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The ILO's performance results under the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP 2.0)

Summary: This constitutes the first document for information on the ILO's performance results under the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP 2.0). It summarizes the results under UN-SWAP 2.0 in 2023 and examines the areas for improvement emerging from the United Nations report card for 2023 and annual letter from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women).

Author unit: Conditions of Work and Equality Department (WORKQUALITY).

Related documents: [GB.350/INS/4](#); [GB.350/PV](#); UN-SWAP 2.0: Summary of 2023 Reporting Results from [UN-Women](#) (available in English only).

► Background

1. At its 350th Session (March 2024), the Governing Body considered the mid-term report on the implementation of the ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2022–25.¹ In its decision, the Governing Body requested the Director-General to:
 - (a) continue the implementation of the ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2022–25, taking into account the Governing Body's guidance and lessons learned;
 - (b) report to its 356th Session (March 2026) on the results of the ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2022–25, along with the proposed approach for the subsequent action plan, with a view to a heightened strategic positioning of the Office's work on gender equality as intrinsic to social justice;
 - (c) publish, as a document for information every March session of the Governing Body, the ILO's performance results under the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP 2.0), along with the annual letter from UN-Women to the ILO Director-General and the Office's response letter, in order to keep the Governing Body informed on progress in advancing gender mainstreaming.
2. The present document constitutes the first document for information on the ILO's performance results under the UN-SWAP 2.0. It summarizes the findings of the assessment of the ILO's performance results in 2023 (also referred to as its United Nations (UN) report card). The annual letter from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to the Director-General and the Office's response letter to UN-Women, are provided in Appendices I and II, respectively.
3. UN-SWAP was developed for the entire UN system and does not take account of the tripartite structure of the ILO. The Office reports to UN-SWAP 2.0 based on the implementation of the ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2022–25, which includes additional, specific indicators that reflect the tripartite structure of the ILO.

UN-SWAP self-assessment and reporting

4. Under the UN-SWAP reporting process, UN entities rate themselves based on a joint accountability framework that comprises 17 performance indicators in six key areas, namely: results-based management; oversight; accountability; human and financial resources; capacity; and knowledge, communication and coherence.
5. Entities self-assess and report on their standing with respect to each UN-SWAP indicator, according to selected criteria. The three levels of the rating system are "exceeds requirements", "meets requirements" and "approaches requirements". Entities can also state that the information is "missing", or that the indicator is "non-applicable".

¹ GB.350/INS/4.

► ILO results under UN-SWAP 2.0

6. The ILO has made significant progress under UN-SWAP 2.0, which was developed and launched in 2018 to include new indicators on normative and development results in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The table below highlights the ratings applied in 2023, comparing them both to those from 2022 and to the baseline established during the initial reporting under UN-SWAP 2.0 in 2018.²

► ILO ratings from UN-SWAP (2018–23)

UN-SWAP indicator	2018 (baseline)	2022	2023
1. Strategic planning gender-related SDG results	Missing	Exceeds	Exceeds
2. Reporting on gender-related SDG results	Missing	Exceeds	Exceeds
3. Programmatic gender-related SDG results not directly captured in the strategic plan	N/A	N/A	N/A
4. Evaluation	Approaches	Meets	Meets
5. Audit	Exceeds	Exceeds	Exceeds
6. Policy	Approaches	Exceeds	Exceeds
7. Leadership	Approaches	Approaches	Meets
8. Gender-responsive performance management	Meets	Meets	Meets
9. Financial resource tracking	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches
10. Financial resource allocation	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches
11. Gender architecture	Meets	Approaches	Approaches
12. Equal representation of women	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches
13. Organizational culture	Meets	Meets	Meets
14. Capacity assessment	Meets	Approaches	Approaches
15. Capacity development	Meets	Approaches	Meets
16. Knowledge and communication	Exceeds	Meets	Meets
17. Coherence	Approaches	Approaches	Approaches

² The ILO reported the 2024 results and self-assessment to the UN-SWAP secretariat in January 2025. The ratings from UN-SWAP for 2024 will only be available mid-or late 2025.

7. The UN report card for 2023 and the letter from UN-Women show that the ILO made significant progress in respect of:
 - (a) the delivery of transformative results in gender equality and women's empowerment through outcome 5 of the Programme and Budget for 2024–25: Gender equality and equality of treatment and opportunities for all (UN-SWAP indicator 1);
 - (b) the provision of comprehensive and regular reports to the Governing Body on high-level results on gender equality through the programme and budget and on the implementation of the ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality (UN-SWAP indicator 6);
 - (c) the enhancement of the senior-level accountability mechanism for promoting gender equality through regular discussions in meetings of the Senior and Global Management Teams (UN-SWAP indicator 6).
8. In its letter, UN-Women identifies three key areas for ILO improvement. Further information on these areas is provided in the following section.³

► Summary of key areas for ILO improvement

Financial resource tracking and allocation (UN-SWAP indicators 9 and 10)

9. In its letter, UN-Women encourages the ILO to apply the gender equality marker in line with the UN data standards for UN system-wide reporting of financial data and to quantify the disbursement of funds allocated to advancing gender equality and non-discrimination priorities. It notes that implementing the gender marker would enable the ILO to evaluate the impact of these investments and establish a financial benchmark. The ILO was rated as approaching the requirements under these UN-SWAP indicators.
10. The ILO has developed a financial resource tracking mechanism to quantify the allocation of funds that promote gender equality and non-discrimination. It currently tracks staff and non-staff resources that contribute to gender equality and non-discrimination for extrabudgetary development cooperation, Regular Budget Supplementary Account and Regular Budget Technical Cooperation activities. A system is also in place for staff resources funded by the regular budget and Programme Support Income to track the time (in terms of hours) allocated to gender equality, through the gender equality and non-discrimination marker.
11. In 2024, the Office developed a methodology that makes it possible to quantify in monetary terms the allocated hours to allow for reporting alongside the other sources of funds in line with UN-SWAP requirements. As a result, the ILO is expected to meet the requirements of indicator 9 in 2025. Based on the financial resource tracking mechanism, setting a financial benchmark for resource allocation to advancing gender equality could be considered.

³ It is recalled that the Governing Body reviewed the preliminary results of the monitoring exercise carried out at the mid-point of the implementation of the ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2022–25 (including for the 2023 reporting cycle) at its 350th Session (March 2024), as reflected in [GB.350/PV](#).

Equal representation of women: UN-SWAP indicator 12

12. In its letter, UN-Women urges the ILO to focus on achieving parity at the P5 level and above, where parity has not been attained.⁴ The ILO approached requirements under this indicator.
13. Achieving parity at the P5 level and above is one of the priorities of the Director-General. The Office has made significant progress towards achieving gender parity in senior leadership roles. The proportion of women holding positions at the P5 level and above has risen from 34 per cent in 2009 to approximately 43 per cent in 2023, with regional variations. Since 2020, the Human Resources Development Department has provided regional directors with annual reports offering an overview of the diversity profile in their regions, including data on gender equality, and encouraging them to increase gender equality and diversity.
14. The ILO needs to capitalize on the overall momentum created in attaining gender parity to ensure that the progress made towards achieving a gender balance at all levels is maintained. Achieving gender parity is part of the ILO's Human Resources Strategy for 2022–25.

Capacity development: UN-SWAP indicator 15

15. In its letter, UN-Women encourages the ILO to prioritize developing a comprehensive capacity development programme to enhance knowledge and skills related to gender equality, including gender-responsive leadership for senior managers. The ILO was rated as meeting the requirements under this indicator.
16. The Office is offering specific courses on gender equality and is also mainstreaming gender equality in leadership courses. For example, gender equality is one important element of a course it offers on executive leadership and strategic management. Gender equality is a core competency of the standard managerial output against which managers are evaluated through an upward feedback system. The Office is considering making the recently developed ILO online training programme on gender equality mandatory for ILO staff.
17. In 2024, the ILO Gender Network carried out an assessment of training needs among gender focal points and gender coordinators and is implementing a training programme on the gender equality marker, resource tracking and the life-course, focusing on the ageing workforce. Furthermore, the International Training Centre of the ILO (Turin Centre) has developed more than 15 different courses with gender-specific content⁵ including the course on "Promoting decent work and the care economy" and the Academy on Gender, Inclusion and the Future of Work, which guides participants through an agenda for gender equality and women's empowerment in the world of work. All courses are regularly attended by ILO staff and by the constituents.
18. In 2023, 679 participants in courses with gender-specific content were from governments (of whom 16 per cent were men), 417 were from trade unions (of whom 28 per cent were men) and 64 were from employer and business membership organizations (of whom 6 per cent were men). Further targeted measures might be needed to increase the participation of men as well as of representatives from employer and business membership organizations.

⁴ For the purposes of UN-SWAP reporting, gender parity, or the equal representation of women, is to be within the 47–53 per cent margin.

⁵ All training courses at the Turin Centre are gender mainstreamed. "Gender-specific courses" address the inequalities associated with gender (for example pay inequity) or explore gender-based social, cultural and economic dynamics.

► Key issues moving forward

19. This marks the final reporting cycle under UN-SWAP 2.0, as the UN system transitions to UN-SWAP 3.0. In 2024, the Office reported on UN-SWAP 2.0 as well as on baseline indicators on UN-SWAP 3.0. As of 2025, the ILO will report on UN-SWAP 3.0.
20. Accordingly, the ILO has commissioned an independent evaluation of the ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2022–25, which will be carried out in 2025. Following the guidance of the Governing Body at its 350th Session (March 2024), the Office will report to it at its 356th Session (March 2026) on the results of the Action Plan, along with the proposed approach for the subsequent action plan, bearing in mind the findings of the independent evaluation.
21. UN-SWAP 3.0 was launched by UN-Women in November 2024.⁶ Most of the new indicators of UN-SWAP 3.0 were derived from the UN system-wide Gender Equality Acceleration Plan (GEAP). The GEAP is a follow-up to a 2023 independent review of the UN system’s capacity to deliver on gender equality, initiated under the UN Secretary-General’s Our Common Agenda.⁷
22. The GEAP is built around five pillars, each comprising targeted “accelerators” to drive results towards 2030, namely: (1) a clarion call for gender equality, which involves UN leaders calling for united action to uphold gender equality and address pushbacks against gender equality, reverse systemic inequality and protect women human rights defenders globally; (2) gender-responsive leadership; (3) elevated accountability; (4) resourcing for gender equality; and (5) partnerships for system-wide gender equality.

⁶ More information is available on the [UN-SWAP 3.0 website](#).

⁷ For more information, see UN, *United Nations System Wide Gender Equality Acceleration Plan (GEAP)*, 2023.

► Appendix I

Annual letter from UN-Women to the Director-General



14 November 2024

Dear Mr. Hounbo,

I trust this letter finds you safe and well. I write to thank you and ILO colleagues for your continued engagement and commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and to the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP).

UN Women is pleased that the UN-SWAP has significantly advanced accountability, coordination and gender mainstreaming across the UN system. Notably, since the launch of UN-SWAP 2.0, 78 per cent of the performance ratings system-wide achieved or surpassed requirements in 2023, compared to 57 per cent in 2018, demonstrating consistent year-on-year improvement. This serves as a testament to our collective efforts, at the system-wide and entity level, to accelerate progress to meet the needs of women and girls worldwide. We all know that our collective success is entirely a product of individual entity successes. Specifically, I commend ILO for exceeding 4 and meeting 6 out of the 17 performance indicators by 2023.

In addition, I am pleased to share with you the Secretary-General's report on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system ([E/2024/58](#)). It presents an overview of system-wide accomplishments, challenges, and good practices in 2023; as well as the subsequent resolution adopted by the ECOSOC ([E/RES/2024/3](#)). The resolution calls for the United Nations system to accelerate full and effective mainstreaming of a gender perspective, including through the implementation of the UN-SWAP. As such, I thank you for your leadership and call upon your support to ensure that these mandates are implemented.

I will take this opportunity to inform you that the [UN-SWAP 3.0](#) accountability framework is being upgraded this year. This update marks the conclusion of the five-year cycle (2018-2023) and aligns with the Secretary General's initiative: the [Gender Equality Acceleration Plan \(GEAP\)](#).

The infographic package accompanying this letter provides an overview covering the period 2018-2023, as well as entity-specific data of UN-SWAP reporting: (1) system-wide reporting results; (2) performance results specific to ILO; and (3) ILO's progress towards gender parity.

Mr. Gilbert Hounbo
Director-General
International Labour Organization

Please note that performance results by entity, in execution of the recommendations of the [JIU review of the UN-SWAP](#), are available on the [UN Women website](#).

For 2023, UN Women commends ILO specifically for the following achievements:

- **Delivered transformative results in gender equality and women's empowerment, contributing to SDG 5 (Indicator 1).** The ILO reaffirmed its commitment to gender equality and non-discrimination in Outcome 5 of the 2024-2025 Programme and Budget and integrated a gender perspective across all other outcomes.
- **Provided comprehensive and regular reports to ILO's Governing Body on high-level results on gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) (Indicator 2).** The ILO submitted the Implementation Report for the Programme and Budget, highlighting progress in achieving SDG 5 and SDG 8, as outlined in Outcome 6 of the 2022-2023 Programme and Budget. UN Women is also pleased to note that the Office has informed the Governing Body on the implementation of the Action Plan for Gender Equality.
- **Enhanced the senior-level accountability mechanism for promoting GEWE (Indicator 6).** UN Women positively notes that gender-related topics are consistently discussed in Senior Management and Global Management Team meetings, which oversee the implementation of the organization-wide Action Plan for Gender Equality (2022-2025).

Importantly, UN Women takes this opportunity to express appreciation to ILO's personnel for their commitment to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. We extend special recognition to Sharon Compton in the HR Department, Nicolas Grumbach in Finance and Yoshe Ichinohe in Program, whose efforts have contributed to more accurate and improved reporting on reportable gender-related results. We commend Angelika Muller in RELOFF, for her advocacy work to improve women's representation in ILO meetings, including regional gatherings. UN Women also acknowledges Olga Gomez and Favour Offia in GEDI, for their contributions to the successful implementation of the UN-SWAP.

To build on the momentum of ILO's achievements, and to ensure increased performance in underperforming areas, UN Women encourages ILO to:

- **Apply the gender equality marker** in line with the [UN Data Standards for United Nations system-wide reporting of financial data](#). UN Women urges the ILO to quantify the disbursement of funds allocated to advancing gender equality and non-discrimination priorities. Implementing the 4-scale gender equality marker will enable the ILO to evaluate the impact of these investments and establish a financial benchmark (Indicators 9, 10).

- **Strengthen efforts to achieve equal representation of women at all staff levels.** UN Women urges a focus on achieving parity at the P5 level and above, where parity has not yet been attained (Indicator 12).
- **Prioritize developing a comprehensive capacity development program** to enhance knowledge and skills related to GEWE, including gender-responsive leadership for senior managers, in alignment with the ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2022-2025 (Indicator 15).

UN Women stands ready to provide technical support, particularly to improve the implementation of underperforming indicators. We also encourage UN entities to engage in the next [Commission on the Status of Women \(CSW\)](#) to take place from 10 to 25 March 2025, which will include an assessment of current challenges that affect the implementation of the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#), in its 30th anniversary next year, and the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and its contribution towards the full realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Finally, we would welcome your response to the above with any additional information on your plans for further implementation in the areas highlighted in this letter as requiring enhanced focus.

For further clarifications, Aparna Mehrotra, Director, Division for UN System Coordination, and her team, who lead and coordinate the UN-SWAP work, remain at your disposal to support and may be reached at aparna.mehrotra@unwomen.org.

Yours sincerely,



Sima Bahous

Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director

► Appendix II

The Office's response letter to UN-Women



International
Labour
Organization

► Assistant Director-General
Governance, Rights and Dialogue

Ms Sima Bahous
UN Under-Secretary General
Executive Director of UN Women
New York, NY
United States

29 January 2025

Dear Ms Bahous,

Thank you for your letter dated 14 November 2024, acknowledging the ILO's performance in the 2023 reporting round of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP 2.0).

I also wish to extend my appreciation for drawing attention to the Secretary-General's report on gender mainstreaming into all United Nations policies and programmes (E/2024/58) as well as the accompanying ECOSOC resolution (E/RES/2024/3).

Let me also thank you for the 2023 UN-SWAP 2.0 Report Card you shared. This provides a useful summary of the results of the SWAP 2.0 implementation between 2018 and 2023, ILO-specific performance outcomes, as well as information on ILO's progress towards achieving gender parity among its staff.

In your letter you acknowledged areas where ILO's performance has exceeded or met the requirements, especially in delivering transformative results on: gender equality and women's empowerment, contributing to SDG 5 (Indicator 1); comprehensive and regular reporting to our Governing Body on high-level results on gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) (Indicator 2), as well as our enhancement of the senior-level accountability mechanism for promoting GEWE (Indicator 6).

The ILO's performance also reveals significant advancements in leadership (Indicator 7) and capacity development (Indicator 15), which were marked as "approached" in 2022 and have improved to "met" in 2023. I am equally pleased that the ILO continued to exceed on audits (Indicator 5).

You also highlighted areas where the ILO can improve. I appreciate your encouragement to align our efforts with the UN Data Standards for system-wide financial reporting, particularly concerning Indicators 9 and 10 on gender equality. I am pleased to inform you that in 2024, the

ILO will take a significant step by quantifying the disbursement of funds allocated to advancing gender equality and combating discrimination.

You encouraged the ILO to strengthen efforts to achieve equal representation of women at all staff levels (Indicator 12). Indeed, this has been a key priority of our Director-General since he took office in autumn 2022. The percentage of women occupying positions at the P5 level and above increased from 34 per cent in 2009 to around 43 per cent in 2023, albeit results differ among regions, with some registering at least 10 percentage points below gender parity. A more detailed analysis shows that women occupy: (a) 100 per cent of Deputy Director-General positions; (b) 78 per cent of Assistant Director-General positions; (c) 57 per cent of D2-level positions; (d) 41 per cent of D1-level positions; and (e) 40 per cent of P5-level positions. The ILO needs to capitalize on the overall momentum created in attaining gender parity to ensure that the progress made towards achieving gender balance at all levels is maintained.

Furthermore, you suggested that ILO prioritizes developing a comprehensive capacity development programme to enhance knowledge and skills related to GEWE, including gender-responsive leadership for senior managers (Indicator 15). In this regard, we are considering making the recently developed ILO training programme designed to address capacity gaps and promote gender equality integration mandatory for ILO staff. Gender equality and diversity are also a core competency of the standard managerial output against which managers are evaluated through an upward feedback system.

The ILO's Gender Network, under the leadership of the Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Branch (GEDI) within the Conditions of Work and Equality Department (WORKQUALITY) has been reinvigorated and continues to play an important role in mainstreaming gender throughout the organization and facilitating knowledge sharing on gender equality. The gender network has carried out a needs' assessment on capacity building priorities and has started rolling out a training programme for gender focal points and gender specialists including on the gender marker, resource tracking for gender and on the life-course approach. I am delighted to see the growing interest in participating in this training programme, extending beyond the current members of the gender network.

These efforts are complemented by the work of the GEDI Branch on structural and systemic discrimination, equality of treatment, decent work in the care economy, violence and harassment and just transition. I am pleased about the continued joint efforts of UN Women, ILO and the OECD as part of the Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC).

Lastly, I would like to commend UN Women for its leadership and guidance throughout the UN-SWAP 2.0 reporting process and its continuous accomplishments over the five-year cycle (2018-2023). In this respect, I welcome the upgrade to the UN-SWAP 3.0 accountability framework. A harmonized approach will accelerate our collective efforts across the UN system towards gender equality and women's empowerment globally.

Mainstreaming gender equality remains central to the ILO's mandate and mission for social justice. It is critical to ensuring that our work is inclusive, effective, and firmly rooted in labour rights.

I look forward to the upcoming Commission on the Status of Women in March 2025 and the commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, and value our ongoing partnership as we strive to achieve our shared goals of gender equality and women's empowerment.

Yours sincerely,



Manuela Tomei
Assistant Director-General
Governance, Rights and Dialogue