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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

Summary: This document summarizes 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), and the key achievements and areas for improvement emerging from the annual letter and the report card from UN Women.

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

Related documents: [GB.350/INS/4](#); [GB.350/PV](#), [GB.353/INS/INF/4](#); [GB.356/INS/3](#); [ILO reporting results under UN-SWAP \(UN report card\)](#).

► Background

1. At its 350th Session (March 2024), the Governing Body considered document GB.350/INS/4, the mid-term report on the implementation of the ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2022–25. 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–April 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 decent work and 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 summarizes the ILO's performance results under the UN-SWAP 2.0 for 2024. ¹ The Office's response letter to the annual letter from UN Women to the ILO Director-General is provided as an appendix.

UN-SWAP self-assessment and reporting

3. Under the UN-SWAP reporting process, United Nations (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.
4. Entities self-assess and report on their standing with respect to each 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".
5. The ILO has made significant progress under UN-SWAP 2.0, which was developed and launched in 2018. The table shows the aggregate figures for SWAP ratings and highlights the progress achieved in 2024, comparing it to the previous year (2023) and the baseline established during the initial reporting under UN-SWAP 2.0 in 2018. ² Between 2018 and 2024, the ILO increased its number of "exceeds" ratings from two to seven. Three of these seven important milestones were achieved in the period 2023–24.

¹ The ratings from UN-SWAP for 2024 were only made available in October 2025.

² The ILO reported the 2025 results and self-assessment to the UN-SWAP secretariat in January 2026.

► **Aggregate ILO ratings for 17 indicators from UN-SWAP (2018, 2023, 2024)**

	Exceeds	Meets	Approaches	N/A	Missing
2024	7	5	4	1	0
2023	4	6	6	1	0
2018	2	5	7	1	2

► **Summary of key achievements**

6. The assessment of the ILO's performance results under UN-SWAP 2.0 through the United Nations in 2024 (also referred to as the "UN report card") and the letter from UN Women note the following key achievements of the Office:
 - (a) promotion of gender-responsive evaluation and accountability to advance gender equality and women's empowerment (indicator 4);
 - (b) leadership in advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women (indicator 7);
 - (c) strengthening of the gender architecture and gender mainstreaming (indicator 11);
 - (d) ensuring gender-responsive communication (indicator 16).

► **Summary of key areas for ILO improvement**

7. The assessment of the ILO's performance results under the UN report card and the letter from UN Women note the following key areas for improvement by the Office:
 - (a) strengthen the use of the four-point gender equality marker (GEM) in line with the UN Data Standards for United Nations system-wide reporting of financial data (indicators 9 and 10);
 - (b) organize tailored gender-responsive training programmes for senior management;
 - (c) engage in a UN-SWAP peer review (indicator 17).
8. The management response to these areas is elaborated in document GB.356/INS/3, "Results of the ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2024–25 and proposed outline of the Action Plan 2026–29", for consideration by the constituents, who are invited to discuss the findings and provide further guidance.

► Appendix I

Annual letter from UN Women to the Director-General



10 October 2025

Dear Mr. Hounbo,

I trust this letter finds you safe and well. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to you and your colleagues at the International Labour Organization (ILO) for your continued dedication to gender equality, the empowerment and rights of women and girls, and your steadfast commitment to implementing the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP).

As we conclude UN-SWAP 2.0 implementation, I am pleased to acknowledge the significant progress made in advancing accountability, UN coordination, and gender mainstreaming across the UN system. Looking ahead, the launch of UN-SWAP 3.0, aligned with the United Nations Gender Equality Acceleration Plan (GEAP), will raise the level of entities' commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment, help achieve the new requirements set by 2030, and further streamline reporting processes and reinforce synergies between entities. This will enhance system-wide efforts to accelerate progress on gender equality and uphold the rights and empowerment of all women and girls. The role of leadership remains central to driving these efforts, ensuring that gender equality continues to be prioritized and that tangible change is realized in the lives of women and girls worldwide. I look forward to the continued progress it will foster in the coming years.

In times of challenge and financial constraint, it is all the more important to safeguard and strengthen ILO's dedicated gender expertise, frameworks and structures that underpin progress on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. UN Women has identified these proven catalysts, built through years of collaboration and investment, as key drivers of more effective delivery across mandates and institutional functions.

In addition, I am pleased to share with you the Secretary-General's report on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programs in the United Nations system ([E/2025/58](#)). This report provides a comprehensive overview of system-wide accomplishments, challenges, and good practices in 2024, as well as the resolution adopted by ECOSOC ([E/2025/L.14](#)). This resolution calls for accelerated and full integration of a gender perspective across the UN system, with a requirement for the full implementation of UN-SWAP. I thank you for your leadership in this regard and encourage your continued support to ensure that these important mandates are effectively carried out.

Mr. Gilbert Hounbo
Director-General
International Labour Organization

The infographic package accompanying this letter provides entity-specific data on UN-SWAP reporting for 2024, including: (1) performance results specific to ILO; and (2) ILO's progress toward gender parity. 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 2024, UN Women commends ILO specifically for the following achievements:

- Promoted **gender-responsive evaluation and accountability** to advance gender equality and women's empowerment (Indicator 4). This included strengthening gender and inclusion components in evaluators' TORs and developing a "Supplementary Guidance Note: Integrating Gender Equality in ILO Monitoring and Evaluation" to complement the existing Guidance Note. As a result, 83% of evaluations adequately or fully addressed gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE).
- Sustained **leadership in advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women** through the effective implementation of its programme of work (Indicator 7). UN Women positively notes senior management's commitment, demonstrated through high-level dialogues and social media engagement. Gender equality was a regular focus in governance, with 41% of SMT and GMT meetings (11 out of 27) featuring either a dedicated gender item or an agenda item with a gender component.
- Strengthened the **gender architecture and gender mainstreaming** (Indicator 11). UN Women appreciates ILO's efforts to enhance institutional gender capacity. In 2024, the active ILO gender network, with over 100 gender focal points and specialists, supported mainstreaming efforts. Notably, the Gender, Equality, Inclusion, and Diversity Branch was fully resourced, and the gender coordinators' terms of reference were updated to highlight their role in supporting gender mainstreaming. A capacity assessment resulted in a 2024/2025 training plan.
- Ensured **gender-responsive ILO communications** (Indicator 16), embedding gender equality as a core theme across all campaigns and products. UN Women acknowledges that the ILO's Global Communication Strategy for 2024-25 emphasizes social justice advocacy, with gender equality integrated as a key cross-cutting issue in all communications.

UN Women sincerely appreciates ILO personnel for their dedication to advancing gender-related commitments. UN Women appreciates ILO personnel for their dedication to advancing gender equality. Special recognition goes to Raquel Gonzalez for her leadership in gender equality within the Director General's Cabinet, Stephen Woess and François Mayeux for their efforts to reduce gender disparities in audits, Naomi Asukai for advocating to address gender issues in evaluations, Zeina Awad for her role in implementing the ILO Gender Action Plan and UN SWAP in communications and Verena Schmidt and Sophie Lambert for her involvement in the UN-SWAP implementation process.

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

- Strengthen the use of the four-point **Gender Equality Marker (GEM)** in line with the [UN Data Standards for United Nations system-wide reporting of financial data](#). We encourage the ILO to finalize the methodology and implement tools to quantify allocations and disbursements toward gender equality and non-discrimination priorities (Indicators 9, 10).
- Participate in a **gender-responsive leadership programme** as a key requirement to further strengthen leadership engagement and accountability for gender equality (Indicator 15).
- Engage in a **UN-SWAP peer review** with a UN entity of similar scope and mandate in 2025. This would provide valuable insights into its UN-SWAP implementation, promote mutual learning, and strengthen accountability. The findings could directly inform the update of the ILO's Gender Action Plan and help align it with system-wide good practices and lessons learned (Indicator 17).

We also invite UN entities to engage in the next Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), scheduled for 9-20 March 2026. The priority theme will focus on Access to Justice, with participation and decision-making in public life as the review theme, and achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all older women as a focus area.

Finally, we would appreciate your response, including any additional information on your plans for further implementation in the areas identified in this letter as requiring enhanced focus. UN Women is committed to providing technical support, particularly to enhance the implementation of underperforming indicators.

We look forward to our continued collaboration in advancing gender equality, the empowerment, and the rights of all women and girls, as well as promoting these principles within the United Nations.

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 Director-General

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Original sent by CABINET

Ms Sima Bahous
Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations
Executive Director
UN Women
NEW YORK
UNITED STATES

13 January 2026

Dear Under-Secretary-General,

Thank you for your letter of 10 October 2025 acknowledging the ILO's performance in the 2024 reporting round of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP 2.0).

The 2024 UN-SWAP 2.0 Report Card provides a comprehensive overview of the implementation of UN-SWAP 2.0 between 2018 and 2023, the ILO's specific performance results and an assessment of the Organization's progress towards achieving gender parity across its workforce.

I am pleased to note the recognition of the progress achieved by the ILO in the areas of gender-responsive evaluation and accountability, leadership in advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women, gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive communication.

You also identified areas in which the ILO could further improve, including with regard to the use of the Gender Equality Marker (GEM) and gender-responsive leadership programmes for staff. You also proposed that the ILO consider engaging in a UN-SWAP peer review. My Office will integrate these recommendations into its proposed Action Plan for Gender Equality 2026-2029, which will be submitted to the ILO's Governing Body in March 2026.

I look forward to the upcoming session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2026 on Access to Justice, a topic at the heart of the ILO.

Partnerships and collective efforts are essential to achieving the United Nations system's shared goals of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The ILO remains committed to ensuring that gender equality becomes a reality in the world of work.

Yours sincerely,

Gilbert F. Houngbo