

## **C 2025/8 Annex 7: Progress on the FAO Gender Policy Minimum Standards and the UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN SWAP 2.0)**

1. Gender equality is central to FAO's mandate and the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, where it is captured as a technical theme as Programme Priority Area BL1: *Gender Equality and Rural Women's Empowerment*, as well as a cross-cutting theme, together with youth and inclusion, aiming to address these issues systematically across FAO's work (*Objective 5, Outcome 5.3*). In achieving *Objective 5*, FAO assesses its performance against two gender-related key performance indicators, as reported below.

### ***Indicator 5.3.A – Number of gender mainstreaming standards implemented***

2. The indicator measures the implementation of the 17 Minimum Standards for gender mainstreaming defined in the FAO Policy on Gender Equality 2020-30. The Standards aim to foster an enabling institutional environment through the establishment of gender mainstreaming mechanisms which focus on the key functions of the Organization. They were designed to be compatible and complementary to the UN-SWAP 2.0 Performance Indicators, which are binding for all UN organizations and against which FAO reports on an annual basis.

3. The FAO Policy on Gender Equality 2020-2030 was updated in 2020, introducing new Minimum Standards (MS) for Human Resource Management (MS 12), Staff Learning (MS 14), Audit (MS 15), Resource Mobilization (MS 16) and Communication (MS 17). Following the establishment of a quality control mechanism (Standard 9), in 2022-23 FAO was able for the first time to track resources dedicated to gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE). The methodology for tracking gender-related planning and outputs was also updated and is now tied to relevant gender-sensitive SDG targets (Standard 3). Most Standards show consistency and improvements in reporting, particularly those related to the collection, analysis and dissemination of sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics; staff learning and capacity development; project formulation and implementation; and strategic dialogues and consultations with resource partners. Over the biennium, all 17 Standards were implemented.

**Table 1: Minimum Standards of the FAO Policy on Gender Equality 2020-2030**

Minimum Standards for Gender Mainstreaming		2022	2023	Biennium Summary of Results
1	FAO systematically collects and incorporates sex-disaggregated data in all its major statistical databases and related SDG platforms. These sex-disaggregated data are analysed and disseminated through FAO knowledge and communication products to expand the evidence base on gender in agriculture, natural resource management, food security and nutrition.	Implemented	Implemented	Seven out of nine FAO major databases available to the public are relevant for sex disaggregation, including an SDG-related repository. Out of these, five <sup>1</sup> currently include sex-disaggregated information. FAO disseminates this data through its knowledge products, and particularly through its flagship publications which include an annual SDG report. Throughout 2022-23, the SDG report and all flagship publications included a gender analysis, <sup>2</sup> while four <sup>3</sup> out of six provided sex-disaggregated data.  In addition, in 2023, FAO launched the report <i>The status of women in agrifood systems</i> which provides the latest evidence on persistent gender inequalities in agrifood systems, lessons learned and recommendations.
2	FAO provides capacity development to Members to enhance the collection, analysis and use of sex-disaggregated data for SDG-monitoring, informed policymaking and programme development.	Implemented	Implemented	FAO strengthens the capacity of Members to collect and analyse sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive statistics. In 2022-23, government officials from 95 countries took part in 68 regional or national training workshops and roundtable discussions which included sessions on sex-disaggregated data collection and analysis in agrifood systems. In 2022-23, FAO also supported 64 countries in collecting and producing sex-disaggregated data through national agricultural censuses and surveys.
3	FAO integrates gender dimensions in its results measurement framework, in alignment with the gender equality objectives set by the FAO Policy on Gender Equality 2020-2030, and systematically plans and measures gender-related results at all levels (SDG/outcome/outputs).	Implemented	Implemented	Gender-related outputs are formulated at country, regional and headquarters levels and contribute to SDG targets and indicators. On average, 22 percent of outputs planned and delivered in 2022 and 2023, contributed to gender-relevant SDG targets.
4	A dedicated budget is allocated to gender-related work and reported to governing bodies.	Implemented	Implemented	The Programme of Work and Budget allocates a dedicated budget for gender work across the Organization.

<sup>1</sup> FAOSTAT, Gender and Land Rights Database; Hand- in Hand Geospatial Platform; Global Livestock Production and Health Atlas (GLiPHA); and Rural Livelihoods Information System.

<sup>2</sup> *The State of Food and Agriculture 2023* is exempted due to this year's topic and methodology applied (aggregated national data and marginal damage estimates) which did not allow for a gender analysis.

<sup>3</sup> *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture*; *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World*; *The State of the World's Forests*; and Tracking progress on food and agriculture-related SDG indicators.

Minimum Standards for Gender Mainstreaming		2022	2023	Biennium Summary of Results
5	Gender expertise is available at headquarters and regional level to support and coordinate FAO's work on gender equality. An organization-wide network of gender focal points – staff who devote 20 percent of their time to support gender mainstreaming work – is in place and maintained.	Implemented	Implemented	In the reporting period a total of 12 gender posts at headquarters and in each of FAO's five Regional Offices supported the implementation of FAO's work on gender, including the coordination of the Organization-wide network of gender focal points (GFPs) at headquarters and in the subregional and country offices. At the end of 2023, there were 160 active GFPs. The total network, which includes also alternates, comprises close to 250 employees.
6	Decentralized Offices and headquarters divisions carry out a gender stocktaking exercise every four years to assess the extent to which gender is integrated in their work. They are also required to develop a follow-up plan of action to address the identified gaps, set priorities and allocate resources for gender-mainstreaming at divisional and office level.	Implemented	Implemented	FAO promotes periodic stocktaking of gender-related work in all Organizational units to plan for future activities. In 2022-23, a total of 26 reports were successfully finalized, maintaining consistency with the previous biennium.
7	Country offices periodically carry out a country gender assessment to provide national/international partners with an updated profile on gender and agriculture and inform country planning. FAO's Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs) integrate gender-related outputs, activities and indicators in their results framework.	Implemented	Implemented	FAO promotes the development of Country Gender Assessments which contribute to Country Programming Frameworks and project formulation. Eighteen new assessments were developed in 2022-23. Significantly, all newly endorsed CPFs incorporate gender-related activities and/or outputs and indicators within their result matrices.
8	Projects and programmes integrate gender-related results and indicators, based on the findings of a gender analysis. Their formulation and implementation are guided by specific gender requirements established by the FAO project cycle.	Implemented	Implemented	Specific gender-related requirements are established through the FAO Project Cycle. Nearly 90 percent of projects formulated in 2022-23 were based on a gender analysis, and 87 percent of projects implemented gender-related activities.
9	All decentralized offices and headquarters divisions dedicate resources, including TCPs, and implement interventions whose main objective is to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.	Implemented	Implemented	In 2022-23, around 2 percent of FAO projects focused exclusively on the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. In 2022-23, FAO for the first time attributed annual project expenditures to gender equality and women's empowerment, which amounted to USD 40.8 million over the reporting period.

Minimum Standards for Gender Mainstreaming		2022	2023	Biennium Summary of Results
10	FAO annually reports to its governing bodies on the gender-related results achieved under its strategic framework and on the implementation of the minimum standards of this Policy and the performance standards of the UN-SWAP 2.0.	Implemented	Implemented	The corporate monitoring framework addresses gender equality within all the <i>betters</i> , as a cross-cutting theme as reported to Members through the Mid-Term Review Synthesis Report and the Programme Implementation Report. These two documents also report on the implementation of the minimum standards of this Policy and the performance standards of the UN-SWAP 2.0.
11	All FAO employees are expected to promote gender equality as part of their work and functions. Gender focal points and supervisors are required to include a gender objective/indicator when planning for the Performance Evaluation and Management System (PEMS).	Implemented	Implemented	FAO continued to expand the incorporation of gender equality objectives in the PEMS of different categories of staff. FAO performance assessments now hold supervisors, FAORs and senior management accountable for gender equality, paving the way for strengthened accountabilities. As for the gender focal points, a notable average of 95 percent reported gender-related objectives in their PEMS.
12	FAO implements policies, strategies and specific measures that promote gender parity and foster gender equality in the workplace.	Implemented	Implemented	A corporate Action Plan on Gender Parity is implemented and regularly reported to FAO Governing Bodies and to the UN system. FAO has also put in place a number of policies promoting an inclusive work environment, including gender equality in the workplace.
13	All employees undertake mandatory gender training to acquire an understanding of gender issues related to FAO's mandate. FAO periodically assesses staff capacities and, based on identified needs, provides tailor-made trainings to headquarters and decentralized offices.	Implemented	Implemented	FAO annually implements a gender-related capacity development strategy and offers a variety of gender-related training options to its employees. In 2022-23, over 160 workshops, seminars or webinars dedicated to gender equality issues (compared to about 130 in the previous biennium) were organized at headquarters and in decentralized offices.  The mandatory e-learning course: Achieving Gender Equality in FAO's work is available to all employees on the internal learning platform <a href="mailto:you@fao.org">you@fao.org</a> .
14	FAO establishes and maintains corporate incentive and award mechanisms to promote good performance and delivery of gender-related results by decentralized offices and technical divisions.	Implemented	Implemented	A multi-level reward and incentive mechanism for gender work has been developed and approved. Individual achievements are rewarded through the corporate <i>FAO Employee recognition awards</i> . A specific recognition for country offices has been initiated in four pilot counties. <sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Benin, Cameroon, Niger and Palestine

Minimum Standards for Gender Mainstreaming		2022	2023	Biennium Summary of Results
15	Evaluation and audit methodologies integrate gender dimensions and gender-specific recommendations are included in the final reports, when relevant.	Implemented	Implemented	Following the corporate guidelines for the assessment of gender mainstreaming, an average of 80 percent of all evaluations included gender-specific conclusions and appropriate recommended actions. The increase from 71 percent in 2022 to 89 percent in 2023 demonstrates a significant improvement over the course of the biennium.  Of the 29 audits carried out in 2022-23, 12 provided gender-specific recommendations.
16	FAO leverages on its partnerships at global and national level to mobilize voluntary contributions to expand and consolidate its work on gender equality and women's empowerment. Financing priorities in this area are regularly presented to resource partners through strategic dialogues, donor consultations and pledging events.	Implemented	Implemented	Gender priorities were discussed as part of the agenda of 67 strategic dialogues, donor consultations, and meetings with resource partners, of which 23 in 2022 and 44 in 2023. This significant increase may be credited to the launch of the FAO flagship report <i>The status of women in agrifood systems</i> which opened avenues for meaningful strategic dialogues, meetings and consultations.
17	FAO gives visibility to and promotes gender-related work, including on the results achieved in the implementation of the FAO gender equality policy and the UN-SWAP 2.0, through its corporate and internal communication activities. All FAO public imaging and branding is gender sensitive.	Implemented	Implemented	During the biennium 162 gender-related stories or achievements were published on FAO's corporate website, and 75 on the internal website, with an increase from 34 in 2022 to 41 in 2023. Additionally, more than 1 000 relevant posts were published on different social media channels, of which 145 <sup>5</sup> were explicitly about gender under the hashtag:  <i>#LetsGrowEquality</i> in connection to the launch of the <i>The status of women in agrifood systems</i> report.  The FAO corporate communication policy also includes guidance and recommendations on gender-sensitive imaging and branding, including specific guidance on photos and video footage to reflect gender balance.

<sup>5</sup> Based on a specific analysis applied on the 2023 posts from FAO's corporate social media account.

**Indicator 5.3.B – UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP)**

4. Indicator 5.3.B assesses FAO's performance against the UN-SWAP standards. The UN-SWAP is an accountability framework to accelerate mainstreaming of gender equality and the empowerment of women in all institutional functions of UN system entities, and requires annual reporting by each entity.

5. An upgraded UN-SWAP 2.0 2018-23 extended the reach of UN-SWAP 1.0 by updating the Performance Indicators, in alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In 2020, additional reporting questions were added to each Performance Indicator to track the effects of, and responses to COVID-19 pandemic in relation to gender equality and the empowerment of women. 2023 constitutes the last of the UN-SWAP 2.0 reporting cycle, and consultations are ongoing for updating the framework.

6. As shown in the table below, FAO met or exceeded 14 out of 16 applicable UN-SWAP Performance Indicators (PI).<sup>6</sup> Of note, FAO has exceeded PI 8 on Gender-responsive Performance Management since 2021, and, in 2023, stepped up its efforts to institute multilevel reward and incentive mechanisms, including the gender criterion of the Employee Recognition Award and the Gender Champions Capacity Building Programme for decentralized offices.

7. There is scope for improvement for PI 12 on the equal representation of women and PI 4 on evaluation. Women accounted for 47 percent of professional staff at FAO as of 2023, reaching the goal of parity (parity is considered to be within the 47 to 53 percent range) set by the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity, but there has been limited progress at the Director level and above, which remained at 28 percent women by the end of 2023. The meta-evaluation score increased from 4.55 in 2022 to 5.2 in 2023, showing on-going improvements in PI 4 on evaluation. although the Organization is still approaching the requirement. In 2023, the evaluation teams expanded beneficiary engagement in the field and improved accessibility to conflict areas.

8. In its annual letter, UN Women (November 2023) commended FAO for having prioritized a transformative result on gender equality and women's empowerment within FAO's high-level strategic planning documents that led to the exceeding requirement rating of PI 1 in 2022, in addition to FAO's continued efforts in enhancing gender capacity of FAO employees and gender-responsive knowledge and communication.

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<sup>6</sup> UN-SWAP includes 17 Performance Indicators, but PI 3 is not applicable to FAO.

**Table 2: UN-SWAP 2.0 FAO ratings by Performance Indicator\***

PI	Title	2020	2021	2022	2023
1	Strategic planning gender-related SDG results	meets	meets	exceeds	exceeds
2	Reporting on Gender-related SDG results	exceeds	exceeds	exceeds	exceeds
3	Programmatic Gender-related SDG Results not captured in PI 1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
4	Evaluation	exceeds	exceeds	approaches	approaches
5	Audit	exceeds	exceeds	exceeds	exceeds
6	Policy	meets	meets	meets	meets
7	Leadership	meets	meets	meets	meets
8	Gender-responsive Performance Management	meets	exceeds	exceeds	exceeds
9	Financial Resource Tracking	meets	meets	meets	meets
10	Financial Resource Allocation	meets	meets	meets	meets
11	Gender Architecture	exceeds	exceeds	exceeds	exceeds
12	Equal Representation of Women	approaches	approaches	approaches	approaches
13	Organisational Culture	meets	meets	meets	meets
14	Capacity Assessment	exceeds	exceeds	exceeds	exceeds
15	Capacity Development	meets	meets	meets	meets
16	Knowledge and Communication	exceeds	exceeds	exceeds	exceeds
17	Coherence	meets	meets	meets	meets

\* In line with the reporting timeline of UN-SWAP to the UN Economic and Social Council, ratings are to be confirmed in 2024