at an institutional and programmatic level – providing valuable information (although not always fully developed or utilized) to inform change and reform.

174.   The pragmatic approach of the GAPs spoke to UNICEF's operating model and culture. Their breadth ensured relevance to most programmatic activity on the ground. They successfully increased programmatic attention to gender equality at both country and HQ levels, bringing attention to five targeted priorities in particular.

175.   Both GAPs served valuable purposes within a highly decentralized – and heavily voluntary-funded – organization. They provided a key institutional reference point and a rallying point around which committed and interested management and staff could gather. They legitimized UNICEF's commitment to undertaking gender equality-focused work where this was present. They provided a framing document, specifying how UNICEF saw gender fitting into its world, and enabling UNICEF staff to 'hook into' its parameters.

176.   Programmatically, most institutional energy and effort and resources were dedicated to the targeted priorities. Consequently, it is here where the strongest results were delivered. Supported by global funding instruments, such as for child marriage, performance in these areas has been mostly strong, with targets met and demonstrable achievements made in issues of importance. Integrating gender equality into UNICEF's core programmatic work – including major expenditure on humanitarian issues – was more uneven, and links to the GAPs themselves are few.

177.   Despite their undoubted value to UNICEF, the GAPs had some significant weaknesses. Most fundamentally: For an organization whose mandate and mission is the realization of children, women's and girls' rights, the GAPs, and particularly GAP 2, lacked aspiration and ambition. They aimed less to raise UNICEF's work to meet gender equality goals, than to interpret and apply gender equality to the UNICEF world. They sought pragmatism rather than transformation; their impact on internal systems was narrow, inadequately looking outward to structural barriers to change. In this, they were self-limited – and arguably reductionist – from the start.

178.   Critically, neither GAP was fully institutionally owned. Undermined by accountabilities set only at the top, which limited gender mainstreaming throughout the institution, both GAPs suffered from being '*someone else's business*'. Some internal and external stakeholders could even be characterized as taking a 'benign interest' in GAP implementation. There was no coherent understanding of what UNICEF would look like when gender equality had been comprehensively mainstreamed, and only a patchy recognition of shared responsibility for achievement. Limited awareness of the GAPs 'across the house' has resulted in a group of committed and interested staff coalescing around them as a vehicle to articulate and operationalize UNICEF's corporate commitment to gender equality.

179.   The GAPs also suffered from a confused identity. They were neither a Policy (as was concurrently in place from 2010), which would require a range of institutional requirements and accountabilities set in place, nor a true Action Plan, which would provide commitment to a set of timebound actions and deliverables, along with core responsibilities and reporting mechanisms. This hybrid identity constrained their scope for change. Rather than providing a clear trajectory to gender equality results, they provided more of an institutional change strategy; a statement of aspiration and necessary but insufficient steps, which lacked prioritization. From the outset, therefore, the GAPs failed to provide UNICEF with a substantive driver to maintain the initial growing momentum.

180.   Capacity gaps for gender remain a challenge. The aim of 'building the capacities of the few' had a legitimate reasoning, but was done in the absence of broader awareness-raising and basic understandings across the organization The 'voluntary' approach has not succeeded in inspiring gender equality concerns to become 'everybody's business' across a highly

decentralized organization. Commitment at all levels of the organization to gender equality values, principles and approaches, remains varied; and at field level, 'gender' has become blurred with the PSEA agenda in particular. The valuable efforts of the Gender Unit are also constrained by their institutional positioning within the Programme Division, which limits their access to, and influence on, critical functional areas of policy, planning and accountability.

181.   UNICEF has strongly engaged in global-level inter-agency partnerships for gender, mostly centred on its high-capacity Gender Unit. At the country level, however, the picture is more blurred. System-wide reforms bring United Nations Country Team division of labour into sharp relief; and in some locations, UNICEF's role in inter-agency gender coordination mechanisms requires clarification vis-à-vis sister agencies. More explicit articulation of UNICEF's gender equality position corporately, appropriately sensitized for the country level, will provide clarity and incentivization to government partners in particular. It will also support a much-needed refocus on partner capacity support.

182.   Even in the absence of a strong and visionary guiding framework, and without the benefit of broad-based capacity strengthening, resourcing or other forms of support, there is clear evidence that some UNICEF country office staff recognize the centrality of gender equality in achieving child rights. They are responding proactively in programming, policy dialogue and other areas of work. Gender-related issues are being addressed that are not reflected in the current GAP, but which are central to the barriers to equality faced in UNICEF's operational settings. This upward 'push' from the country level reinforces the centrality of gender equality to UNICEF's mandate and mission, as well as the importance of transformative approaches to change. In some locations, mindful of often-sensitive relationships between governments and United Nations agencies, UNICEF has avoided potentially difficult areas of dialogue, opting for consensus rather than adopting a more explicit position on gender equality, articulated as a corporate principle.

183.   Overall, therefore, both GAPs were tools for their time. But in 2019, the world of gender equality has shifted. The gender landscape, and current gender realities, are increasingly complex and challenging to define. Against this intricate backdrop, an approach that prioritizes corporate adaptation rather than structural changes in lives, and which approaches gender inequality from a purely functional perspective, is no longer adequate for the current needs.

184.   Gender equality is fundamentally values-based; it needs to sit at, and be felt by, the core of an organization. Despite the strengths of the two GAPs to date, they lacked the ingredients to truly infuse gender equality into UNICEF's organizational 'bloodstream'. The ethos and 'spirit' of gender equality is still not fully felt across the organization.

185.   Consequently, the road ahead requires not small-scale adaptation but a significant shift in ambition. A bolder, more aspirational and comprehensive approach is needed if UNICEF is to match its status as the prime defender of child rights, with a commensurately committed approach to gender equality in future.

6. Recommendations

186.   This report's recommendations arise from the findings and conclusions above. They were informed by a workshop in November 2019 attended by UNICEF staff and management.

187.   Overall, this evaluation urges UNICEF – based on the evidence presented – to significantly upscale the ambition and aspiration of its vision for gender equality, commensurate with its mandate and status as the world's defender of child rights. Doing so will greatly improve UNICEF's scope for achieving gender equality results, creating substantive changes in the lives of children and adults around the world.

188.   The current GAP has two more years still to run. This provides a window of time to consolidate the achievements of the past, while laying the foundations for the future. Moreover, in 2020, the Mid-term Review of UNICEF's 2018–2021 Strategic Plan will be published. This offers a concurrent opportunity, while consolidation takes place, to formalize UNICEF's future plans for gender equality.

189.   Lastly, a large body of evidence indicates that integrating gender equality comprehensively into the culture and programming of an organization requires concentrated and consistent action.[186] The recommendations that close this report do not present an optional list for UNICEF, but a set of minimum requirements. Phasing may be needed, but success requires a fully comprehensive approach if UNICEF is to truly honour its commitments, and realize its potential, for gender equality in the current world.

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[186] UN Women, *Review of Corporate Gender Equality Evaluations in the United Nations System*, 2015.

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 1: PREPARE A REVISED CORPORATE POLICY FOR IMPLEMENTATION 2022–2025	
Rationale	**Actions**

The GAP instruments have served a valuable purpose but are no longer adequately broad or high-level for a changing global environment. Rather than 'GAP 3', the institutional framework should be replaced with a refreshed Gender Policy and associated Implementation Plan.	**Refresh the 2010 Gender Policy, commensurate with UNICEF's status as the world's children agency; the Beijing Declaration; and the SDGs.**
	
	CONTENT: The Policy should:
	● Be based on a **comprehensive and broad-based consultation process**
	● **Firmly define UNICEF's position** on gender equality within the inter-agency system
	● Contain a **clear statement of aspiration,** which positions gender equality centrally to the realization of child rights
	● **Define the high-level gender equality results** to which UNICEF will contribute, allied to the SDGs and the Beijing Declaration
	● Encompass **three pillars of action:**
	  o *Gender-equality results* – normative and programmatic, covering the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding continuum
	  o *The UNICEF workplace*, including gender parity in staffing and organizational culture
	  o *PSEA/sexual harassment and abuse*, internally and externally
	● Support the achievement of results through a clear statement of **planned institutional change to achieve results** (*see Recommendation 2*)
	
	Elements to include in the Policy are:
	● Clear concepts and definitions that reflect current country gender realities
	● A theory of change, which links institutional results to transformative gender-equality results
	● Defined accountabilities from UNICEF leadership down (*see Recommendation 6*)
	● A robust results framework including clear, timebound and measurable gender-equality targets, applicable in diverse operating contexts; and geared to upstream work as well as service delivery
	● A clear strategy for execution, centred on UNICEF country and regional Offices
	● A learning strategy, for knowledge generation, distillation and sharing
	● A commitment to periodic review, e.g., every four years
	
	TIMING: Planning for the Policy should begin immediately to ensure its preparation in advance of the Mid-Term Review of the Strategic Plan.

RECOMMENDATION 2: SUPPORT RESULTS BY CONTINUING INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING GAINS	
Rationale	**Actions**
GAP 1 has built many valuable systems to help UNICEF identify and track	**Support the realisation 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

its progress on institutional strengthening. However, several of these would benefit from revision, to ensure 'fitness for the future'.	• Include:
	  o Continued development of the gender architecture (*see Recommendation 5*)
	  o Refreshed key performance indicators for a stronger emphasis on results and to reward inter-agency partnerships
	  o A review of current corporate data systems for accuracy and validity
	  o 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
	
	TIMING: During the remaining period of GAP 2 implementation, in the lead-up to Policy implementation

RECOMMENDATION 3: IMPROVE GENDER EQUALITY INTEGRATION IN HQ AND MULTISECTORAL PROGRAMMING

Rationale	Actions
The targeted priorities of the GAPs 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-equality ally, into core programming areas.** • Articulate within the Policy an approach of **gender equality integration within core humanitarian and development programming**, complemented by transformative initiatives, particularly for women and girls; • Promote the use of **multisectoral programming**, particularly through life cycle approaches • Prioritize the **incentivization and capacity strengthening of external partners**, from a transformative perspective • Require (and check the conduct of) **gender equality analysis** for all programmatic designs at HQ level • Require the integration of gender equality into HQ **programme results frameworks** and **annual results reporting**, as well as evaluations and Programme Cooperation Agreements **TIMING:** During the remaining period of GAP 2 implementation, in the lead-up to Policy implementation

RECOMMENDATION 4: EMBED GENDER EQUALITY INTO COUNTRY AND REGIONAL PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING

Rationale	Actions
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	**Require country and regional offices to integrate gender within their own Country/Regional Programme Documents, geared to gender realities on the ground; and the priorities of the inter-agency system as reflected in United Nations Cooperation Frameworks.** UNICEF country/regional offices should: • **Ensure realization of the commitment to conduct GPRs** (already mandatory for all country offices) • **Define UNICEF's collaborative advantages** for gender equality at the country/regional level (as appropriate within the inter-agency system, and Co-operation Frameworks, e.g., on data collection • Require an explicit statement of how the CPD and CPMP will **contribute to the realisation of the current GAP/forthcoming Policy results**; what it will achieve for gender equality in the country; and how it will contribute to the Cooperation Framework

UNICEF country offices have already embarked on this journey, but for others it requires urgent attention.	• Develop **a clear set of intended results for gender equality**, geared to the Cooperation Framework and linked to the Common Chapter and the priorities emerging for UNICEF's next Strategic Plan • Plan to **dedicate resources to empowerment-focused gender approaches** in the next iteration of CPDs. • Ensure all associated **tools and regulatory frameworks** for UNICEF's CPDs at country level fully embed gender equality. This approach will help define UNICEF's role in the inter-agency systems and allow many offices to capture work that is being undertaken currently, but which is not being reported under the GAP. **TIMING:** During the remaining period of GAP 2 implementation

RECOMMENDATION 5: 'BRING GENDER HOME': BUILD GENDER CAPACITIES FROM A VALUES-BASED APPROACH	
Rationale	**Actions**

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':**
	• **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
	• Build gender equality into **induction courses** for all new staff, as well as leadership and management courses
	• Enforce the GAP requirement of a **Gender Specialist requirement** for programme budgets of more than $20 million
	• Professionalize the **Gender Focal Point** network:
	  o Require each UNICEF HQ 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
	  o Require all Gender Focal Points to undertake relevant GenderPro training
	  o Allocate realistic time in workplans for Gender Focal Points to undertake gender equality-focused activities
	  o Add gender responsibilities to Gender Focal Points' Performance Evaluation Reviews and learning objectives
	  o Require all country-level Gender Focal Point networks to report to the Deputy Representative
	• Seek to work with other United Nations partners, particularly UN Women, to **build the gender equality capacity of partners**, particularly governments
	
	TIMING: Within the next six months

RECOMMENDATION 6: ENSURE LEADERSHIP AND EMBED ACCOUNTABILITIES FOR OWNERSHIP	
Rationale	**Actions**
Embedding gender institutionally requires clear and committed leadership to inspire staff; a directive approach; and to be supported by	**Articulate clear leadership, manifested in committed accountabilities at all levels.** • **Issue leadership statements** on the role of the current GAP 2 (and subsequent Gender Policy when launched) in ensuring that UNICEF meets its aims on gender equality; external for partners, and internal for staff

comprehensive accountability at all levels.	• **Embed accountability and recognition systems for gender equality results** within key individual accountability and responsibility tools, including Representative and other management performance plans; and key organizational functions (Human Resources, Policy, Field Results Group, Results, Monitoring & Evaluation) • Use the opportunity of the new **Performance Management and Talent Management systems** to embed individual responsibility and accountability for gender equality 'across the UNICEF house' **TIMING**: Within the next six months

RECOMMENDATION 7: REPOSITION THE CORPORATE GENDER UNIT FOR GREATER INFLUENCE AND OVERSIGHT

Rationale	Actions
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 UNICEF's work 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 programmes and management functions. To support this matrix management arrangement, gender mainstreaming should be promoted within HQ structures by designating and training gender staff and/or focal points across all relevant divisions/offices (including but not limited to: programmes, emergency operations, strategic planning, data analysis and monitoring, evaluation, human resources, and units responsible for PSEA and sexual harassment). **TIMING:** Within the next six months