UNAIDS

EVALUATION REPORT

EVALUATION OF THE UNAIDS SECRETARIAT GENDER ACTION PLAN 2018–2023

Report and Annexes

Disclaimer

This report has been authored by TurasPartners. The views expressed in this report are those of the evaluators. They do not represent those of UNAIDS Secretariat or of any of the individuals and organisations referred to in the report.

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Acknowledgements

Gender equality is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as a goal and as a critical enabler to progress across the entire agenda. Gender inequality, however, continues to persist worldwide, including in the workplace. To address this situation, the United Nations Secretary-General launched a System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity in 2017, showing the centrality of advancing gender equality. Building on previous efforts to enhance gender equality, UNAIDS developed a Gender Action Plan in 2018, with targets that address not only issues of gender parity but also performance, learning, empowerment and accountability.

The mid-term evaluation of the Gender Action Plan 2018-2023 was commissioned by the UNAIDS Evaluation Office and conducted in close collaboration with the Human Resources Department. The evaluation was undertaken by Janet Whitelaw-Jones and Helen Merati of TurasPartners (https://www.turas.partners/).

A Reference Group provided support and guidance to the evaluation. Many staff contributed to the evaluation and helped making linkages with other ongoing initiatives and efforts to transform the organisation. The response rates and depth of insights during interviews testify to the high levels of engagement and commitment UNAIDS staff feel on the issue of gender and the related inequalities.

We hope this report will prove helpful to advance gender equality and a broader culture transformation in UNAIDS.

UNAIDS Evaluation Office

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Acronyms and abbreviations

DEI	Diversity, Equality, Inclusion
DxD	Deputy Executive Director
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
ExD	Executive Director
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GACG	Gender Action Plan Challenge Group
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women Empowerment
HR	Human Resources
HRM	Human Resources Management
HQ	Head Quarters
IEP	Independent Expert Panel
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
KII	Key Informant Interview
L&V	Learning and Validation
LDP	Learning and Development Plan
MAP	Management Action Plan
MTE	Midterm evaluation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PALM	Performance And Learning Management
RST	Regional Support Team
SOGIE	Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Expression
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
SMT	Senior Management Team
UN SWAP	United Nations Sector Wide Approach (for GEWE)
UCD	UNAIDS Country Director
UCO	UNAIDS Country Office
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS
USG	United State Government
WHO	World Health Organisation

Executive Summary

This midterm evaluation has taken place at an extraordinary and exciting time of change within UNAIDS. The main achievement of the GAP 2018-2023 has been to move the UNAIDS workplace towards reaching parity among women and men. This has been achieved primarily by recruiting more women to key decision-making roles within UNAIDS. The next step is to go deeper. To explore what outcome and impact level changes the GAP seeks to make, and to develop tailored actions, targets, and commitments to support that change.

Context

Since the second Gender Action Plan (GAP) launched in June 2018[1] the world and UNAIDS have evolved. Gender concerns are being discussed and articulated through refreshed lenses, including feminist principles and intersectionality. These broader lenses seek to locate gender within a narrative that places human beings at the centre of focus, shaped by the interaction of different social phenomena they experience. Gender equality concerns, nevertheless, remain as important as ever. Gender identity and sexual orientation shape the way people experience and progress in the UNAIDS workplace. Just as they shape the way people experience and access health and HIV services in the public health domain.

In early 2019, the UNAIDS Secretariat developed a Management Action Plan[2]. The incoming Executive Director outlined a three-pronged approach to organisational transformation[3]: the unified programme of change. This includes 1) the development of the new Global AIDS strategy[4] (launched in March 2021), 2) an organisational Alignment process that aims to reshape the organisation's structures and teams to be optimally positioned to deliver the new strategy, and 3) an emergent Culture Transformation process using a gender-action learning programme[5] that is working towards creating and sustaining a healthy, equitable and enabling workplace environment for all. The CT process aims to build internal cultures of equality and transform norms that support the achievement of gender equality and social justice[6].

The evaluators recognise that UNAIDS is committed and is resourcing ongoing work at a structural level to create a gender equal workplace. Including the appointment of female staff to lead the current organisational change initiatives, by the UNAIDS Executive Director. This is in alignment with the desired parity in Action Area 1 of the GAP.

UNAIDS staff continue to work with multiple organisational change initiatives as well as the implications of the global COVID-19 pandemic. These initiatives have required more immediate engagement than the GAP; in terms of staff time, attention, dedicated coordinator positions, internal communications priority, and Cabinet level sponsorship.

Key achievements, gaps and challenges

Achievements: The Gender Action Plan 2018-2023 has contributed to several specific policy and practice achievements. These include sustaining parity between women and men in UCD positions increasing the number of women in UNAIDS in senior positions[7]; promoting learning among staff on gender[8]; providing leadership strengthening opportunities for women;[9] supporting the introduction of the single parental leave policy introduced in October 2018; the Policy on Preventing and Addressing Abusive Conduct introduced in March 2021; and continuing to pursue the UN SWAP 2.0 Framework for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment[10]. These achievements will continue to impact on the workplace and programmatic environment within UNAIDS.

However, progress against the GAP commitments has currently stalled. The Gender Action Plan Challenge Group mandate was not renewed in 2020[11]. Though some members of the group continue to meet at times, the group is no longer being actively led by UNAIDS Deputy Executive Director, (Management and

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[1] https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2018/jc2925_unaids-gender-action-plan-2018-2023

[2] PCB46 Update on the Implementation of the Management Action Plan UNAIDS/PCB (46)/20.16

[3] Internal Brief: Culture Transformation at UNAIDS, 10 August 2020

[4] https://www.unaids.org/en/Global-AIDS-Strategy-2021-2026

[5] Internal Brief: Culture Transformation at UNAIDS, 10 August 2020

[6] Internal Brief: Culture Transformation at UNAIDS, 10 August 2020

[7] Action Area 1

[8] Action Area 2

[9] Action Area 3

[10] Action Area 4

[11] GAP Gender Action Challenge Group, Terms of Reference, 2018-07

Governance) as set out in the Gender Action Plan Challenge Group Terms of Reference[12]. The last internal quarterly progress report shared with UNAIDS staff on the GAP was in December 2019. Progress stalled at the end of 2019 in part because organisational and staff focus has been intentionally shifted to the change initiatives explained above, and in part due to COVID-19 pressures. In many respects the GAP has had to wait on the results of the current change processes. Although clarity has been reached in the new Global AIDS Strategy recently, work under the Alignment and the Culture Transformation process continues.

The organisational commitment and resourcing of the Culture Transformation process should also further UNAIDS gender equality aims. See Section 3, page 41 for more detail.

Gaps: The two main gaps for the Gender Action Plan are the lack of clarity in its intent and the lack of senior leadership. The GAP does not have a champion at a senior leadership level to hold the plan accountable and provide it a stable home.

Challenges: A key challenge for the GAP at this juncture is to decide how the organisation should address gender in the workplace so that it a. supports the objectives of the new Global AIDS strategy b. complements the work of the Culture Transformation process and c. influences the Alignment process to invest in gender and broader aims. Recommendation 2 in Section 5 speaks directly to this challenge.

The evaluators found a disconnect between how gender equality is considered and actioned externally in programmes and internally within the workplace. E.g. the Gender Equality, Human Rights and Community Engagement team are not currently formally engaged in the GAP (see Annex 10 'The GAP link to gender programming'). Several interviewees[13] expressed the desire to link workplace and programmatic approaches. A further challenge is the fact that UNAIDS is no longer meeting 100% compliance with the UN SWAP 2.0, despite meeting this for 3 consecutive years in 2016, 2017 and 2018. This is discussed in Action Area 4.

Relevance of targets and commitments: what needs to change?

Although the targets remain relevant, the evaluators found that Targets 1-3 could be updated and nuanced to better orient the GAP towards its implicit intent. The second recommendation suggests revisiting the purpose of the GAP including the impact and outcome level changes it seeks to make. The current targets and commitments can be assessed and located within that ambition.

Recommendations: What direction should the Gender Action Plan take.

There are 6 recommendations in total shown in Figure 1. Recommendations 1 and 2 are priorities. These are accompanied by three further recommendations intended as pillars underpinning the first two. Recommendation 6 is located as a foundation stone necessary to enable structural change for gender equality work within the organisation.

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[12] GAP Gender Action Challenge Group, Terms of Reference, 2018-07

[13] 3 random 2F, 1M, 1 purposive, 1F

Figure 1: GAP Recommendations
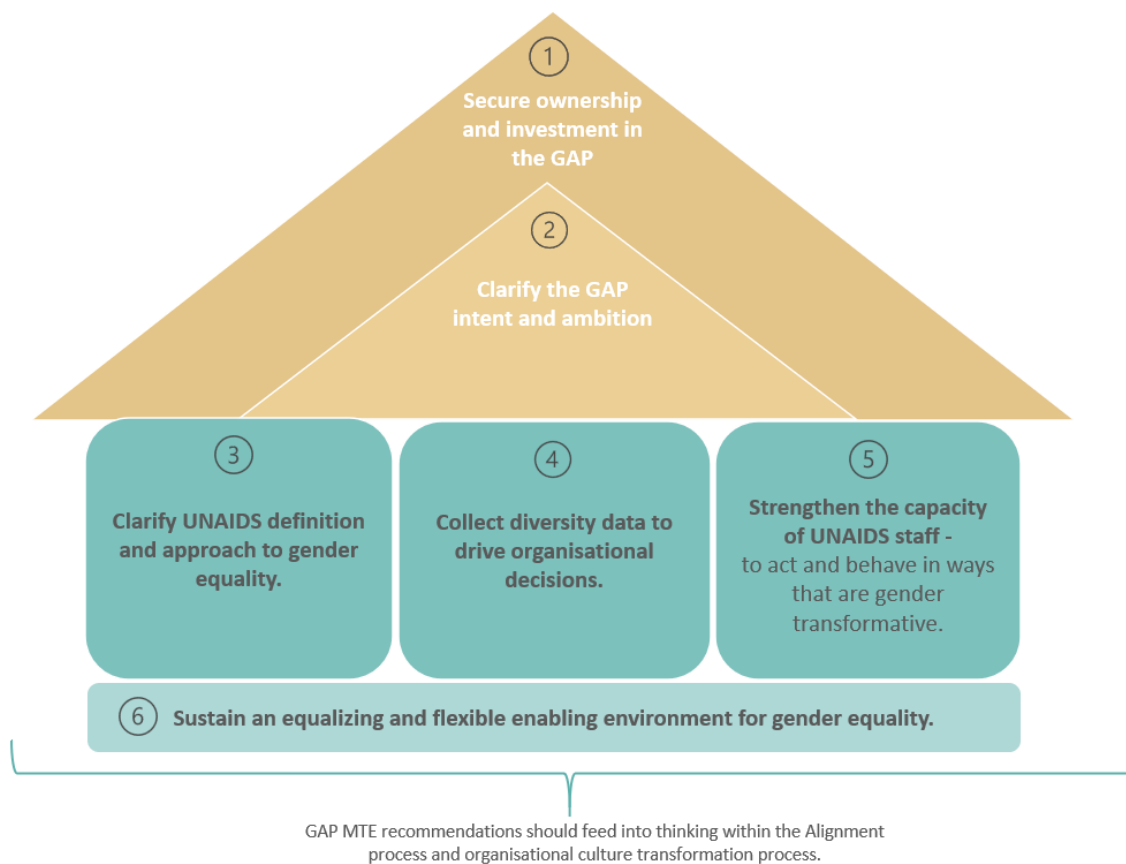
Evaluation methods

Evaluation methods included **document review[14]**, **purposive key informant interviews[15]** and **focus group discussions, randomly sampled staff interviews**, and a static **Miro Board.** These methods were chosen to provide the evaluators with different data sources that could be triangulated during analysis. The aim was to gather as many diverse perspectives as possible in the timeframe, between March to May 2021, to inform responses to the evaluation questions. Please note although the evaluators have quantified responses where possible, this was not a quantitative evaluation. The numbers given are a rough indication of how many times a particular theme emerged and should be interpreted as such.

Limitations

The main limitations for this evaluation include a) the context of flux within UNAIDS that adds complexity around recommendations for the way ahead, b) ongoing change processes may have limited participation of UNAIDS staff in interviews, c) the bias associated with 2 white, heterosexual, cisgender women from the UK, and 1 white, queer, cisgender female from Eastern Europe forming the evaluation team for this evaluation, d) COVID-19 restrictions preventing the evaluators from carrying out in-person focus group discussions and meetings with the evaluation reference group (ERG), and e) the limited availability of intersectional data that could be used to add depth to analysis of the findings.

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[14] See Annex 1

[15] See Annex 2

Section 1: Evaluation Methodology

Introduction

This report presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the independent mid Term Evaluation of the UNAIDS Secretariat Gender Action Plan (GAP) 2018-2023. The GAP was launched in 2018 and runs until 2023. This is the second GAP within UNAIDS. It builds on the achievements of the first GAP that ran from 2013-2018. At this juncture the GAP is in year 3 of the 5-year Plan.

Through this mid-term-evaluation UNAIDS sought to:

- take stock and document what has been achieved and where progress is lacking implementing the Gender Action Plan (GAP) to date.

- explore and document other relevant organizational developments and changes directly related to the Action Plan.

- explore options to achieve the commitments and targets of the Gender Action Plan in the remainder of the implementation period. This includes assessing the current relevance of existing targets and recommending areas for modification.

This mid-term-evaluation has taken place during an extraordinary time for UNAIDS. Contextual understanding and sensitivity are key. Since 2018, UNAIDS has experienced a lot of change. Externally, increasing challenges include growing global conservatism and anti-gender movements, as well as shrinking spaces and budgets for civil society. Internally, a change in leadership and a three-pronged unified change process is ongoing. The COVID-19 pandemic has contributed additional pressures. This makes for an extraordinary moment in time for UNAIDS as an organisation.

The audience for this Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) report is primarily internal. This report aims to provide user-oriented recommendations for the UNAIDS Gender Action Plan Challenge Group, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and senior managers and staff to take on board and reset direction to implement the GAP commitments up to 2023.

Methodology

The broad steps of the MTE methodology included:

- developing an overarching conceptual framework that provides the broad analytic framework for all evaluation activity, reflection and analysis.

- developing an evaluation framework that set out the evaluation criteria, key evaluation questions, methods of data collection and analysis techniques.

- developing a basic Theory of Change for the Gender Action Plan to frame evaluation inquiry around 'how' change has or has not happened. [16]

- developing a sampling approach.

- data collection.

- coding and analysis of data collected.

- writing up and presenting findings, conclusions and recommendations.

- validating findings, conclusions and recommendations with the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) and discuss/co-construct recommendations with other relevant staff (the Gender Action Plan Challenge Group and other staff involved in organisational change processes).

- finalising the evaluation report.

- presentation to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

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[16] A Theory of Change for the GAP did not exist prior to the evaluation. The evaluators drafted a rough pragmatic ToC based on documents reviewed for evaluation purposes.

Data Collection Methods

Methods included **document review**[17] purposive **key informant interviews**, purposive **focus group discussions, randomly sampled staff interviews**[18], and a static **Miro Board.** These methods were chosen to provide the evaluators with different data sources that could be triangulated during analysis. The aim was to gather as many diverse perspectives as possible in the evaluation timeframe to inform responses to the evaluation questions.

Sampling approach & Analysis

The sampling approach included making decisions about inception phase discovery calls, purposive interviews, FGDs and randomly selected interviewees during the evaluation. Analysis was conducted using MAXQDA software. This process is outlined in Annex 2.

The evaluators spoke with a total of 58 people. 54 staff from across UNAIDS; 3 people from UN Women and 1 person from Gender at Work. 80 viewpoints were gathered on the Miro Board.

Throughout this report the evaluators have reflected the numbers of respondents who have mentioned a certain theme. This is because during interviews the evaluators used the interview guides as a *guide*. The evaluators used the guide questions as a starting point but allowed interviewees to speak freely on areas related to the GAP that arose for them. In practice this means that not all interviewees spoke to every single question in the guide. Therefore, it would be inappropriate to interpret the number of people that commented on a particular theme through a quantitative lens.

Limitations

UNAIDS working context: Evaluators anticipated UNAIDS colleagues' capacity for engagement in the evaluation methods may have been limited. This may be due to recent staff surveys and multiple engagement opportunities through the new Strategy development, the Alignment and Culture Transformation processes. To mitigate this the evaluators provided a range of engagement methods requiring different degrees of engagement, aiming to cater to diverse needs and preferences. The evaluators are pleased with the level of engagement achieved: reaching a total of 138 people/viewpoints either via KII, random interview, FGD or the Miro Board, some 18% of the UNAIDS workforce. A further mitigation has been to analyse the 2020 Global Staff Survey, 2021 Pulse Survey and discovery conversation outputs.

Diversity profile represented in the evaluation team: Evaluators were two white, heterosexual, cisgender, female consultants, from the UK and one white, queer, cisgender female from Eastern Europe. The team were aware of the bias their positions bring to the evaluation. The gender specialist in the evaluation team brings a wealth of diversity, inclusion and gender expertise. Evaluators discussed the evaluation approaches, tools and methods to ensure the evaluation was designed to be as inclusive and gender sensitive as possible. The Evaluation Reference Group, a group of UNAIDS colleagues bringing diverse perspectives from across the organisation was important in this context, having reviewed the Inception report, approach, tools and methods. The ERG contributed to the development of the MTE ToRs and challenged the evaluation approach and methods as outlined in the draft Inception Report.

Evaluation timeline: The MTE has taken place over the Easter period. This may have impacted on key informant availability. To mitigate this, the Evaluation Workplan timeline was extended by one week to facilitate UNAIDS staff having enough time to join interviews and /or comment on the Miro board.

COVID 19 restrictions: The evaluators were unable to meet anyone in person, especially during the learning and validation workshop. This may have limited the quality of interactions around recommendation discussion. The evaluators designed the Learning and Validation (L&V) session to be as engaging as possible.

Intersectionality: The Terms of Reference for this evaluation did not request an intersectional approach. However, the evaluators and Evaluation Reference Group recognised this lens could add value. The evaluators and ERG considered how to include an intersectional approach and agreed to:

1. include a random sampling approach to gather diverse perspectives from different categories of staff in different regions, of different ages, race and gender identity. However, evaluators are not able to provide an accurate profile of the composition of this group beyond the current categorisation within the UNAIDS HR system of age, location, sex and grade.

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[17] See Annex 1

[18] See Annex 2

2. include analysis disaggregated by domains that say something about intersectionality where possible. For instance, the UNAIDS HR system categorisation allows the evaluators to understand the profile of the random sample of key informants in terms of age, location, sex and grade. Further the global staff survey data provides information on such as SOGIE and racial identity. Evaluators have used these categories to qualify evaluation findings as far as possible.

3. include the anonymous Miro board method to capture a diversity of voices and perspectives. The evaluators recognise that the Miro Board itself is limited to one key question. It is possible for the same person to make more than one comment, which is a limitation of the Board. Nonetheless a wide variety of viewpoints and ideas were collected.

80 individual responses i.e. text written on online sticky notes as shown in Annex 5 were received. This has provided an insight into what approximately 10% of the UNAIDS workforce would do to improve the level of gender equality in the workplace.

Note on language used in this report
This report refers to women and men in line with the language used in the current Gender Action Plan. But the report refers to male and female when referring to data collected by the HR Department in line with data collection language already used. Throughout the text when referring to interviews, Focus Group Discussions are included. Where interviewees are quoted, they are represented by an anonymous number preceded by 'R', followed by 'F' or 'M' to indicate whether they are female or male. Quotations are in italics. For the purposes of this evaluation UNAIDS definitions (2015)[19] were used.

Consent and Ethical Considerations

All interviewees purposive and random were asked to consent via email. No consent was sought for **Miro Board contributions**. All respondents were allocated a 'R' number for reporting purposes.

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[19] UNAIDS Terminology Guidelines, 2015

Introduction to the GAP

The GAP has 4 Action Areas. Each Action Area has 1 main target. There are 27 commitments across all 4 Target Areas and 3 commitments that relate to the set up and maintenance of the Gender Action Plan Challenge Group.
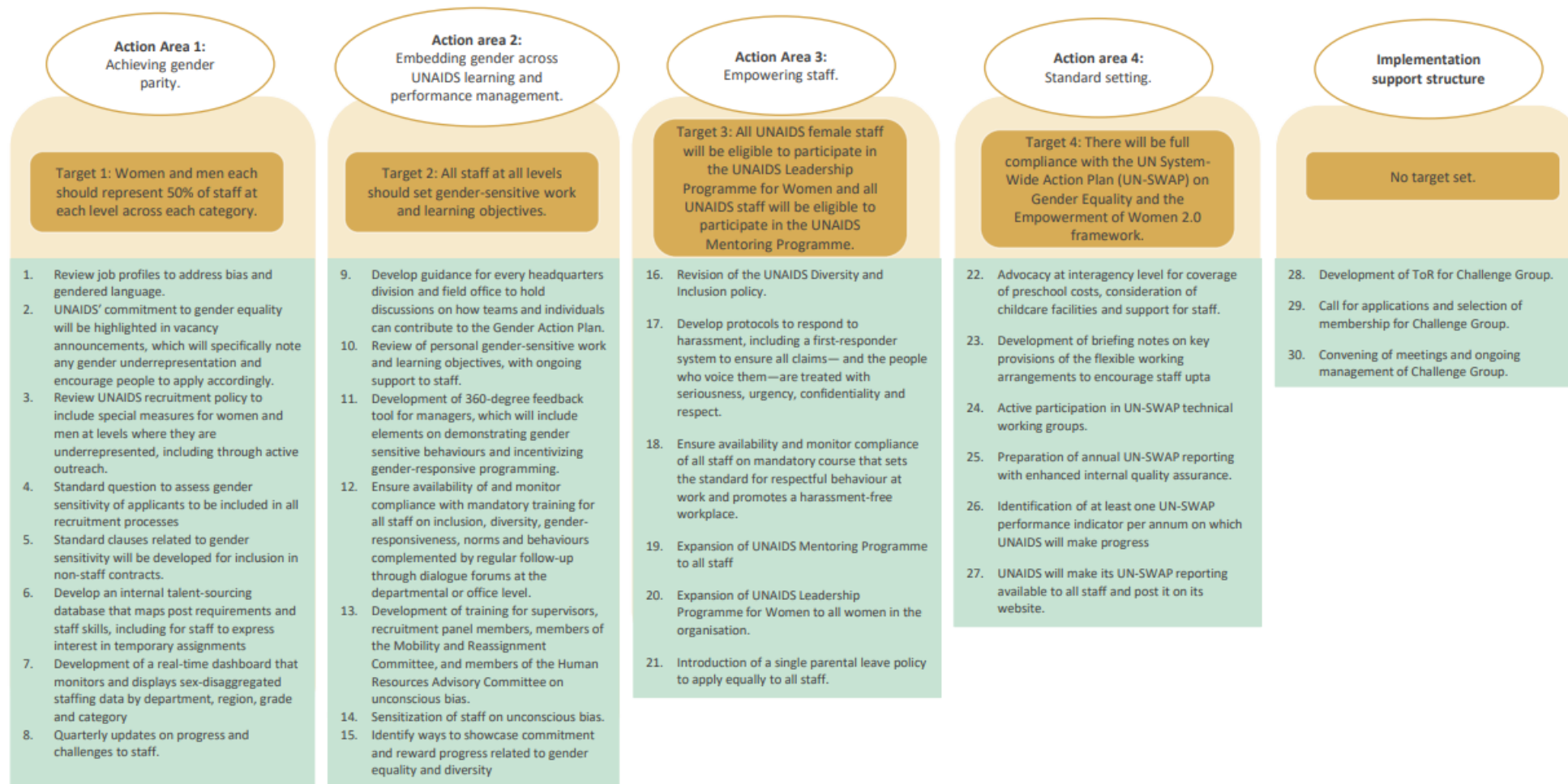
Action Area 1:
Achieving gender parity.

Target 1: Women and men each should represent 50% of staff at each level across each category.

1. Review job profiles to address bias and gendered language.
2. UNAIDS' commitment to gender equality will be highlighted in vacancy announcements, which will specifically note any gender underrepresentation and encourage people to apply accordingly.
3. Review UNAIDS recruitment policy to include special measures for women and men at levels where they are underrepresented, including through active outreach.
4. Standard question to assess gender sensitivity of applicants to be included in all recruitment processes
5. Standard clauses related to gender sensitivity will be developed for inclusion in non-staff contracts.
6. Develop an internal talent-sourcing database that maps post requirements and staff skills, including for staff to express interest in temporary assignments
7. Development of a real-time dashboard that monitors and displays sex-disaggregated staffing data by department, region, grade and category
8. Quarterly updates on progress and challenges to staff.

Action area 2:
Embedding gender across UNAIDS learning and performance management.

Target 2: All staff at all levels should set gender-sensitive work and learning objectives.

9. Develop guidance for every headquarters division and field office to hold discussions on how teams and individuals can contribute to the Gender Action Plan.
10. Review of personal gender-sensitive work and learning objectives, with ongoing support to staff.
11. Development of 360-degree feedback tool for managers, which will include elements on demonstrating gender sensitive behaviours and incentivizing gender-responsive programming.
12. Ensure availability of and monitor compliance with mandatory training for all staff on inclusion, diversity, gender-responsiveness, norms and behaviours complemented by regular follow-up through dialogue forums at the departmental or office level.
13. Development of training for supervisors, recruitment panel members, members of the Mobility and Reassignment Committee, and members of the Human Resources Advisory Committee on unconscious bias.
14. Sensitization of staff on unconscious bias.
15. Identify ways to showcase commitment and reward progress related to gender equality and diversity

Action Area 3:
Empowering staff.

Target 3: All UNAIDS female staff will be eligible to participate in the UNAIDS Leadership Programme for Women and all UNAIDS staff will be eligible to participate in the UNAIDS Mentoring Programme.

16. Revision of the UNAIDS Diversity and Inclusion policy.
17. Develop protocols to respond to harassment, including a first-responder system to ensure all claims— and the people who voice them—are treated with seriousness, urgency, confidentiality and respect.
18. Ensure availability and monitor compliance of all staff on mandatory course that sets the standard for respectful behaviour at work and promotes a harassment-free workplace.
19. Expansion of UNAIDS Mentoring Programme to all staff
20. Expansion of UNAIDS Leadership Programme for Women to all women in the organisation.
21. Introduction of a single parental leave policy to apply equally to all staff.

Action area 4:
Standard setting.

Target 4: There will be full compliance with the UN System-Wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women 2.0 framework.

22. Advocacy at interagency level for coverage of preschool costs, consideration of childcare facilities and support for staff.
23. Development of briefing notes on key provisions of the flexible working arrangements to encourage staff upta
24. Active participation in UN-SWAP technical working groups.
25. Preparation of annual UN-SWAP reporting with enhanced internal quality assurance.
26. Identification of at least one UN-SWAP performance indicator per annum on which UNAIDS will make progress
27. UNAIDS will make its UN-SWAP reporting available to all staff and post it on its website.

Implementation support structure

No target set.

28. Development of ToR for Challenge Group.
29. Call for applications and selection of membership for Challenge Group.
30. Convening of meetings and ongoing management of Challenge Group.

Figure 2: GAP Action Areas, Targets and Commitments

Section 2: Findings on Achievements, Gaps and Challenges of the GAP

This section presents findings and conclusions based on analysis of the GAP targets and commitments. This section covers the retrospective, stock-taking questions within the Evaluation. It answers four of the eight evaluation questions:

- EQ 1: Which action areas and targets in the Gender Action Plan are still relevant to UNAIDS given the changed organizational and global context? (Relevance)

- EQ 3: What are the key achievements and gaps/challenges as well as trends against key targets, action areas and commitments? (Effectiveness)

- EQ 4: Given the trajectory of progress and change, what are the chances of achieving the targets by 2023? (Effectiveness)

- EQ 5: What needs to be changed—if anything—in the remaining period up to 2023 to enable the achievement of targets and commitments still deemed relevant and with potential for transformative change? (Effectiveness)

Introduction to the GAP

The 2018 GAP built on the previous UNAIDS GAP of 2013-2018. It focused organisational attention on concrete metrics used to: a) mainstream access to opportunities available to women through focused recruitment and leadership development, b) raise staff awareness on the need for gender equality through learning and development and c) continue institutional strengthening activity for gender equality and raise the profile of UNAIDS as a champion of the UN SWAP GEWE 2.0 Framework efforts.

The 4 Action Areas of the GAP are operationalised by various business owners within UNAIDS, coordinated by the GAP Focal Point. The Gender Action Plan Challenge Group is a mechanism that was established in 2018 to monitor progress towards the full achievement of the Gender Action Plan targets and the related action areas. The intention was to raise critical voices and challenges to senior management to urge UNAIDS to further accelerate progress.

Visibility and understanding of the GAP: Randomly sampled interviews revealed that most staff are aware of the GAP. Most staff interviewed associate the GAP with recruiting more women. Most staff interviewed reported having seen internal reports. Several interviewees pointed to the lack of attention to men in the GAP. This reinforces a notion that the GAP is primarily in place to address 'women's concerns'. Some staff were unclear that the GAP related to gender equality in the workplace, believing the focus of the interview to be related to gender within programmes.

Overview of GAP achievements, gaps and challenges across all Action Areas

The Gender Action Plan 2018-2023 has contributed to several specific policy and practice achievements. These will continue to impact on the workplace and programmatic environment within UNAIDS, including through driving progress towards meeting and exceeding the Performance Indicators of the UN SWAP 2.0 Framework for GEWE.

Current progress against the GAP commitments has stalled. At the end of 2019, the plan had achieved 13 of the 30 commitments and 2 out of the 4 targets. At the time of writing, May 2021, it has achieved 10 of 30 commitments and 1 out of 4 targets. The evaluators suggest that the stalling at the end of 2019 can be linked to the convergence of a) A change in UNAIDS leadership towards the end of 2019 and ensuing change processes, b) The COVID-19 pandemic requiring attention at senior levels.

The GAP achievements fall short of the transformative change that the GAP aspires to, intending "to provoke a shift in policies, mindsets, attitudes and behaviours". While the 4 Action Areas could achieve this change ambition, the implementation of the targets and commitments appear to have been inadequate to provoke, and measure changes in attitudes and behaviours. For the GAP to have delivered mindset, attitudes and behaviour change, it would have been necessary to first articulate the change pathways and assumptions, supported by evidence to effect such change. For example, to effect behaviour change, some evidence suggests that four conditions are needed[20]. A theory of change development process could have helped to make this explicit.

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[20] https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/the-psychology-of-change-management#

The evaluators suggest that **the likelihood of achieving the remaining targets** and commitments in the GAP up to 2023 is unlikely without a revitalisation and resourcing of the GAP and renewal of the mandate of the Gender Action Plan Challenge Group. This implies clarifying the fundamental intent, ownership, and location of the GAP as priorities. It may be that the Culture Transformation process will address the gender equality aims intended within the GAP. However, this was not possible to discern through this evaluation particularly as the Culture Transformation process is ongoing. This question should be explored during work on recommendations 1 (securing ownership and investment in the GAP) and 2 (clarifying the intent of the GAP).

Action area 1: Achieving gender parity[21.]

Relevance

Targets and commitments remain broadly relevant.

There is a strong message from interviewees that the GAP conceived in 2018 was a good start. To remain relevant, the Targets need to be more nuanced. It was suggested by 19 interviewees[22] (out of 54, 35%) that nuancing could happen in two ways: 1. broadening the focus of recruitment parity beyond women and men (i.e. to include those who identify as transgender, or gender non-conforming) 2. If the intent is to put women in decision making roles, UNAIDS may wish to prioritise achieving parity at the senior leadership level for the remainder of the GAP (rather than focusing on achieving parity at all levels).

Several interviewees suggest a broader approach to staff selection and recruitment rather than targets based on gender, for example suggesting recruitment based on meeting recruitment criteria, skills and professional ability:

"we should be looking for people that fit into the criteria, rather than people of a particular gender" (R21, F)

"I would request to revaluate this - are we just talking about gender? Women gender or men gender? Gender should not be the key criteria for awarding the contract. Professional skills and experience should go first" (R19, F)

"Look at ability / capacity rather than their gender…... What happens if the women are less capable—that is what I have experienced, and I think it's not fair." (R41, F)

"It may be selfish—as I understand the equity point—but positions should be filled with the most capable candidates" (R57, M)

We note these calls to select primarily based on skills and experience. This may suggest that staff need more nuanced understanding of prevailing working norms that may impede career progression and appointment to more senior roles, despite having equal or stronger skills. It may also suggest the need to level up access to skills development and experience among women and gender non-conforming identities which may facilitate access to career advancement opportunities. Widening the framing from a perceived binary approach to include women and men in all their diversity, including reference to an intersectional approach is supported by most interviewees (36 out of 54, 66%)[23] and 3 Miro Board viewpoints also agreed.

Miro Board contributions called to *"widen the binary approach"* and also noted that *"gender challenges do not sit in isolation".*

At the same time, the evaluators heard some reservations. These interviewees[24] suggested there was no need to broaden the definition, suggesting the workforce is already diverse and that decisions on gender parity should be made at country levels.

Four interviewees[25] cautioned that the focus on women's progress and empowerment should not be lost with the refining of Target 1 (that is 'women and men each should represent 50% of staff at each level across each category'), recognising that safe spaces for women (and men) to connect are needed and powerful.

Another point raised in interview is that national contexts differ and should be considered when setting targets. For example, one interviewee noted that in countries where cleaning staff and / or drivers are mostly male, it may not be reasonable and / or desirable to recruit more women into these positions (R36, F). This supports the need for both clarifying intent and nuancing within Target 1. The evaluators note that cleaners

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[21] 'Parity' is not defined in the GAP.

[22] 11 purposive, including 7 KIIs (1F, 6M) and 4 FGD respondents (2F, 2M)), and 8 random interviews (6F, 3M).

[23] 13 random (10F, 3M). 14 purposive (3 FGD (2F, 1M), 11 KIIs (5F, 5M)

[24] 3 random (2F, 1M)

[25] Random (2M, 2F)

are not part of UNAIDS workforce but are contracted services. UNAIDS might consider amending contracts to reflect gender and diversity aims.

In contrast, parity has been achieved for UCD positions and from the data available this makes sense and is desirable and reasonable in all contexts.
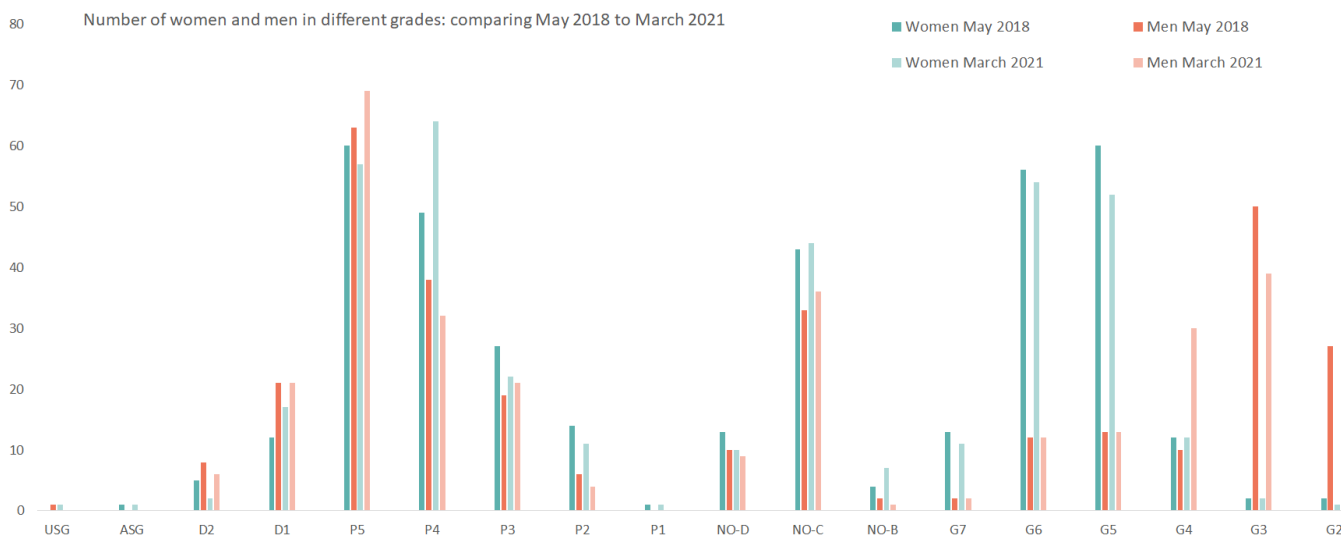
Achievements

The balance of women and men has remained consistent since 2018. In 2018 the workplace comprised 54% of women and 46% men compared to 55% women, 45% men in 2021. Since 2018 (and before that since 2013) progress has been made in balancing the representation of women and men notably at the UCD level. However there remain disparities in *distribution* among staff grades. More men occupy the lowest grade positions overall (G2,3,4), with many more women occupying G5, G6, and G7 roles. The evaluators note that G2-G4 are typically drivers/clerks (mainly men) and G5-G7 tend to be administrative roles (mainly women). Women currently remain underrepresented at D1, D2 and P5 levels (see Figure 3 below). Within the Senior Leadership Team, two of the most senior positions in the organization (ExD and the Deputy Executive Director, Programmes) are occupied by women.

This Action Area has three specific targets:

Target 1: Women and men each should represent 50% of staff at each level across each category: Partially achieved.

Parity in the GAP is defined as 50/50. The broader UN SG definition is 47/53 either way. If we assume the GAP definition, no grade has reached parity. If we assume the UN SG definition in 2018, one out of fifteen grades (P5) achieved parity (with 60 women (48.8%), 63 men (51.2%)). In 2021 one grade reached parity (P3) with 22 women (51.2%) and 21 men (48.8%) in post. In 2021 the grades underrepresented by women include: D1 (17 women, 21 men), D2 (2 women, 6 men), P5 (57 women, 69 men). A key question raised through this evaluation is whether 50/50 parity across all levels and categories is desirable and achievable. Figure 3 below demonstrates how the distribution of women and men to different categories has changed during the GAP to date.

Figure 3: Distribution of women and men across different categories comparing May 2018 to March 2021

Target 2: Women and men each represent 50% of the senior management team, which is composed of directors at headquarters, regional support teams and liaison offices[26]: Partially achieved.

Two of the three most senior positions in the organization (ExD and the Deputy Executive Director for Programmes) are currently occupied by women. There has been an 8% increase in women in the SLT between 2018 and 2021: In October 2018 there were 30% (7) women and 70% (16) men in the SLT, compared to 38% (10) women and 62% (16) men in March 2021.

In grade terms the largest gap between women and men is at D2 level, with 2 women and 6 men sitting at this grade. The D1 level is closer to reaching parity with 17 women and 21 men.

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[26] Comprised of directors at HQ, regional support teams and liaison offices

Target 3: Women and men each represent 50% of UNAIDS country directors and UNAIDS country managers. Achieved.

30 women (48%) and 32 men (52%) are in UCD positions in 2021[27]. This is a 20% higher representation of women than in 2013 (27%)[28]. It is consistent with the baseline position in 2018 (48% women[29]) suggesting the current GAP has maintained parity levels between 2018-2021.

There is recognition among interviewees that progress has been significant in this area in recent years. The addition of an Assessment Centre in 2019 has contributed to a more transparent process for the selection of UCDs. Guidelines for the assessment process required that women constitute at least half the candidates shortlisted for participation in the Assessment Centre. In addition, a standard question to assess the gender sensitivity of applicants was included in the pilot exercise for the assessment centre and is now reported to be routinely included in all recruitment processes (Commitment 1.4).

Additional notable achievements include recognition that being able to analyse data on women and men occupying positions in different categories has been a helpful step forward. A real-time dashboard sharing progress in parity across levels/grades was launched to staff in May 2021.

A further achievement includes the pilot initiative on short-term development opportunities (stretch assignments) that was introduced in 2019. It was introduced for fixed-term staff to give them an opportunity to grow professionally and to allow the organization to promptly deploy motivated staff to meet urgent, time-bound needs.[30] Two interviewees (F) commented on this as a promising initiative to foster greater understanding of other colleagues' work at the same time as supporting progression. This links to the work in progress under GAP commitment 1.6 'An internal talent-sourcing database that maps post requirements and staff skills will be developed to support the roll-out of stretch assignments.' The fact that only 2 interviewees mentioned the pilot may indicate that not many staff are aware of the possibility. Or that it is not an interesting proposition. This evaluation is unable to provide a conclusive statement on this. During the development of new targets and commitments for the remainder of the GAP, this pilot scheme could be revisited along with any data that exists to inform a decision as to whether it remains relevant as a priority for the GAP.

There are 8 specific commitments in Action area 1.

As shown in the table below, 1 out of 8 commitments have been fully achieved to date.

Achieved	In progress	Pending (yet to be initiated)	Unsuccessful (progress stalled)
1.7 Development of a real-time dashboard that monitors and displays sex-disaggregated staffing data by department, region, grade and category.	1.1. Review job profiles to address bias and gendered language.	1.2 UNAIDS' commitment to gender equality will be highlighted in vacancy announcements, which will specifically note any gender underrepresentation and encourage people to apply accordingly.	1.8 Quarterly updates on progress and challenges to staff.
	1.4 Standard question to assess gender sensitivity of applicants to be included in all recruitment processes.	1.3 Review UNAIDS recruitment policy to include special measures for women and men at levels where they are underrepresented, including through active outreach.	
	1.6 Develop an internal talent-sourcing database that maps	1.5 Standard clauses related to gender sensitivity will be	

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[27] GAP Quarterly report 'as if' March 2021

[28] UNAIDS Secretariat Gender Action Plan page 8

[29] Data received from HRM team, May 2021

[30] 2019-06 UNAIDS Gender Action Plan 2018-2023 - First annual progress report

post requirements and staff skills, including for staff to express interest in temporary assignments.	developed for inclusion in non-staff contracts.

Table 1: GAP Commitments related to Action area 1

So what? Has progress in this area impacted on the UNAIDS workplace?

There is a strong feeling that although UNAIDS is moving in the right direction in terms of gender parity, Target 1 needs to be more nuanced. This is addressed in the Relevance section above.

The main impact cited by interviewees is that they see more women in positions of leadership. This is a positive step. The perception is that the GAP has contributed to this visible increase. Prioritising women for leadership positions is in line with the UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, where "Temporary measures" such as quotas for women are part of the solution, until there is 'parity'. As noted above parity has not yet been achieved in UNAIDS and should be discussed during the recommended reformulation of action areas and targets.

The majority of those interviewed asked for the Targets to be refined, to make them more nuanced. There was also an appreciation that gender equality is a work in progress and the targets are a *"starting point but not the end point" (R,7 F)*

Gaps and challenges in Action area 1

A diverse workforce is desirable to ensure representation from the communities UNAIDS seeks to serve, including people living with HIV and key population groups. This is a gap recognised explicitly by 4 interviewees[31] as potentially limiting the effectiveness of the UNAIDS response.

Data is a crucial asset needed to inform organisational decisions. The major gap is that currently only binary data is available on women and men in staff positions.

The lack of more granular data collection capacity is recognised to be due to the limitations of WHO's HR system, on which UNAIDS systems are based. Disaggregated data availability was noted to have been an ongoing issue of concern since at least 2009[32]. However, as several interviewees point out UNAIDS administered a Global Staff Survey in 2020 that captured broader data on intersectional dimensions. Further, if UNAIDS is encouraging programming at country levels to collect more granular data, to be congruent with its strategic intent it should also be able to collect this data internally.

Without capturing data on intersectional dimensions, UNAIDS will not be able to present an accurate picture of the profile of its workforce in terms of gender representation and other diversity dimensions including ethnicity and race, disability and other life factors. This will mean that the organisation is unable to recruit intentionally to fill gender and broader diversity gaps. UNAIDS could look externally for inspiration in both the private sector and within other UN entities. Data confidentiality and safety will be vital to address given the sensitivity related to collecting SOGIE data. Aside from setting up the relevant systems to gather this, it will be important for UNAIDS to provide reassurance to potential applicants and existing staff around how the data they are requesting will be safely stored and used. This requires staff to have a level of trust around how their data is processed. It will also be important to provide information to staff on where they can access support around disclosing personal data or other workplace concerns they may have or experience as a minority group UNAIDS staff. UNAIDS could provide for example LGBTIQ focal points within the organisation who could provide anonymous and confidential support and advice. The staff counsellor could provide additional help.

Two interviewees (both female) expressed concern that targeting recruitment of specific groups can create perverse incentives. Some felt that selection based on SOGIE or HIV status rather than ability is not the solution. However there remains a recognition that if UNAIDS wants to serve key populations (people living with HIV, sex workers, men who have sex with men, transgender people, people who inject drugs) better then there is a need to have a more inclusive workplace,

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[31] FGDs (2M), KII (1F), random (1F, 1M)

[32] KII (M)

"we serve communities and we need to push for more people from these communities to be part of UNAIDS….it will give more balance" (R57, M)

One interviewee (male) called for consistency across the recruitment approach for different grades:

"we have 3 vacancies…The D1 positions specify that UNAIDS is committed to a diverse workforce, whereas P5 position didn't include it in the advert. We need to demonstrate consistency in this across the board" (R20, M)

These comments and observations from staff suggest a need for careful consideration of 'how' to recruit to fill diversity gaps. It suggests the need for reflection within UNAIDS on how lived experience is valued alongside educational and / or professional expertise. Some of these conversations have been happening within the Culture Transformation process. The evaluators note that UNAIDS is already in the process of including a sentence in recruitment advertisements that people living with HIV, people who belong to HIV key populations and LGBTIQ people are encouraged to apply, as is currently included for women (in Commitment 1.2).

Action area 2: Embedding gender across UNAIDS learning and performance management.

Relevance

These targets remain relevant, but components of the targets and commitments need updating.

The main concern in this Action area is a) the assumption that setting a gender-related learning objective will always translate into learning intervention (currently online training modules), and b) there is an implicit assumption that training translates into behaviour change. Evidence shows this assumption is inadequate.

The Targets, '100% of staff at all levels set a **work objective** on gender' and '100% of staff at all levels set a **learning objective** on gender' remain relevant, if a quality dimension is integrated in future. Targets could be strengthened by ensuring staff have access to improved quality learning opportunities for gender, specific to their role with practical examples. And by ensuring staff are supported by staff with gender expertise to set relevant and meaningful work-related gender objectives where work roles are relevant. Learning could also be aligned with the inequalities lens of the new Global AIDS strategy.

Commitments could be refined by exploring commitment 2.1 on 'Developing guidance for every headquarters division and field office to hold discussions on how teams and individuals can contribute to the Gender Action Plan' (see Table 2). This could be folded into higher level guidance on the UNAIDS unified programme of change, alongside additional intersectional dimensions of discussion including e.g. race and disability etc. This would respond to the call for streamlining change initiatives expressed by most people interviewed.

Commitment 2.4 on 'Ensuring availability of and monitor compliance with mandatory training for all staff on inclusion, diversity, gender-responsiveness, norms and behaviours complemented by regular follow-up through dialogue forums at the departmental or office level' and 2.7 on 'Identifying ways to showcase commitment and reward progress related to gender equality and diversity' remain relevant and needed. Staff interviewed expressed not knowing which training to choose. Guidance was requested on what constitutes "basic gender training," and what to do first, especially if staff time was limited.

Achievements

As part of the annual performance review process, staff at all levels across the organisation are required to set a work objective and a learning objective that serves to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women. Overall efforts in this area are perceived to be less visible and less impactful than actions on parity. Although learning related to gender is broadly seen as positive there were concerns about the quality of gender-related training available. As noted in the gaps and challenges section below, several interviewees (8 of 26 from the randomly selected sample) offered the viewpoint that the targets in this area are a 'tick box' exercise.

Target 1*: 100% of staff at all levels set a work objective on gender*: Partially achieved
Progress in setting work related objectives for gender is weak, with 4% all staff having set a work objective on gender in 2021 compared to 15% in 2019. No data is available on 2018 figures. Setting work objectives is seen as a shallow task. Although most perceive that work objectives are relevant, when asked to clarify, many people do not understand *what* they could put in their PALM. Most interviewees that commented on

this area had trouble identifying a suitable objective, unless they work specifically in a gender-related field. Non-programmatic staff expressed a lack of clarity in how to set these objectives.

"You can learn a lot in theory but how to implement is another problem" (R34, F)

This may point to the need for better visibility of guidance available, or more support for staff being provided in setting these especially among non-programmatic staff where links to gender in their work are not clarified.

Target 2: 100% of staff at all levels set a learning objective on gender: Partially achieved

Progress against the setting of learning objectives on gender is strong, with 95% of staff having set a learning objective on gender in 2021, compared to 81% in 2019. However, the key question discussed below in gaps and challenges is whether this is a meaningful indicator of progress as it stands, without any follow-up to assess impact or compliance.

There are 7 commitments in Action area 2.

As shown in the table below, 1 out of 7 commitments have been achieved to date.

Successful (Achieved)	In progress	Pending (yet to be initiated)
2.3 Development of 360-degree feedback tool for managers, which will include elements on demonstrating gender sensitive behaviours and incentivizing gender-responsive programming.	2.2 Review of personal gender-sensitive work and learning objectives, with ongoing support to staff.	2.1 Develop guidance for every headquarters division and field office to hold discussions on how teams and individuals can contribute to the Gender Action Plan.
	2.6 Sensitization of staff on unconscious bias.	2.4 Ensure availability of and monitor compliance with mandatory training for all staff on inclusion, diversity, gender-responsiveness, norms and behaviours complemented by regular follow-up through dialogue forums at the departmental or office level.
		2.5 Development of training for supervisors, recruitment panel members, members of the Mobility and Reassignment Committee, and members of the Human Resources Advisory Committee on unconscious bias.
Table 2: GAP Commitments related to Action area 2		2.7 Identify ways to showcase commitment and reward progress related to gender equality and diversity.

Achievements include commitment 2.3 with upward feedback having been included in the UNAIDS new Performance Management Policy. [33]

So what? Has focus on learning and work-related objectives impacted on the UNAIDS workplace?

Learning objectives are seen in general as valuable and helpful, but referred to by several as a 'tick box exercise' with little or no evident impact/change in behaviour. Learning objectives are widely set and 15 interviewees referred to having "completed training" because of setting this objective. Respondents referred interchangeably to "learning objectives", "learning opportunities" and "training".

Gaps and challenges in Action area 2

There appears to be a disconnect between the current learning opportunities available, the organisation UNAIDS wants to be (through the Culture Transformation Process), and the behaviours needed to be present to become that organisation. Much of this is currently in flux and the evaluators note that work is ongoing within HRM to review learning and development approaches. It is beyond the scope of this evaluation to examine the learning opportunities thoroughly, but themes emerged around quality, delivery methods and accountability.

Quality of learning opportunities

Seven of 54 interviewees and 1 document[34] commented on the quality of learning opportunities available. Quality was criticised in terms of being "*old*" (i.e.—there is a perception that the training has not been updated over the years) and *"not very engaging," "needing refreshed - its framing, not being gender or racially diverse."* Some interviewees referred to training across the UN system rather than UNAIDS specifically:

"The use of mainly white male management experts—and it's in all the UN courses—all the non-white women had papers in their hands…. and it's the white men who were the bosses" (R26, F)

Delivery method

Some criticism related to how the training is delivered. Reliance on generic recorded module-based sessions and not enough experiential learning was mentioned. Participants noted few interactive sessions, few learning and feedback sessions and no requirement to train others as part of the learning integration process[35]. Even if the expected outcome of training is first level awareness raising (rather than behaviour change) a review of training delivery methods should be considered.

"Deepen the target—this learning is just at awareness level. We need training in how is attitude, behaviour changed? That would be good. (R35, F)

Accountability

Three[36] out of 54 interviewees reported a lack of accountability following training. This resonates with the eight out of 26 interviewees who felt that the gender-related learning and work objectives were considered 'tick box'.

"Need for a concrete follow up—this doesn't exist" (R54, F)

Time for training/ workload

Some interviewees feel like they are not given time to do training to complete their learning objective. Three staff reported that although there are learning opportunities available online[37] they felt they are not granted time to do them[38]. Most of these comments came from staff at G -level. They reported a lack of agency and control over their working schedule to be able to get the training completed.

These findings reinforce the need to deliver on the current GAP commitment 2.4 'Ensure availability of and monitor compliance with mandatory training for all staff on inclusion, diversity, gender-responsiveness, norms and behaviours complemented by regular follow-up through dialogue forums at the departmental or office level.' Ensuring there is follow-up and an accountability mechanism on completion of these courses would help staff to complete the learning objective.

Impact on behaviour change

Interviewees and Miro board responses suggested it is not currently clear how learning and training initiatives are making a tangible difference to their day to day working experience and environment. Internal processes and systems to capture attitudinal and behaviour changes do not appear to be in place.

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[34] 8: 1 FGD (F), 4 random (3F, 1M), 2 KII (F), 1 document: Spotlight on UNAIDS Community

[35] https://doi.org/10.1002/acp.3410

[36] 2 KII (both F), 1 random (M)

[37] PI8 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) Concerns everyone at UNAIDS

[38] 3 random (2F, 1M)

There is an assumption that training will lead to behaviour change. In reality, training is a first step along a behaviour change journey. Processes like the Gender Action Learning Process are more likely to lead to behaviour change, in tandem with e.g., experiential learning, role play etc.

Several commented that not seeing the organisation, including the SLT consistently demonstrating the behaviours UNAIDS desires and expects, undermines the commitment to implementing gender- related learning. This finding triangulates with the **2020 Global Staff Survey** finding that 61% of respondents feel the Senior Leadership at UNAIDS demonstrate their commitment to gender equality, diversity and inclusion. This is 13 points lower than the benchmark median. The methodology for the benchmark is contained within the 2020 Global Staff Survey.

Action area 3: Empowering staff

This Action area includes efforts to developing leadership competencies (with a focus on women) as well as furthering gender equal policy and practice in the workplace.

Relevance

Most interviewees believe this target remains relevant. They support the expansion of the Women's Leadership Programme to all women, and the mentoring programme to all staff.

In terms of revising the Target, the evaluators heard desire from both men and women to expand the Leadership Training to all staff, not just women. This supports efforts to address power dynamics and abuse of power within leadership, rather than focusing on gender as a selection for training programmes.

There is also scope for Targets 2 and 3 to be combined under 'learning' as currently learning and empowerment intentions sit in both Target areas 2 and 3. The empowerment focus of Target 3 could concentrate on enabling policies and practice, rather than the term 'empowerment' which has connotations of learning.

The question for the Women's Leadership Programme, is whether it is fit for purpose within the realigned UNAIDS following the results of the ongoing Culture Transformation and Alignment processes and learning under the UN Leadership Framework. It may be that the Women's Leadership Programme continues but in a revised format, in addition to a leadership programme that is open to all. This should be decided following a learning needs assessment and definition of leadership related to Recommendation 5.1. We note the following intention outlined in the HRM update to the PCB of May 2020:

"Other planned initiatives include the development of focused learning curricula to meet target needs, such as an enhanced orientation programme for new staff, orientation modules for staff on mobility and reassignment, and courses focusing on inclusive leadership, ethics and fostering a respectful workplace."[39]

Achievements

Target 1: All UNAIDS female staff will be eligible to participate in the UNAIDS Leadership Programme for Women, Achieved

Leadership Programme for Women: The programme is a 5-day residential programme for women, hosted in Turin Italy. Access to the programme was broadened between October and December 2018 to ensure that female staff members, of especially lower P, NO and G grades would be eligible to participate.[40] In 2018 thirty women completed the programme across all grades. In 2019, twenty-four completed the programme. In total 158 women have completed the programme since it began in 2014. 70% of women having completed the programme were from regional and country offices reflecting UNAIDS workforce distribution.

There is recognition that the Women's Leadership Programme is providing a good opportunity for some women.

Interviewees who had been on the programme, spoke very positively about it. Others who hadn't been on it, spoke positively of colleagues who had participated, and had *"definitely benefited…. more understanding of her own potential and had more self-assurance" (R26, F)*

"this is great. I benefitted from this. For many years, women have occupied secondary positions. Salaries less than men. This was a great programme—keep these types of programmes" (R21, F)

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[39] UPDATE ON STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT ISSUES, UNAIDS/PCB (46)/20.17, Issue date: 28 May 2020
[40] Quarterly report 2 December 2018

Target 2: All UNAIDS staff will be eligible to participate in the UNAIDS Mentoring Programme.
Achieved

Mentoring programme for all staff: The mentoring programme was opened to all staff between October and December 2018. 36 staff engaged as a mentor in 2019 (25 female, 11 male). Among interviewees, not all people had heard of the programme. There is support for the Mentorship programme remaining available to all.

There are 8 commitments in Action area 3.

As shown in the table below, 5 out of 8 commitments have been achieved to date.

Successful (Achieved)	In progress	Pending (yet to be initiated)
3.2 Develop protocols to respond to harassment, including a first-responder system to ensure all claims— and the people who voice them—are treated with seriousness, urgency, confidentiality, and respect.	3.1 Revision of the UNAIDS Diversity and Inclusion policy.	3.7 Advocacy at interagency level for coverage of preschool costs, consideration of childcare facilities and support for staff.
3.3 Ensure availability and monitor compliance of all staff on mandatory course that sets the standard for respectful behaviour at work and promotes a harassment-free workplace.		3.8 Development of briefing notes on key provisions of the flexible working arrangements to encourage staff uptake.
3.4 Expansion of UNAIDS Mentoring Programme to all staff		
3.5 Expansion of UNAIDS Leadership Programme for Women to all women in the organisation.		
3.6 Introduction of a single parental leave policy to apply equally to all staff.		

Table 3: GAP Commitments in Action Area 3

Other notable achievements against commitments include:

The Preventing and Addressing Abusive Conduct Policy was launched (March 2021) (GAP commitment 3.2). This is an important milestone that provides staff with reassurance following the harassment incidents and subsequent publication of the 5-point plan in 2018[41]. Two important pieces of content within the policy that had been called for include: 1. accelerating the process of addressing formal complaints (a criticism raised and acknowledged in FGDs) and 2. removing the requirement for complaints to be made within a specific time limit in recognition that victims can need time to reach the point of feeling able to report safely. Ahead of this policy, in 2019 the Integrity Hotline was reported to have been established[42]. It apparently serves as an ongoing confidential reporting system for staff. The evaluators did not hear of this being used in practice among interviewees. Several interviewees referred to this policy having been launched recently but did not comment further.

The mandatory course on Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority that sets the standard for respectful behaviour at work and promotes a harassment-free workplace was rolled out during 2019 as an online module.

The introduction of a single parental leave policy which extends adoption and paternity to 16–18 weeks, depending on the number of children, and introduces surrogacy leave of the same duration[43] (GAP commitment 3.6).

The inclusion of SOGIE, disability, HIV status and race disaggregation in the Global Staff Survey. Although not a specific GAP commitment, this is a positive move towards the organization being able to understand better how intersectional elements including gender are impacting on the way staff experience

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[41] https://www.unaids.org/en/20180227_unaids

[42] 2019-06 UNAIDS Gender Action Plan 2018-2023 - First annual progress report

[43] Quarterly report 3 December 2018

the workplace. Seven interviewees[44] and 1 Miro Board respondent called for more emphasis on data disaggregation, i.e. to capture data on groups beyond women and men, to align and remain congruent with programmatic efforts to be evidence informed and leave no-one behind.

Though also not a specific commitment in the current GAP, work on building an organizational culture founded on feminist principles is ongoing through the Culture Transformation process. This encompasses an action learning programme (also referred to the Gender Action Learning programme/process) championed by the ExD and is perceived to be contributing to a more empowered workplace. Several staff, however, expressed a desire to see "more action, less words". Interviewees also recognised the significance of the ExD appointing women from the global south to lead the Culture Transformation and Alignment processes.

So what? Have any achievements in this area impacted the UNAIDS gender workplace?

Those who have worked with Women's Leadership Course participants speak positively of their colleagues' experience and the perceived impact of the course. Examples shared include: witnessing colleagues grow in their career (perceived to be due to exposure on the course); strengthened communities of peers; bonding with colleagues of different regions and grades (important for addressing north/south and east/west divides and power dynamics); having space to reflect on values; having space to understand power dynamics.

Gaps and challenges in Action Area 3

Specific challenges in this area revealed during this evaluation relate to 1) equality in access to and quality of learning and empowerment opportunities and support for career progression at all levels and all genders, and 2) support in the workplace environment being provided consistently in equal measure for all staff irrespective of gender identity, race, age etc, and 3) Demonstration of UNAIDS values through staff and SLT behaviours.

1. Equality in access to and quality of learning and empowerment opportunities.

This first challenge relates to access to learning and empowerment opportunities to support career progression:

Access: Although the Leadership Programme for Women was broadened to women at all levels of the organisation, some interviewees were unclear how they could access this, and whether they were indeed eligible to participate. This could send a signal of lack of transparency to staff. This is incongruent with all that UNAIDS is currently doing to establish a safe, equal and empowering workplace. The Impact Evaluation of the programme carried out in 2019[45] also recommended making the selection criteria more transparent.

Seven interviewees[46], 1 Miro Board respondent and the GAP also recognise that a) progress is desirable as an opportunity for all, not limited to women and b) leadership is a desirable attribute for all staff, irrespective of seniority level within the organisation.

"where is the programme that identifies potential in staff—and nurtures them, provides them with leadership opportunities... now wouldn't be nice to have gender (which is women, let's be honest) action plan that works

IN PARALLEL (HAVE BOTH) with an action plan for new leadership development that is not related to gender?

why do we divide? why not bring together? remove dichotomies, see a spectrum of genders..." (Miro Board respondent).

"Ensure career opportunities and progress for women across P levels--gender equity is not only about women in leadership roles" (Miro Board respondent)

In the spirit of a forward looking UNAIDS this should be considered in line with the strategy and the kind of leaders needed to deliver on that.

One interviewee said:

"Limiting the Leadership Development Programme to only women—limits the opportunities to just women—this limits the organization moving forward" (R20, M)

This is supported by the Impact Evaluation of the programme carried out in 2019. It concluded that the exclusively female participation is valued. However, the organization needs to also engage male staff in gender sensitivity issues as well as better leadership and management practices. An important

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[44] 1 random (F), 3 FGD (F), 3 KII (F)

[45] UNAIDS Leadership Programme for Women, Impact evaluation June 2019

[46] 2 KII (2M), 7 random (2F, 5M), 1 Miro board, 1 document (GAP 2018-2023)

recommendation from the Impact Evaluation is the introduction of a training course for managers and supervisors, male and female.

In this mid-term evaluation of the GAP, some of the women interviewed who had participated in the programme recognized the value of the Women's Leadership Programme and the provision of a women-only space.

In terms of impact, the Impact Evaluation noted that although satisfaction with the Programme was high, satisfaction does not necessarily translate into impact. It recommended more effort be placed on measuring impact of the programme in future.

Seven[47] of 54 interviewees pointed to the lack of attention to men in the learning and empowerment space. The evaluators heard from some men that they feel left out of these opportunities. This is reinforcing the notion that the GAP is primarily in place to address 'women's concerns'.

Interviewees suggested that limiting the leadership programme to women implies that women currently lack something rather than addressing the prevailing workplace norms that may be impeding their career progression and appointment to more senior roles.

Other examples of inconsistency in access to empowerment opportunities heard in interviews include the challenge of staff in the GS category progressing to either a P grade position and / or transitioning from a national to an international status. Interviewees shared examples of themselves or colleagues not being selected into positions they were overqualified for, as they are not defined as 'internationals'. This is a wider point than gender but speaks into issues around power and privilege and reinforces the need for an intersectional lens in ensuring equality of opportunity within the workplace.

A further challenge related to career progression is the perceived barrier that rising to senior levels in the organisation will require a sacrifice to one's health, wellbeing and family commitments to enable progression. This was voiced particularly by women interviewed, citing unrealistic expectations of workloads at more senior levels not being sustainable. And this being an active deterrent to accepting roles higher up the ladder. Two respondents on the Miro board also suggested more support is needed for re-entry to the workplace following maternity leave.

Quality:

Women's leadership programme: The 2019 Impact Evaluation[48] recommended that not all grades be mixed in future courses due to challenges related to programme content required. The report also recommended the need to develop two parallel programmes and the need to re-evaluate criteria for participation. The Impact Evaluation also revealed that 100% participants would recommend it, with an overall programme rating of 5.1 out of 6[49].

The evaluators heard from one interviewee on the need for improvement in the programme's framing and training techniques:

"How can you give that training? I brought it up with the [white, global north] trainers who became…. hostile. I brought up intersectionality. We see these issues in our work but how can we do better HIV response if we're not prepared to be progressive. I cannot take this seriously." (R53, F)

Mentoring programme: One interviewee had experience of it but was unimpressed as they had not been consulted prior to being assigned a mentee. From her perspective, there seemed to be little structure to the programme, or any attempt to match abilities and ambition resulting in an unsuitable match.

Others were clear that such programmes were ineffective:

'Women need advocacy, not mentorship' (R3, F)

On the other hand;

"The mentorship when accompanied with a course, opens up their minds and other platforms, and they see what needs to be improved. Gives them a lift. More practical than theory based," (R54, F)

"Yes I took part in the mentorship programme as a mentee…. I found it really helpful to connect with people in the organisation to share experiences. Very helpful" (R57, M)

A question voiced by 1 Miro board perspective was around the impact of this programme for women that have participated. Specifically, how the programme completion fits into a broader plan to support those that attended, to progress in their careers:

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[47] 7 random (5F, 2M), 3 KII (2M, 1F)

[48] 2019-07 Leadership Programme for Women—Impact Evaluation

[49] UNAIDS Leadership Programme for Women, Impact evaluation 2019-07

"What happened to the women who went to the programme and what has their progress been". (Miro Board respondent)

2. Related to workplace environment.

This second area of challenge identifies three key themes: a. introduction and institutionalisation of gender equal policy, b. inconsistency in management and leadership approaches to workplace policy and practice, and c. language barriers.

a. One example cited within this theme is the single parental leave policy introduced in 2018. This policy introduction has been cited as a GAP success and a step in the right direction. There are other **policies that do not yet meet the same standard**. For instance, one Miro board respondent mentioned:

"Because of prevailing gender norms, it is more difficult for men to be "a trailing spouse" than it is for women". (Miro Board respondent).

A second challenge voiced through interviews and the Miro board is ensuring staff feel able to apply the single parental policy in practice**.** Two interviewees (both M) mentioned that although the single parental leave policy is a great step forward, it is still rare for male parents to apply it. One Miro Board respondent congratulated a senior male leader within the organisation for taking parental leave and called for greater visibility to staff that are contributing to normalising the policy:

"More visibility for male colleagues…. who are role models for values of care, work-life balance, commitment to our shared cause" (Miro Board respondent).

b. Interviews revealed inconsistency in managers' approaches to communicating and demonstrating workplace policy and practice. A positive response overall was found in the Global Staff Survey 2020 in relation to gender equality, diversity and inclusion actions behaviour and language. However, when drilling down to explore whether all staff groups experience the workplace in the same way (a proxy for how behaviours can impact on the workplace environment) they do not. For example, the 2020 survey found that:

- 77% of respondents feel they are encouraged to be sensitive to gender equality, diversity and inclusion, in terms of their actions, behaviour and language.

- Women are less positive than men on all topics of the survey—average 9% less positive.

- People with disabilities are less positive than people without disabilities on all topics of the survey— average 8% less positive.

- People who live with HIV are less positive on 6 topics.

- People who identify as gender non-conforming are less engaged (33%) than other genders.

- People who identify as being Multi racial (64%), South Asian (64%), or North African/ Middle Eastern (65%) were all less positive.

- People who identify as gay are significantly less positive (53%)[50]

This suggests a need to explore how gender and additional intersecting characteristics impact on staff experience of the workplace in more depth.

During COVID-19 staff have also experienced differing access to flexible work arrangements, which they associated with feelings of stress. Interviewees reported differing degrees of flexibility having been granted during COVID-19 was varied and appeared to be dependent on negotiation with the UCD. The evaluators are unable to comment reliably on the degree to which this policy was implemented pre-COVID-19. However, their impression is that COVID-19 has raised the visibility of the policy.

A further example of inconsistent behaviours experienced in the workplace voiced by interviewees is the persistence of 'old guard' behaviours not being held accountable. These behaviours were not elaborated on in the interviews. However, the evaluators understand them to refer to people who are unable to adapt to new ideas or practices. Interviewees may have been referring to specific behaviours (rather than specific people) that are not being held accountable.

This view triangulates with the Global Staff Survey findings that:

"Only 37% of respondents reported the discrimination or abuse or ill treatment or harassment or sexual harassment they experienced in the last 12 months. Of the 37% who reported it, **45% said they know no action was taken**, 33% said the problem is continuing. **Of the 73% who did not report it, 46% said it was because they didn't think the issue would be dealt with or taken seriously."**

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[50] UNAIDS Global Staff Survey 2020

c. An additional workplace element that presents a barrier to equal access to empowerment opportunities includes language. Several interviewees reported that UNAIDS country offices working in languages other than English often experience inequity in access to information/training/organisational policies and opportunities due to the additional time and energy it takes them to read/discuss/perform in a non-working language (i.e. a language that is different from the official UN language spoken at the duty station). Specific examples were given of staff missing communication or simply not having the time or energy to read it on top of their pressing workload responsibilities. This point is also relevant for gender equality definitions. Different languages will understand and translate concepts differently.

The points raised in this section are not limited to their impact on the gender equality dimension of the workplace alone. However, they nevertheless contribute to the levels of empowerment and wellbeing possible in the workplace for staff of all gender and other intersecting characteristics.

3. **Translating UNAIDS values into behaviours.** The third challenge relates to the misalignment of behaviour and values. The evaluators heard in FGDs and interviews that not all staff are able to trust their managers, and not all staff believe SLT are consistently demonstrating the values and behaviours the organisation promotes. These messages are echoed in the collated comments from the meaning making sessions held as part of the Culture Transformation process[51].

This is triangulated through interviews, Miro Board and the Global Staff survey. Specifically, when senior leadership action and behaviour is not aligned with UNAIDS values it impacts negatively on the workplace. When leaders do not display the values they communicate, it can lead to distrust and disengagement.

Some respondents of this evaluation commented they felt they could not trust the Leadership and others would like to see members of the Leadership Team modelling the organization's values and setting a better example. This is in line with findings of the Staff Survey 2021.

Action area 4: Standard setting

Achievements

The UN SWAP 2.0 Framework for GEWE is a UN-wide framework and was endorsed by the Chief Executives Board and technically UNAIDS has committed to compliance. As such it remains highly relevant to the GAP. Some of the GAP targets and commitments feed directly into the SWAP. Understanding of its relevance could be enhanced among staff by including summaries of key achievements within select SWAP indicators in internal quarterly GAP reports.

There are 16 out of 17 indicators of relevance to UNAIDS within the UN SWAP 2.0. These address many areas of organizational practices, including strategic gender-related Sustainable Development Goals results, leadership, oversight, financial resource allocation and human resources matters. UNAIDS is recognised by UN Women and UNAIDS staff for having been a champion for the UN SWAP framework, citing 100% compliance for 3 consecutive years through 2016, 2017 and 2018. Staff are aware of and proud of the fact that UNAIDS is known to have been the first UN agency to have achieved full compliance with the GEWE SWAP. The achievement of the UN-SWAP 2.0 Framework is important not only in terms of improving programmatic and workplace effectiveness, but also important in perception terms.

Target: There will be full compliance with the UN System-Wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women 2.0 framework. Partially Achieved.

This is the action area that most interviewees were the least clear about. Despite this, UNAIDS is widely recognised for having been the first UN entity to be fully compliant with the first UN-SWAP on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women through the completion of the first GAP 2013-2018. There is recognition among those more familiar with the SWAP that reporting can be subjective, figures are self-reported and that has not always necessarily reflected an accurate picture of progress.

The UNAIDS contributions to UN Women's gender focal points is noteworthy. UNAIDS staff are recognised by UN Women for their passion and commitment to sharing learning and encouraging progress internally within UNAIDS. Notable achievements in this area include UNAIDS having hosted more than 100 gender focal points at the 2018 UN-SWAP annual meeting. At the time it was among the eight entities developing and piloting the UN-SWAP 2.0 Performance Indicator Framework and actively participated in the design of the theory of change that ties the UN-SWAP to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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[51] Collated comments from meaning-making sessions, 9 Feb, 2021

Table 4 below provides an overview of progress made against individual commitments in Action area 3 and current gaps. Two out of 4 commitments have been achieved to date. One has stalled as the latest UN 2.0 SWAP report for 2020 progress has not been made available to all staff or added to the UNAIDS website.

There are 4 commitments in Action Area 4.

Successful (Achieved) In progress	Pending (yet to be initiated)	Unsuccessful (progress stalled)
4.1 Active participation in UN-SWAP technical working groups.	4.3 Identification of at least one UN-SWAP performance indicator per annum on which UNAIDS will make progress.	4.4 UNAIDS will make its UN-SWAP reporting available to all staff and post it on its website.
4.2 Preparation of annual UN-SWAP reporting with enhanced internal quality assurance.		

Table 4: GAP Commitments in Action Area 4

So what? What has the UN-SWAP on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women contributed to the UNAIDS workplace?

SWAP Indicators 1-5 relate to SDG related achievements and indicators 6-17 relate to institutional strengthening to support achievement of SDG results. Digging into the full list of indicators (See Annex 7) the SWAP appears to have led to several internal workplace as well as programmatic improvements. For example, progress in procurement, audit and evaluation guidelines are encouraging UNAIDS staff and suppliers to integrate gender equality thinking within processes and tools.

Of concern, however, is the fact that the Gender Equality Marker (GEM) benchmark was missed in 2020 for the first time. GEM is tracked through Indicator PI10 tracking Financial Resource Allocation to gender equality and women's empowerment mandate. This is important as it displays the organisation's commitment to GEWE externally through programmes. The latest SWAP report available from 2020 noted that analysis of the UNAIDS Secretariat GEM application for the year 2020 of the 2020-2021 workplans demonstrates a large majority of UNAIDS Secretariat planned deliverables do have a significant contribution or principal objective to advance gender equality and women's empowerment. Moreover, financial allocation to the UNAIDS Secretariat gender unit (excluding the cost of 5 staff members) was $550 000.[52]

Gaps and challenges in Action Area 4

The publication of UNAIDS UN-SWAP 2.0 Framework reports 2019 and 2020 was not achieved, despite the 2018 report being made available. It is unclear why this did not happen. The reports were prepared and submitted to UN Women.

Performance against the SWAP indicators appears to be in decline. Based on 2020 progress, UNAIDS was exceeding 5, meeting 8 and approaching 3 requirements of Performance Indicators, compared to earlier progress reported in the GAP 2019 -06 Annual report:

In 2019 for a third year in a row, UNAIDS reported full compliance with the 17 performance indicators of the UN-SWAP on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women 2.0 framework that address all areas of organizational practices, including strategic gender-related Sustainable Development Goals results, leadership, oversight, financial resource allocation and human resources matters (GAP 2019 Annual report).

However, evaluators also heard from three interviewees that reporting on the UN SWAP 2.0 may not be fully accurate. One interviewee suggested the decline in performance in 2020 compared to 2018 and 2019 may be an indication that reporting now seeks to be more accurate and objective.

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[52] UN-SWAP 2.0 UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM-WIDE ACTION PLAN THE ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK FOR MAINSTREAMING GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN UNITED NATIONS ENTITIES Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS 2020

GAP implementation mechanism achievements

Three of the GAP achievements (in Table 5 below) do not relate to progress in the 4 action areas. Rather they relate to 'how' the plan has been implemented and overseen.

Implementation of the GAP

Successful (Achieved) In progress	Unsuccessful (progress stalled)
A Development of ToR for Challenge Group.	C Convening of meetings and ongoing management of Challenge Group
B Call for applications and selection of membership for Challenge Group.	

Table 5: GAP Commitments related to implementation

Current objective of Gender Action Plan Challenge Group: "To oversee the implementation of UNAIDS Gender Action Plan 2018-2023, advising on how to achieve progress and overcome challenges in a way which contributes to ensuring staff ownership and sustainability of results."[53]

Current Gender Action Plan Challenge Group members: are not necessarily gender institutional development specialists. They are a diverse group of committed members of staff who connect with key organisational change initiatives and colleagues. They are intended to represent the diversity within the organisation. They currently have no clear leadership. Members are elected for 1 year; however, the mandate of the elected members was extended in agreement with the DXD MER in 2019 for one additional year and expired in 2020.

The Gender Action Plan Challenge group and the GAP Focal Point have been crucial to ensure progress on the GAP up to the end of 2019. However, the Gender Action Plan Challenge Group mandate expired (based on the TORS) and public reporting ceased at the end of 2019. The GAP Focal Point prepared an 'as if' quarterly report 2021 to allow this evaluation to report on progress during 2020-2021. Interviews and FGDs confirmed that some members of the Gender Action Plan Challenge Group continue to feed into the Culture Transformation process, continuing to champion gender voices and perspectives despite an expired mandate. They are part of the connectors for the Culture Transformation process.

There are several points which could help improve implementation and reporting against the plan and its commitments up to the end of June 2023:

▪ Developing a Theory of Change for the GAP to which a clearer structure of results can be attached will help clarify what the GAP is achieving at outputs, outcomes, and impact levels. This is included as Recommendation 2.

▪ The GAP (page 12) refers to asking "every staff member to take the Panel Parity Pledge and commit to ensuring parity in every mission, event and meeting they organize". This pledge does not appear in the 30 commitments reported on in the GAP and is not mentioned in routine reporting. This requires clarification.

▪ It would be helpful for the GAP to include the commitments that are being reported on and provide numbers in the plan to ensure ease of read across. Having the Theory of Change articulated and locating targets and commitments inside this will facilitate this structure.

▪ To improve reporting against the GAP it would be helpful for future reports to:

   – Include definition(s) on the range(s) accepted for achievement of parity in Target 1.

   – provide clarity on whether targets are deemed to be achievable or aspirational—i.e. clarifying whether the 50/50 targets are both desirable and achievable at all grades.

   – provide a standard update on progress against each of the target indicators and the 30 commitments in every quarterly report.

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[53] Gender Action Challenge Group Terms of Reference 2018-07

The Gender Action Plan Challenge Group has provided an important function for GAP progress up until now. However, it lacks institutional organisational development expertise for gender and senior leadership backing.

Among 9 of 54 interviewees[54], there was a call for streamlining change initiatives in recognition of the number of groups, structures, initiatives that have been started in recent years, sometimes with overlapping areas of work. E.g. Diversity and Inclusion Group, Dignity at Work Advisers, the Gender Action Plan Challenge Group.

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[54] 3 random (3F), 3 FGD (1F, 2M), 3 KII (2F, 1M)

Section 3: Findings and conclusions on how the GAP could align with the UNAIDS organisational unified programme of change.

This section covers the forward-looking questions within the Evaluation. It explores evaluation questions 2, 6, 7 and 8:

EQ2: To what extent should the Gender Action Plan go beyond a binary definition of gender, gender equality and women's empowerment and consider organizational Culture Transformation and diversity more broadly?

EQ 6: What effect, if any, have the COVID-19 pandemic and changes in working arrangements had and how would this require changes in the Action Plan?

EQ 7: How does the Gender Action Plan fit with the broader Culture Transformation and other organizational change initiatives?

EQ8: What direction should the Action Plan take considering the changing organizational environment and broader inequalities framework of the new global AIDS strategy and the UNAIDS Secretariat's role in delivering on it.

To what extent should the Gender Action Plan go beyond a binary definition of gender, gender equality and women's empowerment and consider organizational Culture Transformation and diversity more broadly?

Findings

Most interviewees and several Miro Board comments support broadening the definition within the GAP beyond the binary definitions of women and men and to introduce intersectional dimensions. This aligns with the intent of the current GAP - to support women in all their diversity and men in all their diversity. However, the language 'in all their diversity' needs unpacking and defining for clarity. Unless staff within the organisation have a clear definition of the scope and intent of the GAP securing commitment to further progress in targets and commitments will be compromised. The current GAP is seen as predominantly binary.

Many staff associate the GAP with women's concerns. Some staff feel men are left out of the GAP picture. Interviewees and the Miro Board respondents suggested an approach that would include gender as seen through an intersectional lens rather than a siloed approach. In fact, the evaluation question above often became a discussion about more than gender definitions. It became a conversation about inclusion in the broadest terms in terms of race, age, nationality, HIV status, disability, and other diversities. There is a desire to reduce inequality in any sphere. Dimensions of interest shared in interviews included such as race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE), geography, age, disability/ability, HIV status, neurodiversity and socio-economic status. Socio-economic status was raised by one KI in the context of determining whether UNAIDS is welcoming staff from lower socio-economic groups[55]. Discussion with interviewees also included the inequalities that exist because of the hierarchal nature of the organisation, and the inequalities strongly felt at different levels in the organisation. E.g. between national staff and international staff. Some staff felt there should be more people inside UNAIDS from the communities UNAIDS serves including key populations and people living with HIV. There is a desire to find a formula that welcomes everyone.

Within that backdrop there is also a clear need and desire to recognise, respect and nurture women and men in all their diversity. These diversities need to be articulated clearly.

Supporting this view a recent Policy Brief from the Global Policy Institute[56] exploring the intersectional lens of COVID 19 states that an analysis of COVID-19 reduced to sex and gender differences can exclude or not adequately account for critical factors such as **age, geography, disability, race/ethnicity and Indigeneity, migration/refugee status, class**, and other structural conditions, including **precarious housing, employment**, and **political** and **environmental** stressors. Gender must be recognised as an intersecting

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[55] Determining staff members' parents' level of education (i.e. whether they attended university or other high education) was suggested as a potential proxy indicator for assessing socio-economic status.

[56] Beyond sex and gender analysis: an intersectional view of the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak and response; Policy Brief **|** Olena Hankivsky, PhD | Anuj Kapilashrami, PhD https://www.qmul.ac.uk/media/global-policy-institute/Policy-brief-COVID-19-and-intersectionality.pdf

component of wider structural inequities. What is needed is an understanding of sex and gender based on an intersectional analysis and not a silo approach to tackling single-axis vulnerability (Policy Brief from the Global Policy Institute, 2021).

Challenges in broadening the GAP definition.

Staff Data on gender identify, sexual orientation and expression: As noted in Section 1, one challenge is that the staff data currently collected is limited by the capability of WHO data systems. Staff note that UNAIDS has already started collecting and using different category/language (e.g. gay, gender non-confirming) in the Global Staff Survey 2020. This data is self-reported. It does not seem too much of a leap to encourage broader categories of data collection. Self-reporting could be used as a starting point gathered through a simple anonymous survey software. UNAIDS is perceived by staff to be an adaptable and innovative organisation. Beginning this data collection and using it to inform strategic decisions could be an ideal opportunity to welcome greater diversity.

Although some staff were wary of broadening the definition of gender, their concerns were mostly around how to collect data; and how to measure gender meaningfully. For example, some people are wary about putting themselves and others in categories and unnecessary labelling, especially in hostile environments with punitive laws.

The Global Staff Survey showed that some staff were unwilling to share their sexual orientation and gender identities: 8% of respondents selected 'prefer not to say' what their gender identity is and 16% respondents selected 'prefer not say' for sexual orientation. This may indicate that not all staff currently feel safe to disclose their gender identify and sexual orientation. Or there may be other reasons such as desire for privacy, or fear of being identifiable when in a minority group. Although not the focus of this evaluation, and the actual reasons for not disclosing are unknown, it is important to note that 17% preferred not to disclose HIV status and 15% preferred not to disclose race/ethnicity. This reinforces the need to ensure people of all identities—gender, sexual orientation, race, age etc.—feel safe, remain free to non-disclose and self-identify, and able to participate fully in the UNAIDS workplace.

Culture Transformation discovery conversations indicate that not all staff currently feel safe to talk openly:

"If we create an environment where we really listen and talk openly without fear of retribution, more people will feel seen, heard and not voiceless."[57]

Gender definitions: Some felt that the language 'women and men in all their diversity' captures all diversity. While some felt that is not broad enough. This is a definitions challenge. While the UNAIDS Strategy and the GAP uses specific words, for e.g. 'women in all their diversity' consistently, the meaning of those words is not clearly defined. The language and terminology used in the GAP needs reviewing and updating.

Others are wary of the implication of broadening the definition into an intersectional lens and losing some of the gains made in women's empowerment and progression.

Equal opportunities: One interviewee in favour of ensuring all groups have the same equal opportunities, felt that currently non-conforming gender identities have access to preferential treatment. The example given was that a gay couple would not be posted to a country with punitive laws against homosexuality, when heterosexual staff would be posted to dangerous locations with young children. He felt this was unfair treatment. (R37, M)

What effect, if any, have the COVID-19 pandemic and changes in working arrangements had and how would this require changes in the Action Plan?

Findings

UNAIDS has faced challenges in similar ways to many other organisations working through COVID-19. COVID-19 has changed the way UNAIDS staff feel about their working set up. As voiced by one FGD participant (M) the COVID-19 pandemic has tended to exacerbate existing situations—for those that tend to overwork, not having boundaries and support to switch off creates burn-out, for those that find it hard to motivate themselves to work from home, not having the tools and capacity they need to work in isolation presents a challenge. At the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, working from home was the only option for many. But as the pandemic progressed, and in some countries, as a return to the office was phased in, having the flexibility to choose where to work from has been appreciated. Staff have generally felt supported by UNAIDS during this challenging time.

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[57] 2021-02-10 Collated comments from meaning making sessions 10 Feb 2021

In some countries and offices working from home can represent significant additional burden, most notably related to the caring burden carried out by women, as noted by 5 of 54 interviewees[58]. This view is echoed in global evidence including by UN Women[59].

In addition, feelings of isolation, concerns related to COVID-19 and new ways of working have dominated the UNAIDS workplace. The March 2021 Pulse survey shows that 61% of respondents rated isolation and loss of connection with families as the highest stressor, followed by COVID-19 health concerns at 49% and teleworking at 32%.

The evaluators identified several themes in this area:

Choice and flexibility

There is a real sense that barriers have been broken through on this front. Giving staff freedom to organise their own ways of working has been a real opportunity for some. One of the key things the evaluators noted was the desire to keep the flexibility of working from anywhere as a choice - whether it is at the office or another location. Several staff[60] said they want to have the choice about where they work. Five of 26 randomly interviewed staff[61] suggested they were much more productive when working from home, one citing 'huge positives'.

"Some of our directors became much more flexible. I really value my flexibility at home" (R27, F)

"It has been very difficult to get used to it, but now we have a routine, we are much more productive." (R21, F)

"I've come to a balance in my working day that I can manage the work and family—it's been brilliant. Imagine it will likely be a hybrid when we do go back…it would be great" (R28, F)

However, for some staff the home environment is not ideal: Two interviewees from the random sample (both M) expressed the challenge of finding a suitable space to work when living with a large extended family, and with their children around. We cannot assume that all homes are suitable working environments.

Some staff[62] recognised that a flexibility policy[63] already existed:

"Pre covid there was a tele working arrangement—but not sure everyone was aware of it. I didn't know about it. Important for staff to know that. Esp. post COVID. And back to office—hard for a lot of people and changed again their work/life balance…But not many people had taken the opportunity of teleworking previously. The effect of the COVID 19 restrictions has enabled many more people to become aware of the policy and experience working from home." (R22, F)

This point was also noted in the UN SWAP 2.0 report[64], reporting that despite UNAIDS already being on the forefront on the implementation of the flexible working arrangements, 2020 has seen staff learning a new way of working and a normalization of telework in and outside of the duty station.

Choice and flexibility irrespective of gender are therefore key in formulating policy, as different people have different needs.

Shift in mindset

Five staff[65] interviewed suggested they would rather be measured on their outputs and deliverables than on the hours spent in the office. The change in the way staff have been managed through COVID-19 is shifting mindsets and pushing for more progressive approaches to work and life co-existing.

"COVID—has showed us that working from home does not affect effectiveness." (R19, F)

"Being next to your family and being able to choose these hours and how you delegate all the things—shows that it didn't affect our performance." (R19, F)

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[58] 3 random (3 F), 1 FGD (F), 1 KII (M)

[59] Whose-time-to-care-brief_0.pdf (unwomen.org), undated: "Available data from 38 countries overwhelmingly confirm that both women and men have increased their unpaid workloads, but women are still doing the lion's share. Women are also taking on a greater intensity of care-related tasks than men. Meanwhile, parents are getting more help from daughters than sons. Worryingly, more women than men are leaving the workforce, perhaps as a result of these increased workloads."

[60] 6 random and 1 KII, all F

[61] 5 random (all F) and 1 KII (F)

[62] 2 random (both F)

[63] UNAIDS Information Note, Flexible Working Arrangements Policy, 22 November 2013

[64] UN-SWAP report 2020 UNAIDS - final

[65] 4 random (4 F) 1 KII (F)

"How can our policies be adapted to support staff with the understanding, that staff….. will be able to deliver? Rather than based on working hours. Rather than forcing staff back into the office e.g. PLHIV" (R7, F)

Overcoming reluctance around working from anywhere

Staff commented that there was a sense of having to overcome resistance to working from home in the past. Two staff were grateful that they could end long commutes, and talked about how technology (Docusign, Zoom, MS Teams among others) had enabled working from home in a way that was previously thought impossible.

"We were not equipped to work from home. It was mandatory for audit purposes to have physical copies of everything. We just had to reorganize our entire work plan to work from home. Now we have figured it out. But we don't need to be all there. We can do everything from home—DocuSign has changed things. I don't know why we haven't had this before. For me this is great. And MS teams—Innovate around the technology" (R23, F)

Boundaries

Good boundaries around working hours seemed to be manager and staff member specific but in most cases negotiable; some staff reported that nothing really changed for them as they felt they already had good support from their manager. There were nuances around those with caring responsibilities and there were both negative and positives experienced.

One challenge was the impact of a lack of boundaries in the home working environment.

An example of this was not having clear working hours. This has affected people differently, with some staff feeling they have to be always 'on'; examples include:

"taking the phone to the toilet—which if you are in the office, you would never do, but I am so worried about missing a call at home" (R24, M)

People reported constantly having the laptop open as they were not equipped to set boundaries. Others report a poor work life balance as they are required to be on calls all day with no breaks at all, and staff overtime needs have become more intense. This seemed to be the case even if interviewees reporting having supportive managers. In addition, the fact there "*wasn't anything else to do*" meant that staff have ended up in a vicious circle with no rest and this may have compromised wellbeing.

Negotiating clear boundaries with a manager is noted to have helped relieve this tension. For example, agreeing to not responding to emails late at night/weekends. Other staff used the flexibility to work around children's needs such as stopping to cook dinner and working again after the children had gone to bed. (R52, F, R32, F)

"Maybe we need to develop empathy—ways of working during teleworking—it is not defined—this is needed. It is complicated—for especially mothers. We need to ask what we can do to protect them." (R24, M)

Setting clear expectations for boundaries around working from home seems inconsistent among managers. This aligns with findings in Effectiveness Action Area 3 included in Section 1 around the inconsistency of workplace expectations and practice impacting on staff wellbeing and empowerment levels.

As one interviewee and one Miro board perspective noted, "*developing empathy*" is crucial so managers can understand the needs of their teams. This could begin with listening and being open to accommodating for different team member needs.

These findings suggest that managers may need more support to understand how to manage remote and hybrid teams. For example, suggestions from interviewees include having meeting-free days once per month, or not sending emails late on a Friday night. Another suggestion was to encourage staff to be more mindful of time zone differences and the sacrifices that staff often make to take calls over dinner time etc.

COVID19 as a digital equaliser

In one sense COVID19 has been an equaliser. The evaluators heard several times that because everyone is now on screens, as long as internet connections are working, there is no inequality in terms of who is in the room and who is not.

One staff interviewed recalled pre-COVID experience as often *"Communicating with people who are in the office, and silently excluding those who are not in the office." (R27, F)*

Because no-one is in 'the room', people experience this as more balanced and equal than before COVID19 and relevant changes in working arrangements. Everyone is on a screen.

"The fact we're all behind screen puts us in a more equal platform…More G staff, female staff became more active as before they couldn't take the floor as people in higher position spoke more. Now it's probably different. Also the fact we can link more easily outside Geneva—with other countries. Somehow we got closer in a sense…" (R34, F)

Staff also described working with others they would not normally have had a chance to connect with because of digital interaction:

"Very positive…has taken away some geographical barriers…now we're exploring it in different ways, allowing for more cross-team, regions, countries, discussions. It enables us to engage around these topics. It is another avenue. Sharing what it means to be a father in India and taking paternity there compared to Geneva—might be very different…has allowed HQ and regional and country staff to gather around a ["virtual"] coffee and chat about what it means to be a feminist father for example" (R39, F)

The evaluators note that most of the points noted through interviews in this area were made by female staff. This may indicate that women have benefitted the most from enhanced connection and a sense of levelling.

Family caring commitments experienced unequally

The evaluators heard from 5 staff[66] that women staff, especially for national staff living in countries with strong patriarchal norms, have suffered an extra burden during COVID-19. One interviewee (R36, F) commented that the national female staff in the office had experienced high levels of stress when they needed to work at home. She explained that where ordinarily her colleagues would not have needed to make lunch for partners at home (as they would both be working in offices), the gender norms in this country meant that male partners who were also working at home would expect to be cared for. This, on top of extra childcare duties has impacted women more than men. Helpers have not been able to visit homes, for example babysitters, cleaners, thus exacerbating the situation. This is not a challenge that UNAIDS faces alone, it has been well documented, including by UN Women[67].

How does the Gender Action Plan fit with the broader Culture Transformation and other organizational change initiatives?

Findings

This evaluation has come at a rather extraordinary and exciting time for UNAIDS. The UNAIDS unified programme of transformational change is currently ongoing. The GAP needs to be located within the change processes and their strategic directions. Three major organisational change 'prongs' are being worked through. This includes 1) the development of the new Global AIDS strategy (launched in March 2021), 2) an organisational Alignment Process aiming to reshape the organisation's structures and teams to be optimally positioned to deliver the new strategy, and 3) an emergent Culture Transformation process that is working towards creating and sustaining a healthy, equitable and enabling workplace environment for all.

Nine out of 54 staff[68] interviewed expressed a desire for streamlining, alignment and clarity. They are also clear that gender concerns are real, must not be diluted, and not forgotten. Achieving this balance is a key challenge facing the future of the GAP:

"Makes sense to fold it into something else, but be wary of losing the uniqueness of the GAP." (R4, M)

"Sometimes we need rules for people to follow—this GAP—should be part of a bigger thing—shouldn't be in a corner" (R21, F)

What are the organisational change initiatives to consider?

The three prongs or pillars of the transformation programme include the recent launch of the new Global AIDS Strategy, the Alignment process, and the Culture Transformation process. These are mapped in Annex 3.

The Global AIDS Strategy 'End Inequalities. End AIDS 2021-2026' "is a bold new approach to use an inequalities lens to close the gaps that are preventing progress towards ending AIDS. The Global AIDS Strategy aims to reduce these inequalities that drive the AIDS epidemic and prioritize people who are not yet

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accessing life-saving HIV services. The Strategy sets out evidence-based priority actions and bold targets to get every country and every community on-track to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030."[69]

The Alignment process refers to reorganising the UNAIDS architecture to bring it closer to the UNAIDS mission and those it serves. It has 5 objectives:

4. To align UNAIDS structure with the new strategy and achieve highest impact.
5. To be financially sustainable and cost-effective.
6. To increase diversity and gender equality so that UNAIDS is credible and legitimate.
7. To become a knowledge-driven secretariat optimizing the use of digital technology in work.
8. To increase relevance by alignment with United Nations reform and especially within the work of the United Nations on pandemic preparedness.

The Culture Transformation process began in 2020 and aims to result in an equal, safe and empowering workplace for all UNAIDS staff. The Culture Transformation process is being operationalised primarily through an <u>Action Learning approach</u>[70]. Its purpose is to support UNAIDS staff through a change process, helping them to explore and test positive working practices that can be taken forward and embedded within organisational policy and practice.

The Culture Transformation intent of building internal cultures of equality and transforming norms that support the achievement of gender equality and social justice[71] overlaps with that of the GAP to "guide action on embedding gender equality into organizational culture and ensuring an inclusive, gender-responsive workforce." The Culture Transformation process is grounded by feminist principles, aiming to instil feminist leadership principles throughout UNAIDS policies and processes. Resourcing of this process provides evidence of UNAIDS commitment to gender (and all other) equality.

Several staff commented on the Culture Transformation process as being a positive initiative. Some were unclear of its progression and as noted earlier, called for "*more action, less words*".

Now is the time for UNAIDS to take stock of the various plans and policies it has and intends to develop to cover gender, and arguably broader equality, diversity and inclusion issues applying an intersectional lens. Not least as the UN SWAP on Youth and Disability and Inclusion are reported to be active, with LGBTIQ in the pipeline and racial equality also likely to be developed.

Interviewees and the Miro board suggested that most staff favour a broader approach to achieving gender equality in the workplace:

"Ineffective workplaces need to be tackled first in order to make progress on gender equality. Trust and racial discrimination issues need sorting first since gender challenges do not sit in isolation." Miro board respondent

This triangulate with findings from the Global Staff Survey 2020. The staff survey[72] results suggest that gender is not necessarily staff members only priority concern. Within the staff survey 58% of staff said they feel they are treated equally irrespective of gender or gender identity. This compares to 54% who said they feel they are treated equally irrespective of disability and 53% irrespective of age and 48% irrespective of ethnicity and race.

One interviewee (R31, F) also suggested that allowing country offices freedom to determine topics most relevant for them to discuss following the Global Staff Survey 2020 findings (e.g. gender rather than racism) would be helpful.

These findings do not suggest that gender is not a concern but that taking an intersectional approach to multiple forms of inequality alongside gender make sense to some groups of staff. It is also worth noting that in some contexts, discrimination based on gender can go unnoticed due to traditional gendered roles being seen as the status quo and therefore gender hierarchies as acceptable.

How does the GAP align with these initiatives currently?

The GAP does not currently align with these initiatives as the GAP predates the change initiatives. The GAP also does not currently have a definitive home within the organisation. The Gender Action Plan itself articulates the plan as being a shared responsibility of all staff, and that The Cabinet "ensures that the executive leadership of UNAIDS is fully engaged in the Gender Action Plan including ongoing monitoring of results and high-level support to its activities." In practice however, it does not have a senior level champion

[69] global-AIDS-strategy-2021-2026_en.pdf
[70] https://unaids.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/changeportal/SitePages/UNAIDS-Culture-Change.aspx
[71] Internal Brief: Culture Transformation at UNAIDS, 10 August 2020
[72] UNAIDS Global Staff Survey 2020

across the organisation that could support its evolution with ongoing initiatives. The evaluation consultants recognise that the current Culture Transformation process intends to effect structural change that overlaps with the intent of the GAP. It was not possible to discern through this evaluation how the Culture Transformation process will ensure gender equality aims will be achieved in concrete terms. Work required in recommendations 1 and 2 should explore this further.

Progress stalled at the end of 2019 in part because organisational and staff focus has been intentionally shifted to the change initiatives explained above. Layer COVID19 on top of an already busy workload, and it is understandable why the GAP feels like it has 'no home and no driver'. In many respects the GAP has had to wait to see where 'the dust lands' following the change processes happening. Although clarity has been reached in the new Global AIDS Strategy recently, work under the Alignment and the Culture Transformation process continues.

How could the GAP align better?

Most of the work of the GAP has been happening within the HRM, stewarded by the GAP Focal Point. This is commendable, but this is not where the GAP home should arguably be. The impetus for strategic direction, improvement and decision making should come from the Executive Office along with other strategic initiatives. In line with earlier comments about the desire to expand the GAP definition of gender to a more inclusive intersectional lens, it would seem pragmatic to align the GAP with the new UNAIDS Global AIDS Strategy inequalities lens. Locating the GAP at a strategic level during the Alignment process and ensuring it links to the new Global AIDS Strategy (i.e. recognising that UNAIDS will struggle to deliver its external mandate of reducing inequalities for all if it cannot do that internally in the workplace) would also help to solidify its link to UNAIDS' programmes, so that all UNAIDS staff can locate themselves in the change pathway process working to ending AIDS.

Section 4: Conclusions

Conclusions	Links to which recommendation
To what extent do GAP action areas and targets need to change: Action Area 1 (Gender parity)	
1. **The action area remains relevant. Target setting for parity needs to be more nuanced and aligned to the intent of the GAP.** The evaluation identified a mismatch between the intent articulated in the GAP and the measures it currently tracks. There is no Theory of Change in place currently to frame the GAP. The evaluation also revealed a disconnect between the GAP and how it supports and feeds into the delivery of the Global AIDS Strategy. To achieve 95% coverage of all population groups with HIV prevention, treatment and other services, while promoting and respecting human rights, the organization would need to assess how diverse its staff is and how represented key populations and other groups are, and address gaps as relevant. Now is a good time to reconsider the ultimate purpose of the GAP and to align it with the Global AIDS strategy.	2: Clarify the GAP intent and ambition
2. **The current methods of data tracking within the HR system are inadequate** given the intention of the GAP to enhance gender equality for 'women in all their diversity' and 'men in all their diversity' and given the wider organisational commitment to inclusion and intersectionality.[73] The evaluation found strong support to adopt a data driven approach to achieving gender equality that mirrors UNAIDS external approach to data driven programmatic decisions. In recognition that the data-driven approach has led to progress in more women being recruited to UCD positions notably, gathering broader data on different diversity dimensions will help the organisation establish a firm baseline position to inform future GAP and Diversity, Equality and Inclusion policy actions.	4: Collect diversity data to drive organisational decisions.
To what extent do GAP action areas and targets need to change: Action Area 2 (Learning and performance)	
3. **This action area remains relevant and desirable. Targets on learning and work objectives provide a sensible metric to track. However, they need strengthening.** On the whole they do not currently say anything meaningful about staff's understanding of and integration of gender within their work. Internal processes and systems to capture attitudinal and behaviour changes do not appear to be in place. The assumption that training translates into behaviour change is inadequate. The evaluation found that current gender-related training opportunities are often seen as a tick box exercise with limited understanding of impact. Not all staff are granted time to complete it, despite UNAIDS policy [74] stating the 5% of working time should be allocated to learning.	5. Strengthen the capacity of UNAIDS staff to act and behave in ways that are gender transformative.
4. **The evaluation found that staff are currently unclear and conflating concepts** such as gender equality and equity, gender parity, gender transformative, intersectionality, feminist principles, diversity and inclusion. Staff are unclear on what is meant in practice by these terms. This leads to people filling in their own interpretation of gender equality, often	3. Clarify UNAIDS definition and approach to gender equality.

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[73] Global AIDS Strategy 2021-2026, 47th-PCB_Speech_December_2020

[74] People Development and Performance Policy and Guidelines for the UNAIDS Secretariat, 2012

understood to refer broadly to 'women's issues'. Training available does not clarify organisational definitions for key gender terms, aspirations for the organisation and clarity on how this aligns with the Global AIDS strategy.	
To what extent do GAP action areas and targets need to change: Action Area 3 (Empowerment)	
5. **The action area remains relevant and desirable. Action area content and targets need revisiting.** Progress is desirable as an opportunity for all, not limited to women and leadership is a desirable attribute for all staff, irrespective of level within the organisation. Staff are keen for the Women's Leadership Programme to continue to exist but be reviewed in line with a gender transformative lens. The mentoring programme purpose and utility is currently unclear. The framing and curriculum of the training, the selection process and the teaching faculty may not be currently aligned with broader HRM leadership training initiatives that are anticipated as noted in Section 2, Action Area 2. Recruitment (referred to in conclusion 3), retention, learning and performance should be addressed collectively under Recommendation 5.	5. Strengthen the capacity of UNAIDS staff to act and behave in ways that are gender transformative.
6. **The Single Parental Leave policy exists as one example of a policy that aims to address gender equality.** A gap remains in translating this into practice, mainstreaming/institutionalising it and ensuring opportunity to apply it are consistent across different offices. This is a barrier to empowering all staff of different genders, grade etc.	6: Sustain an equalizing and flexible enabling environment
7. **The evaluation findings suggest that senior leadership are not consistently demonstrating the values and behaviours the organisation promotes**. There is a clear need and call from staff for the UNAIDS SLT to demonstrate UNAIDS values. This has a significant impact on how staff experience the workplace. This need is even more pressing given growing global conservatism and reductions in UNAIDS budget. Staff need to be more aligned than ever on gender equality and broader diversity and inclusion aims. There is a need for SLT to be visible in taking greater accountability steps when staff act in discordance with UNAIDS values and expected behaviours. It should also address disrespectful workplace practice that can negatively impact on staff, such as mansplaining, interrupting, emailing out of hours etc. [75].	6: Sustain an equalizing and flexible enabling environment
To what extent do GAP action areas and targets need to change: Action Area 4	
8. **The action area remains relevant. Targets are not well understood by staff and require unpacking in reporting and communications.** The UN SWAP 2.0 Framework has provided the impetus for important institutional and programmatic change. Staff could helpfully be made more aware of these achievements through reinstating access to the reports and summarising progress on key indicators in quarterly reports.	2: Clarify the GAP intent and ambition
To what extent should the Gender Action Plan go beyond a binary definition of gender, gender equality and women's empowerment and consider organizational culture transformation and diversity more broadly?	
9. **The GAP is currently predominantly perceived to be concerned with women.** The evaluation revealed a sense that men are being 'left out' of current GAP activity and that the current GAP is inappropriately binary in its lens. Staff feel this is not aligned with the mandate of UNAIDS - working with and serving diverse population groups. We conclude that the UNAIDS recruitment effort needs to flow down from the new Global AIDS strategy, to ensure people are recruited with both	2: Clarify the GAP intent and ambition, and 3. Clarify UNAIDS

[75] Update on the implementation of the Management Action Plan for a healthy, equitable and enabling workplace for all UNAIDS staff, UNAIDS May 2020

the competencies and behaviours required to deliver the Strategy. Competencies and behaviours development should also consider how these can support better engagement of men.	definition and approach to gender equality.

What effect, if any, have the COVID-19 pandemic and changes in working arrangements had and how would this require changes in the Action Plan?	
10. **COVID-19 working arrangements have changed working practices and there are opportunities to sustain positive aspects.** Staff desire flexibility and choice on their working location and want to be measured on their outputs and deliverables rather than on the hours spent in the office.	6: Sustain an equalizing and flexible enabling environment
11. **During COVID-19 staff have experienced the flexible working arrangements policy differently**. The evaluators heard in interviews that experience tended to vary according to managers. Setting clear expectations for boundaries around working from home seems to be manager specific. There is a need to help staff negotiate boundaries and support managers on what good boundaries and a good professional and personal balance looks like. The need to define boundaries in a way that makes sense to the team and the individual is important as different staff have experienced different challenges during COVID-19. For example, the additional burden facing women staff originating from and living in patriarchal societies when required to work from home during pandemics such as COVID-19 needs to be considered by UNAIDS[76]. UNAIDS might consider how the flexible working arrangements policy could be interpreted and translated into practice in such situations, for specific groups including women in all their diversity and men in all their diversity. Developing empathy so managers can understand the needs of their teams is also crucial.	
12. **Embracing technology such as Teams, Zoom etc during COVID-19 has proved a great leveller.** It has provided staff access to meetings and colleagues they would not ordinarily have had access to and provided opportunities for greater learning and understanding of UNAIDS work contributing to a safer, healthier enabling environment. There is a need to consider how to embed digital lessons of greater connectivity at a time when people were globally socially distanced. The evaluators recognise that retaining screen-based gatherings is not a natural or easy suggestion. But it was clear from comments that it was a leveller of inequity due to geographical barriers. The COVID-19 experience has led teams to connect in meaningful ways across teams and regions that previously would not have been offered. This is a powerful message. Evaluators also heard from those that have engaged in the Culture Transformation process that this process is also reinforcing better connection among colleagues.	

How does the Gender Action Plan fit with the broader Culture Transformation and other organizational change initiatives?	
13. **The current GAP does not align with the broader intent heard among staff interviewed to reduce inequality in any sphere**. There is a call to locate gender within among other intersectional dimensions, aligned with the new Global AIDS Strategy and the Culture Transformation process. The current GAP scope and intent needs clarifying against this backdrop. Definitions need to be developed and socialised within the organisation. The GAP needs an organisational location and a	2: Clarify the GAP intent and ambition and 1. Secure ownership and investment in the GAP

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[76] 3 random (3 F), 1 FGD (F), 1 KII (M) voiced this. And the UN Women report notes greater burden on women during COVID-19: Whose-time-to-care-brief_0.pdf (unwomen.org)

champion. It also needs to evolve with the Global AIDS Strategy, Alignment and Culture Transformation process. Staff need senior leadership within UNAIDS to demonstrate commitment to GAP since progress and reporting stalled in the end of December 2019.	
14. **The evaluation found a need to simplify and streamline organisational change and improvement structures.** Staff are tired of multiple change initiatives and task groups.	
15. **The evaluation found that resourcing commitment to institutional gender mainstreaming under the remit of the GAP is currently insufficient.** The evaluators recognise that significant organisational resource is being allocated to the Culture Transformation process whose underlying aim is to create a gender equal workplace.	

Section 5: Recommendations. What direction should the Gender Action Plan take and what needs to change?

This section combines analysis on evaluation questions 5 and 8 to explore the direction the GAP should take and what specifically, needs to change:

EQ 5: What needs to be changed—if anything—in the remaining period up to 2023 to enable the achievement of targets and commitments still deemed relevant and with potential for transformative change?

EQ8: What direction should the Action Plan take considering the changing organizational environment and broader inequalities framework of the new global AIDS strategy and the UNAIDS Secretariat's role in delivering on it?

6 recommendations are presented below in priority order. The evaluators recognise the organisation is in flux and change. The Alignment and Culture Transformation processes continue to progress along different timelines while a new Global AIDS Strategy is being operationalized. With this in mind, the evaluators have not suggested specific timelines under each recommendation and instead provided recommendation on the sequencing of these.

There are two main recommendations. These are accompanied by three further recommendations intended as pillars underpinning the first two. Recommendation 6 is located as a foundation stone necessary to enable structural change for gender equality work within the organisation.

Figure 1 Gender Action Plan Mid-Term Evaluation Recommendations
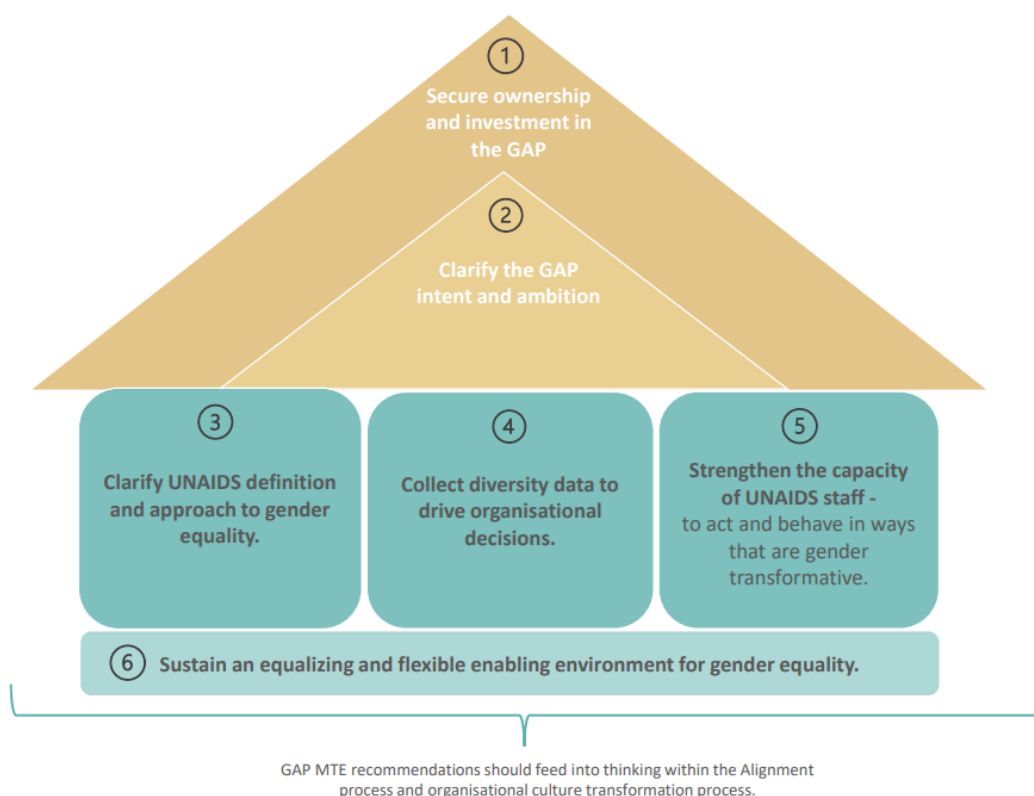
Recommendation 1: Secure ownership and investment in the GAP, locating it within the UNAIDS unified programme of change.

This recommendation should be considered while decisions are still being made within the Alignment process. It is important to consider the location of the GAP and which team will be responsible for driving the GAP forward. This is important because it feeds into achieving an improved workplace culture and the effective delivery of programmes. UNAIDS will need to invest resources into realising GAP intended changes as outlined below:

Supporting actions:
1.1 **Locate the GAP within a Gender, Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion Framework.** This portfolio of institutional strengthening work could be led by a Gender, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion team, mandated to deliver on all equality driven aims. This group could also be widened to include 'Accessibility' to encompass disability inclusion.

1.2 **Secure a senior leadership champion within the EXO for the GAP** to hold its progress accountable. The evaluators recommend locating the strategic support for the GAP (within the broader Framework) in the EXO to ensure it receives visibility at the strategic and senior level of the organisation.

1.3 **Establish gender as an overarching lens for the Gender, Diversity, Equality, Inclusion** (and Accessibility) **Framework** (linked to GAP commitment 3.1). The Framework should be broadened to encompass Gender, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (and potentially Accessibility) that also address constraints imposed on it due to being located within the UN system. Gender transformative impact and outcomes sought within the Framework should be clearly articulated through the Theory of Change development process in Recommendation 1. Gender should be central within the Framework and an overarching entry point for analysis of equality and equity discussion and action.

1.4 **In addition, create a UNAIDS Gender, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (GDEI) lead and team.** This will require recruiting staff to be tasked with delivering on GDEI gender pillar (and broader DEI) outcomes. This is important to show organisational commitment to this area of work. The GDEI lead will be supported by a suggested team of 3-4 gender, diversity, equality, and inclusion experts (e.g. 1 institutional strengthening gender role, 1-2 diversity and inclusion roles, and 1 disability role if Accessibility is also included). These experts will be tasked with embedding gender (and broader DEI) transformative behaviours and actions in the workplace and will be linked with programmes. The GDEI team could assume a knowledge management and learning function across the organisation to link up with programmatic gender and community mobilisation staff to ensure knowledge skills and competencies are refreshed among programmes and non-programme staff. The Executive Office's Senior Leadership Champion will hold the GDEI team responsible for implementation of GAP (and broader DEI) commitments, to ensure robustness of reporting, transparency, and commitment to doing things better. Investing in this unit would also support the UN SWAP GEWE 2.0 target '11bii. Gender department/unit is fully resourced according to the entity mandate.'

1.5 **Align and streamline the mandates and structures** of the Diversity and Inclusion Group, Gender Action Plan Challenge Group, Dignity at Work Advisers (and any other relevant groups) into one Gender, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Group that comprises multi-dimensional expertise. **Switch the current GAP Challenge Group function to a GDEI Challenge Group function, providing a sounding board and connector with the diversity of UNAIDS staff.** This will ensure the GAP remains focused on needs raised by diverse groups. The new Challenge Group (i.e. broadened to encompass DEI) will provide broader connection with UNAIDS colleagues and diverse views. The Challenge Group would report to the ExO senior leadership champion for the GAP secured under supporting action 2.1 and work collaboratively with the GDEI lead and team.

1.6. **Include an advocacy function within GDEI team** for internal advocacy/comms and external advocacy with other UN bodies and e.g. the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) for progressive policy and practice change for gender equality. This function should align with the internal communications function.

The evaluators believe that implementing this Recommendation would:

- provide a home and senior backing for the GAP.
- align the GAP with the Global AIDS Strategy focus on ending all inequalities that act as barriers to accessing prevention, treatment and care.
- respond to the internal desire to streamline initiatives, mechanisms and groups with similar mandates.

- present an opportunity for efficiency by pooling institutional change expertise in gender with institutional change expertise in other intersecting dimensions of inequality - ultimately pursuing a human-centred and holistic approach to equality and equity.

Recommendation 2: Clarify the GAP intent and ambition.

The evaluators suggest completing this recommendation first. Determining the intent of the GAP need not wait for the conclusion of the Culture Transformation and Alignment processes and could helpfully inform both processes.

Supporting actions:
2.1 **Develop a Theory of Change for the GAP** to a) clarify its intended impact and outcomes and b) to locate it within the broader Global AIDS Strategy. Clarifying its intended impact should include unpacking what 'gender transformative' means to UNAIDS. The structure of the GAP should also be addressed, and key performance indicators identified that align with the GAP intent. Current targets and commitments (as they are still considered relevant) should be located within this Theory of Change. Linked to Recommendation 1, consider how the UNAIDS approach to gender equality work will align with the broader CT process. For example, one idea could be that 2 or 3 core changes (outcomes) are desirable for gender equality. These could be embedded within the broader GDEI framework rather than being actioned as a standalone plan. Clear, simple messaging could be created around the key changes sought and clear communications shared to report on progress.

2.2 **Reconsider the GAP targets during the Theory of Change development process to align with broadened definitions agreed**. E.g. consider GAP Target 1 (50/50 parity): is it desirable and achievable to reach women and men 50/50 parity at all levels? If the intent is to put women in decision making roles, UNAIDS may wish to prioritise achieving parity at the senior leadership level for the remainder of the GAP, aligned with the UN Secretary General's approach[77]. Within the targets to be set, UNAIDS could set benchmarks for teams to work towards, including temporary special measures.[78]

In Action area 2, commitments could be refined by exploring how commitment 2.1 (see Table 2) could be folded into higher level guidance on the UNAIDS unified programme of change, alongside additional intersectional dimensions of discussion including e.g. race and disability etc. Also in Action areas 2 and 3 there is scope to merge these areas into a 'learning' action area 2 as currently learning and empowerment intentions sit in both Target areas 2 and 3. The empowerment focus of Target 3 could be primarily focused instead on enabling policies and practice. Reporting could also be strengthened especially to share UN-SWAP GEWE 2.0 progress.

Recommendation 3: Clarify UNAIDS' definitions and approach to gender.

This recommendation should be implemented alongside the Theory of Change development process. Exploring and clarifying gender concepts to broaden and define understanding and intent of the GAP (e.g. to encompass feminist principles and intersectionality) will be crucial in helping the GAP achieve its intended outcomes and impact.

Supporting actions:
3.1 **Clarify and define terms used within the GAP and broader Culture Transformation process** (i.e., gender equality and equity, gender parity, women in all their diversity, men in all their diversity, feminist principles etc). These should be clarified, documented and shared with all staff through learning interventions, meetings etc. Language should be used consistently to avoid confusion and conflation of terms. A core set of minimum principles should be agreed. Care should also be taken to cultural sensitivity and ensuring that any translations made are inclusive and not derogatory (e.g. in many UN document Russian translations still have 'homosexualism' instead of 'gay'). During the definition process consider the inequality dimension of language in understanding and being able to deliver an equitable enabling environment for all. During formulation of UNAIDS GAP definitions it will be important to explore how different countries/cultures interpret gender concepts and language.

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[77] Secretary-General launches UN system strategy on gender parity | Permanent Missions

[78] General recommendations made by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (un.org) accessed 7 June 2021. General Recommendation No. 5: "Recommends that States Parties make more use of temporary special measures such as positive action, preferential treatment or quota systems to advance women's integration into education, the economy, politics and employment"

3.2 **Establish guidelines for 'gender-proofing' workplace** initiatives to make it easier for the organisation to screen in or out proposals that do not meet UNAIDS' gender equality ambition.

Recommendation 4: Collect disaggregated data to build a picture of gender (and other) diversity dimensions within UNAIDS.

This recommendation should be implemented as soon as feasibly possible to start building a picture of gender diversity and other dimensions of diversity within the workplace. This is important to develop a baseline picture so that investments to address the diversity balance can be data-driven. As data starts being collected and analysed this will also help the organisation to detect unequal workplace experience.

Supporting actions:
4.1 **Review the existing data collection policy** to ensure clarity on what data is currently collected, how it is collected and stored.

4.2 **Agree what data to collect.** For instance, what data parameters and how questions will be asked sensitively, to avoid staff feeling like they're being labelled or put in a specific gender identity box.

4.3 Begin collecting data asap on diversity, equality, and inclusion parameters so that the organisation has robust data to support action on addressing gender based and other inequalities. The evaluators understand that UNAIDS is already investigating this possibility for gender. As staff see and experience that the organisation is taking gender, diversity, equality, and inclusion seriously, alongside investments in the enabling, safe environment, one may expect current fear around sharing gender, sexual orientation and other diversity data to reduce.

4.4 **Provide information to staff on where and how they can access support around disclosing personal data** or other workplace concerns they may have or experience. UNAIDS could provide, for example, LGBTIQ or disability focal points within the organisation who could provide anonymous and confidential support and advice.

Recommendation 5: Strengthen UNAIDS staff capacity - to act and behave (within the workplace) in ways that are gender transformative.

This recommendation should be implemented once the definitions and theory of change are in place, and as the Culture Transformation process unfolds so that these tools can align with learning and needs identified through the Culture Transformation process.

Supporting actions:
5.1 **Evaluate Gender and leadership development learning opportunities currently offered.** Ensure that these align with the Strategy, UNAIDS role in delivering on it and outcomes of the change processes. Training methods should be fit for purpose, experiential and relevant to one's professional role. Ensure the definitions included in the gender and leadership training are aligned with the definitions at an organisational level. UNAIDS should reconsider whether the Women's Leadership Programme continues in a revised format, in addition to a leadership programme that is open to all. UNAIDS should align these leadership programme efforts with broader HRM efforts as noted in Section 2, Action Area 3 to avoid duplication and to maximise coherency and complementarity. These efforts should include training for the SLT and other senior managers on GDEI/leadership approaches consistent with transformative change[79]. Looking ahead Leadership Programmes should also articulate the impact they seek to effect for those that take part, and for the organization. Creating formal and informal spaces for leadership experience to be gained should also be considered. These could include more formal opportunities such as the pilot initiative on short-term development opportunities (stretch assignments), with more informal opportunities such as ensuring space for colleagues to attend meetings to gain learning and exposure to different areas and levels of work; shadowing more senior colleagues etc.

5.2 **Provide focused learning on gender, including engaging men, exploring disrespectful workplace practice, feminist principles, power, privilege, intersectionality, and leadership** in the context of gender (and broader DEI). This should be shared with managers and UCDs to cascade to their teams (linked to

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[79] UNAIDS could learn from the gender equality learning/training programme that is currently being developed for UNDP senior leaders as part of the roll out of their new Strategic Plan.

current GAP commitments 2.5 and 2.4). This should incorporate contemporary evidence-based approaches to achieving behaviour change such as through experiential learning techniques. Training should articulate concrete examples of how power and privilege can interplay with gender.

5.3 **Integrate post-learning discussions as an accountable action**, **to support attitude and behaviour change.** These should be integrated within the performance management system PALM (linked to current GAP commitments 2.4 and 2.5). For example, once a staff member completes a learning action, one follow-up activity could be for the staff member to briefly summarise and share the key learning points with their team/supervisor during a team meeting. This could help to reinforce the learning and provide an opportunity to discuss the content with the wider team. Integrating such opportunities could reinforce an explorative learning culture. It would also be helpful for UNAIDS to **build internal capacity to track and measure changes in individual attitudes and behaviour change and in organizational norms.** Tracking GAP KPIs (and other organizational change processes) going forward may depend on this capacity being in place.

Recommendation 6: Sustain an equalizing and flexible enabling environment for gender equality.

This recommendation is included in recognition of the positive and negative workplace impacts experienced during COVID-19, and the need to sustain flexibility so that staff irrespective of gender have the best chance possible of doing their jobs to the best of their ability. This recommendation intends to leverage the progress achieved through COVID-19 in a) 'levelling' the workplace through digital communication and b) establishing flexible workplace practice such as teleworking and working from home. In recognition of the powerful shift in workplace practice that has been made over the last year and the benefits it has afforded and challenges it presents to all staff interviewed. The evaluators suggest that this recommendation be implemented while the Alignment and Culture Transformation processes remain ongoing, to inform their content and decision-making.

Supporting actions:

6.1 **Agree on a UNAIDS Compact[80] that outlines concrete ways to ensure SLT members and UCDs commit to and proactively demonstrate UNAIDS values** in their behaviours. Senior-level role models need to demonstrate and promote a level, flexible and enabling workplace. Including reprimanding behaviours not aligned with UNAIDS values and its commitment to gender equality. Example behaviours related to gender include not mansplaining, not interrupting others speaking, taking parental leave in equal amounts to partners, etc. Monitoring implementation of the single parental leave policy would be a good step in capturing gender transformative behaviours among men, for example.

6.2 **Establish and promote a clear policy position related to flexible working arrangements during and post COVID-19** (linked to current GAP commitment 3.8). Promote shift in mindset from inputs oriented to outputs oriented (i.e., that staff will not be measured on being available 9am-6pm but rather will be measured on outputs). Including an accountability mechanism to ensure that members of the SLT and UCDs commit to and proactively demonstrate a consistent approach to guiding implementation of workplace policy, including flexible working arrangements with their teams. Consider how the policy could proactively support the additional burden facing those in caring roles (mainly, but not limited to women) that are subject to less support and more burden during pandemics such as COVID-19. There is a need to be aware of the risk of setting specific expectations on flexible working and the related potential for unequal gender uptake. Consider policies that favour choice, where these are supported by evidence that there are no implicit adverse effects on gender equality.

6.3 **Promote continued use of technology to level opportunities for communication and collaboration.** Encourage where possible all participants to join online meetings on an equal footing. For example, if a meeting requires attendance from people located in different offices/environments, encourage all participants (even if some are based in the same office) to join online meetings from their separate screens/rooms. Additional equipment for staff and facilitated connectivity may also be required. The evaluators note that most of the points noted through interviews in this area were made by female staff. This may indicate that women have benefitted the most from enhanced connection and a sense of levelling.

6.4 **Consider the inequality dimension of language** in understanding and being able to deliver an equitable enabling environment for all. Ensure this is addressed during formulation of UNAIDS GAP definitions.

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[80] Similar in idea to the UN Global Compact: https://www.unglobalcompact.org/

6.5 **Consider a mapping exercise to identify policy items of concern** and establish a plan to address policies that include unequal conditions between genders, as well as intersectional dimensions including international and national categorisation of staff. This could include e.g. access to childcare, recognition of the need to provide elderly care, and necessary infrastructure to be working online. For instance, LGBTI activists in Central Asia are not able to work from home as their family may overhear sensitive information or they are not out[81]. This is particularly important to ensure online communication security in hostile environments where working with key populations may be considered immoral/illegal etc.

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[81] This point was not raised by UNAIDS staff, it is an external perspective from the evaluation team included to demonstrate the point with an example.

Annexes

Annex 1: Documents reviewed

No	Title & Author (where available)	Date
1	UNAIDS Gender Action Plan 2, A framework for accountability, 2018–2023	8 June 2018
2	First Progress Report, UNAIDS GAP	June 2019
3	UNAIDS Gender Action Plan 1, Closing the gap, 2013–2018	
4	Report to UNAIDS for informing the next Gender Action Plan 2018–2022, Linda Wirth,	10 January 2018
5	Gender Challenge Group TORs	July 2018
6	UNAIDS Staff Survey 2020, Summary Report, & Overall Narrative Report, Agenda Consulting	February 2021
7	Internal Brief: Culture Transformation at UNAIDS	10 August 2020
8	Collated Comments from Meaning making sessions, Gender Action Learning Process	10 February 2021
9	Meaning Making Sessions Sketches, Gender Action Learning Process	10 February 2021
10	My Gender Action Plan, UNAIDS Community Support Advisers	September 2019
11	UNAIDS UN SWAP 2.0 2018 Reporting (Final Self Report)	5 September 2019
12	UN SWAP 2.0 Technical Guidance, The accountability Framework for Mainstreaming Gender equality and the empowerment of women in United Nations Entities	December 2020
13	UNAIDS SWAP Letter	12 October 2020
14	UN-SWAP 2.0 Summary, Analysis and Key Insights from 2019 (report card)	October 2020
15	Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system, Report of the Secretary-General, UN Economic and Social Council	8 April 2020
16	My Gender Action Plan, Women in West and Central Africa	June 2019
17	Quarterly update on progress and challenges in implementing the GAP 2018-2023	December 2018 March 2019 Sept 2019 December 2019 March 2020 March 2021
18	Update on Strategic Human Resources Management Issues PCB46 Update HRM	June 2020
19	Update on the Implementation of the Management Action Plan PCB46	June 2020
20	Update on the implementation of the management action plan for a healthy, equitable and enabling workplace for all UNAIDS Staff PCB46 MAP CRP2	June 2020
21	Update on progress of implementation of JIU recommendations, PCB47	November 2020
22	I am the gender action plan: Leadership as a process of influence https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/featurestories/2019/june/20190611_leadership-influence	June 2019
23	UNAIDS Revises its policy on adoption, paternity and surrogacy leave. https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/featurestories/2018/october/adoption_paternity_surrogacy_leave	October 2018

24	UNAIDS Executive Summary & Integrated Report DRAFT: What works in gender and health—gender mainstreaming in the UN Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS, United National University, International Institute for Global Health	February 2021
25	COVID 19 Pulse Check Survey - February 2021, Staff Pulse Survey - Results 2021 - Sisense	March 2021
26	Q1 update 2021 on UNAIDS Culture Transformation	March 2021
27	Internal Brief: Culture Transformation at UNAIDS	11 Sept 2020
28	Transforming UNAIDS Culture Personal Commitments by Senior Leaders	Oct 2020
29	GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT (GEWE) CONCERNS EVERYONE AT UNAIDS. PI8 Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Guidance	Undated
30	Draft Report of the Gender Equality Marker application to the Joint Programme core UBRAF 2019 allocations to Cosponsors at the country level	March 2019
31	Draft Report of the Gender Equality Marker application to core resources of the 2020-2021 UNAIDS Secretariat workplans, and the 2020-2021 Joint UN Plans on AIDS	February 2021
32	UNAIDS Dignity at Work Adviser Programme - mandate	December 2018
33	2019-07 Leadership Programme for Women—Impact Evaluation	2019
34	2015 Terminology Guidelines UNAIDS	2015
35	GEM JP 2019 Planning Report: Report of the Gender Equality Marker application to the Joint Programme core UBRAF 2019 allocations to Cosponsors at the country level	February 2019
36	GEM JP 2018 Planning Report: Report of the Gender Equality Marker application to the Joint Programme core UBRAF 2018 allocations to Cosponsors at the country level	February 2019
37	PI10, P19 GEM 2019 Country Envelope Planning Report	2019
38	PI10, PI9 UNAIDS 2020 GEM Report (planned budget)	2020
39	Alignment Overview (Slides)	Undated
40	Principles of the Alignment	Undated
41	2019-10-05 UNAIDS Secretariat Diversity Taskforce DraftV4 TORs	May 2019
42	2021-03-04 Terms of Reference HRM Diversity & Inclusion	March 2021
43	Global Staff Survey- Reporting on Priorities and Actions	Undated
44	Staff Pulse Survey Results 2021-3-31-2021	March 2021
45	Policy Brief V3, Beyond sex and gender analysis: an intersectional view of the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak and response, produced by Olena Hankivsky1, PhD	Anuj Kapilashrami2, PhD	Undated

Annex 2: Additional detail on Evaluation Methodology

Data Collection Methods

Methods included **document review (see Annex 1)**, purposive **key informant interviews**, purposive **focus group discussions, randomly sampled staff interviews**, and a static **Miro Board.** These methods were chosen to provide the evaluators with different data sources that could be triangulated during analysis. The aim was to gather as many diverse perspectives as possible in the evaluation timeframe to inform responses to the evaluation questions.

Key Informants (KIs) were chosen to provide an expert perspective from their experience related to implementing the GAP, challenging the GAP, leading and engaging in other organisational change initiatives such as the Culture Transformation and Alignment processes.

The random sample of interviewees responded to the desire to gather diverse views of UNAIDS staff around the topic of gender equality. These interviews sought to explore the extent to which they had/ had not been impacted by the existence of the GAP and its achievement, and how. The purpose of including a random sample of interviews was not to reach representation in terms of viewpoints heard, as the sample was relatively small. But to provide another data point for triangulation, and to reach staff members that would not ordinarily be heard.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were included as a pragmatic way of a) hearing more perspectives on the GAP and b) creating a space for specialist groups to reflect and explore achievements and challenges together. The FGDs allowed the evaluators to listen to groups of colleagues discussing experiences and ideas around structured questions.

All interviews and focus group discussions were recorded by the evaluators in written form only, for coding and analysis purposes.

The Miro Board was chosen as an innovative data collection method, aiming to reach a larger group of UNAIDS staff than was possible through interviews and FGDs alone. And to provide a non-intrusive and non-burdensome opportunity for staff to engage. It was included to avoid administering a survey when staff may experience survey fatigue from the 2021 COVID-19 Pulse Survey, the Global Staff Survey and other surveys conducted in relation to the Alignment process.

Sampling approach

The sampling approach included making decisions about inception phase **discovery calls**, **purposive interviews**, **FGDs** and **randomly selected interviewees** during the evaluation. The process is outlined below.

Orientation Calls

At the start of the evaluation four names were suggested by the Evaluation Office of staff who were involved in the various ongoing change processes as well as those involved in the GAP. From these evaluators were able to build a picture of how the evaluation should take shape, and who to speak with.

Purposive Sample: Key informant interviews (KIIs)

The purposive sample was important to ensure the evaluators understood the UNAIDS context and the various organisational change initiatives. The target number of interviews for this sample was 13**. The total number interviewed was 15**. This sample was jointly suggested by the Evaluation Reference Group, the consultants and the Evaluation Office. In the end 15 staff and 4 external people to UNAIDS (UN Women and Gender at Work) were invited for interview. Of these 11 staff and 4 external accepted and completed interviews. KIIs were selected due to their involvement with the GAP, or their role in other processes such as the Culture Transformation Process, Diversity and Inclusion work and United Nations System-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) 2.0 for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE). Representatives from UN PLUS and UN GLOBE were included in this sample.

Purposive Sample: Focus group discussions

51 staff members were invited to FGDs across 3 different groups. **13 staff in total participated: 5 in the GAP Challenge Group, 6 in the USSA and 2 in the Diversity Taskforce.**

Staff who were members of more than one group were invited to choose which FGD they would attend. 1 member of staff attended 2 FGDs. Staff who were members of more than one group were invited to choose which FGD they would attend. 1 member of staff attended 2 FGDs. FGDs were held during the week of 19th

April 2021 and lasted for 90 minutes. The FGDs were scheduled for 13.00 CET to take into account different time zones.

Invites were sent 3 weeks before the FGDs were held. Reminders were sent out the working day before each session with a reminder to the meeting link and the topic to be discussed.

Name of Group	# invited	# participated	Female	Male
Gender Action Plan Challenge Group	10	5	3	2
UNAIDS Secretariat Staff Association Executive Committee	15	6	3	3
Diversity Taskforce and Dignity at Work Advisors	26	2	2	0

During the FGD, evaluators introduced themselves, the purpose of the evaluation and worked through the relevant evaluation questions in the format of a discussion (please see the Evaluation Question Guide in Annex 2). The discussion was not audio recorded, but notes were taken.

Randomly sampled interviews

The target number of interviews for this sample was 30. **A total of 26 were interviewed.** A total of 50 staff were randomly selected. In total, 26 interviews were carried out during the period 14th April–12th May 2021.

The process was as follows:
1. UNAIDS Evaluation Office provided the evaluators with a list of all UNAIDS staff members with Department name, Team name, gender, person grade, age and duty station. Staff were not identifiable by name. All were assigned an individual number. The list included 743 numbers (members of staff).

2. An online, random number generator[82] was used to select 40 staff to interview.

3. The randomly selected numbers were returned to the Evaluation Office who provided the names and email addresses of the 40. Of the original 40 selected 1 had already been participating through a Focus Group Discussion and another was a purposive key informant. Therefore, another 2 staff were randomly selected.

4. Of the 40 initially invited to interview:

25	replied positively
13	did not reply
2	declined

One reminder was sent out to those who did not respond initially leading to a total of 25 interviews.
5. Invitation process: The consultants personally contacted each selected staff member by email containing:

▪ information about the Evaluation from the Evaluation Office

▪ information about how to consent, how the interview would be conducted and how their information would be used

▪ a simple calendar booking system with available appointments spanning a two-week period.

6. On 29th April, a further 10 staff were invited to take part later in the evaluation to help boost the random interviews. Only 1 out of the 10 translated into an interview bringing the total number of random interviews to 26.

Profile of the Random Selection

The tables below show the level of diversity capture through the randomly selected interviewees that participated in an interview:

location: covering 16 duty stations globally

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82 RANDOM.ORG - True Random Number Service

gender: by available HR data

Total	Female	Male
26	16	10

staff grade level

Total	G2	G5	G6	G7	NO-C	P2	P4	P5
26	1	5	4	1	4	3	1	7

by age

Total	30-35	36-45	46-55	56-65
26	2	6	13	5

Miro Board

The board aimed to gather wide perspectives on the forward-looking part of the Mid-term evaluation. It was left open online for a 2-week period between 14th April–28th April 2021. In total 80 viewpoints were collected in individual notes left on the board. They are collated in Annex 4.

The Miro Board asked guests to respond to one question:

"If you were EXD of UNAIDS and could change one thing to advance a gender equal workplace, what would it be and why?"

The purpose and intention of this board was to give staff an anonymous space to share unrestricted thoughts on what kinds of things could move gender equality in a positive direction.

Communication about the Miro Board: The evaluators shared the link (password protected) and instructions of how to use the Miro Board with all FGD participants on 13th April, asking them to share the board on the Workplace, team meetings, or by email to other staff members who may not be aware of the evaluation but would like to take part. The evaluators also sent the link to all randomly selected staff, with the intention that they could share on Workplace with their groups/team meetings. The Evaluation Office also sent an email on 15th April to all staff to let them know about the Miro Board and provide the link, and background to the evaluation, in addition to a post on Workplace. All guest posts were anonymous.

Analysis

All data gathered was entered into MAXQDA and coded. This included secondary data documents reviewed and primary data perspectives in written notes from KIIs, FGDs and randomly selected interviews. The Coding Framework is attached in Annex 5. Coded text was extracted per the coding framework. This allowed for content analysis linked back to the evaluation questions and Theory of Change. Following analysis and identification of key themes, the evaluators critically challenged evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations. They used an evidence table to document the linkage between findings, conclusions, and subsequent recommendations. The evidence table allowed the evaluators to analyse the evaluation data with an intersectional lens—exploring whether there were any discernible patterns among randomly selected interviewees' responses.

Annex 3: Interview & FGD Guides, Consent Form

Eval criteria	Evaluation Questions	Interview questions
Relevance	1. Which action areas and targets in the Action Plan are still relevant to the UNAIDS Secretariat given the changed organizational and global context?	1. To what extent do you feel the GAP 4 Action Areas remain relevant today? (we will share these on screen) 2. Would you remove, adjust or add any Action areas? Please share why.
	2. To what extent should the Gender Action Plan go beyond a binary definition of gender, gender equality and women's empowerment and consider organizational Culture Transformation and diversity more broadly?	*3.* How do you feel about the framing of the current GAP being predominantly binary? *(By binary we mean that the plan focuses primarily on establishing parity between women and men. It is not explicit about gender identities that do not fall into the male or female categorisation, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities (SOGI)).* 4. Do you see any challenges or opportunities with broadening this definition? 5. Do you see any challenges with broadening this? How might these challenges be best navigated? Are you aware of any specific learning from other UN Agencies including UN Women that could help UNAIDS?
Effectiveness	3. What are the key achievements and gaps/challenges as well as trends against key targets, action areas and commitments?	6. Are there any specific achievements in the UNAIDS workplace you're aware of that the GAP has contributed to? 7. Are there any specific efforts ongoing or changes likely to happen with the UN-SWAP that might impact on the next few years of the UNAIDS GAP? 8. What do you feel most proud of in terms of GAP achievements to date? How has this group contributed?
	4. What do these achievements mean to the UNAIDS workplace in real terms? i.e. what has changed (or not) as a result of the GAP achievements? (e.g. Has it changed the way teams are being led? How different groups of staff members feel supported etc? What specific activities or efforts have contributed to the change?	9. If yes, to what extent do you believe this achievement has impacted your experience of the UNAIDS workplace? How might it be different for colleagues of (an)other gender(s)? 10. If yes, to what extent do you believe this achievement has led to any changes in the way you or your supervisor/manager do your job? Or perhaps the way you are treated by others? 11. If yes, do you see any groups of colleagues that are not experiencing the benefits of the changes (achievements) as you do? E.g. *SOGI, regions, people of colour, ethnicities, ages, national/international staff, HIV status)* 12. What do you think made these achievements possible? I.e. have you observed any specific enabling factors? *(e.g. structured processes set up, changes in attitudes and behaviours following training on unconscious bias, shift in leadership style etc)*
	6. Given the trajectory of progress and change, what are the chances of achieving the targets by 2023?	

Same

	7. What needs to be changed—if anything—in the remaining period up to 2023 to enable the achievement of targets and commitments still deemed relevant and with potential for transformative change?	13. If you were ExD for a day and could change one thing to improve the workplace in UNAIDS from gender perspective, what would it be and why? *(What would move the needle quicker. Are there any quick wins?)*
Sustainability	8. What effect, if any, have the COVID-19 pandemic and changes in working arrangements had and how would this require changes in the Action Plan?	14. Do you see any specific opportunities and / or challenges ahead that could/should influence the way the remainder of this GAP is carried out? Not least given how the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way people are working? (i.e. virtual connection, less informal connection etc).
	9. How does the Gender Action Plan fit with the broader Culture Transformation and other organizational change initiatives?	15. How do you believe the GAP could best align with the Culture Transformation and other change initiatives that are ongoing within UNAIDS? What mechanisms or processes do you think would be important to have in place to support Alignment?
	10. What direction should the Action Plan take considering the changing organizational environment and broader inequalities framework of UNAIDS new strategy?	

Consent Email

Prior to participating, individuals will receive an email with the following information:
Thank you for agreeing to participate in a one-on-one interview or focus group discussion as part of the UNAIDS Secretariat mid-term evaluation of the Gender Action Plan. Before participating, the evaluation team would like to inform you about the purpose of the interview/discussion, how the data will be used and the risks and benefits of your participation. If you give your consent to participate, please return this email with the following response:

"I, (insert name), consent".

Information about your participation:

- This interview/group discussion is being conducted as part of the mid-term evaluation of the UNAIDS Secretariat-Gender Action Plan.

- Your perspective is very valuable and will help to make recommendations about improving the work of the Gender Action Plan moving forward.

- Your participation is voluntary, you may choose not to participate or withdraw at any time.

- Your responses will be kept confidential and only be used for the purpose of this evaluation.

- The information you provide will NOT be used in reports in a way that can identify you (i.e. your responses will not be attributed to you or your specific position).

- The report will NOT include an Annex which lists all people interviewed to preserve key informants' anonymity.

- This interview/discussion will be recorded in written notes. These notes will be kept as a secure password-protected electronic file.

- Only members of the evaluation team will have access to the notes made during this interview/discussion. All evaluation team members have signed data confidentiality agreements to protect the confidentiality of the data collected for the evaluation.

- Within 3 months of the evaluation final report having been accepted by the Reference Group, all primary data files will be destroyed.

Annex 4: Sunrise Diagram: UNAIDS organisational change programme contributing to UNAIDS Goal

Sunrise diagram: UNAIDS organizational change program contributing to UNAIDS GOAL

People & structures

Aligning and empowering people and structures to deliver Global AIDS Strategy 2021-2026

UN Plus

Young UN

UN Globe

Culture Transformation Change Agents*

Gender Action Plan Challenge Group*

Staff Association*

Dignity at Work Advisers*

Come together as 'connectors' for Culture Transformation

Blue Sky Group on gender equality, diversity and inclusion

Diversity task force

SLT hub for strategic direction

Independent Ethics Office

EXD virtual meetings with staff at all levels

Staff mobility policy

Human Resource system (recruitment, retention, learning, performance)

Implementation of the management response to the Joint Inspection report

Action learning programme: Team conversations and change experiments

Implementation of Management Action Plan

Culture transformation process

@Workplace

Webinars on internal support services for staff and UNAIDS offices (Part of communication system)

Processes

Aligning processes to deliver Global AIDS Strategy 2021-2026

Streamlining internal processes

Delegating authority

Management Action Plan

Staff surveys

Aligning systems to deliver Global AIDS Strategy 2021-2026

UNAIDS internal communications function

Gender Action Plan

Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Systems & tools

GOAL: UNAIDS best positioned to deliver on the vision of ending AIDS by 2030

A healthy, equitable and enabling workplace.

UNAIDS values underpinning Global AIDS Strategy and organizational culture

Annex 5: List of Miro Board Comments & Miro board visual

The contributions to the Miro Board are below. We have grouped them into 4 themes.

- Architecture/Systems/Policy
- Training/Learning
- Respectful Workplace Behaviours
- Widening the framing / Definitions

We are looking for overarching themes rather than any quantitative assessment—except for the number of contributions. While it was not our intention to analyse the contributions, from a grounded theory perspective it is interesting to note the themes that came up. Most contributions related to the Architecture /Systems/Policy theme (46)

Contributions are numbered, but the numbering is only for counting and reference purposes and does not relate to any order.

	Question asked: If you were the EXD of UNAIDS and could change one thing to advance a gender equal workplace, what would it be and why?
	Architecture / Systems / Policy (46)
1	ensure distinct gender unit in MER focused on human resources, parity, gender action plan, separate from the programme unit on human rights and gender
2	Empower Gender Focal Point by allocating human and financial resources and include in decision making and policy development
3	Ensure both men and women feel they can use uncertified sick leave to tend to a family illness or emergency
4	change forms and make them gender friendly
5	ensure there are new gender adviser positions created in all regional or subregional offices and in countries depending on need
6	ensure appropriate funding dedicated to gender programming activities
7	Gender assess the impact of mobility. Support spousal employment in the context of mobility. Because of prevailing gender norms, it is more difficult for men to be "a trailing spouse" that it is for women
8	Don't organise meetings after 5.00pm to respect people with children
9	Empower staff counsellor to act in the interest of staff wellbeing - particularly on issues relating to return from maternity leave etc.
10	Always question gender bias in every appointment - it is never in women's favour, even when it looks like a leadership position.
11	introduce days of the week with no meetings internally
12	Educate managers and hold them accountable. Don't be shy to punish who deserves punishment rather than the usual slap on the wrist: these are highly retributed, highly educated people. Their lack of sensitivity is intolerable!
13	Put effort in identifying why (if) women are not making it to management roles across the different sectors of UNAIDS
14	I would not allow MEN nor WOMEN to be under consultant contract if they perform full time staff functions
15	I would ensure salaries are the same for men and women
16	I would ensure that women are promoted throughout the organization and not only in top positions
17	What happened to the women who went to the programme and what has their progress been
18	I would revise policies such as hiring, training, PER etc, to provide active and equal support and opportunities to all genders
19	Stop punishing women who take special leave without pay to extend their parental leave.

20	Make sure that career gaps for caregiving (for children, older parents) are not held against the staff member (when the y are applying for a position, or in reassignment processes).
21	using the equal opportunity for all, i will promote the best person for the job, 50/50 on both women and men
22	Establish athis is risky gender equality, diversity and inclusion unit at EXO
23	At least 6 months paid maternity- and paternity/parental leave to all new parents (and ideally more than that).
24	Ensure that gender quality is a KPI for each and everyone. This is not optional ode 'delegatable'.
25	I would work to create proper fixed- or long-term contracts for all staff. The UN does not practice what it preaches in contracting of staff (i.e. many short-term consultant contracts that makes life- and career-planning impossible)
26	When staff members are internationally reassigned, provide support to the spouse to find employment
27	Ensure flexible working arrangements that makes it possible to have a family and work full time
28	Gender parity in positions (also middle-management) across all levels of the organization
29	Ensure that a feminist/gender strategy guides all investments & monitoring of results
30	Allowing an opportunity of flexible working ours to mothers of children up to 3 years
31	Ensure that "being a woman" is not the only reason for being accepted or awarded a position/contract
32	Give seat at the table for GAP lead
33	Flatten the hierarchy - promote horizontal management, self-management of staff and teams, invest in staff and promoting/empowering them (all grades and staff categories)
34	Start with a salary review - to ensure that men and women in equivalent roles performing at equivalent levels are compensated equally
35	Ensure career opportunities and progress for women across P levels--gender equity is not only about women in leadership roles
36	Clarify role of SWAP and if deemed important, make progress a priority again
37	ensure promotions are going internally to women instead of hiring from outside as if the talent inside was not enough
38	Normalize and promote flexible work so that all staff are empowered to use this - without fear of being denied growth opportunities and to ensure work/life balance
39	Radically different recruitment policy and process to bring in more gender-diverse youth and community in our staffing
40	Implement policies that put staff wellbeing first and that serve all staff rather than working for (and advancing) a narrow category of staff
41	Ensure that young mothers are given equal opportunity to grow even if they cannot be available 24/7 for obvious reasons
42	Appoint a young KP/PLHIV to be EXD
43	Instate a focal point in HRM that is responsible to ensure that women who go on maternity leave have a plan for their return before they go - and who is responsible for follow-up and ensuring this take place - too many people have come back from maternity leave to find their job has disappeared or is occupied by someone else.
44	Have more female leaders from the global south in SLT
45	Ensure gender sensitive/inclusive data (accounting for differences between sexual orientation, gender identity, and sex) inside and outside of the organization
46	open a creche to facilitate the daily life of young parents (and most of the time mothers)
Training (10)	
48	Educate staff about comprehensive gender
49	stop the assumption that gender issues are only women's issues

50	Value accountable collaboration, empathy, self-care + caring for others, in our management approach - for leaders of all genders.
51	make gender neutral bathrooms
52	Do not assume that women managers are more sensitive to women issues
53	to constantly send out reminders on channels to report sexual harassment cases for new comers and current employees as a refresher
54	Educate Human Resources with appropriate language for interviews with gender diverse people
55	I would provide training on Feminism and focus on the discrimination and obstacles of women of color
56	specific actions for addressing patriarchal norms across the secretariat
57	I would focus on building relationships and not on meeting metrics for different grades.
58	gender action plan? or women action plan? yes we are very very very behind in gender equality at UNAIDS - which is why we need a gender action plan. not a gender action plan that puts the responsibility of our women colleagues to remove the inequalities they face that were put there by men... we need a gender action plan that also puts responsibility on men to STOP their sexist behaviours, identify and rectify their actions that perpetuate harmful traditional gender norms in the workplace - intentional or unintentional
	Respectful Workplace Behaviours (7)
59	Make it equally acceptable and welcome that men and women take parental leave when they have a new child
60	More visibility for male colleagues……who are role models for values of care, work-life balance, commitment to our shared cause
61	Even when you are at the same grade as a male colleague in some duty station you are expected to pass share your inputs through them
62	Make working at nights and weekends something that is badly seen. Women (and sometimes men) wiht small children are currently often discriminated against and not given interesting projects because they are not able to work 24/7.
63	I would encourage staff to respect human rights, especially right to dignity at work, not letting people work day and night because of time difference
64	Watch out for excessive overtime (in a world with unequal caregiving roles, women will feel the biggest pressures to "keep up" with their peers)
65	Don't assume that women can't do hardship duty station assignments
	Widening the frame/Intersectionality/Definitions (15)
66	Ineffective workplaces needs to be tackled first in order to make progress on gender equality. Trust and racial discrimination issues need sorting first since gender challenges do not sit in isolation.
67	Don't rely on a single LGBTQ staff member to represent all of us. We are all different and more voices need to be heard.
68	I will explain clearly what FEMINISM is for me- which is inclusion of ALL GENDER and not only about women- to all UNAIDS staff.
69	Stop de Binary approach
70	The gender action plan is primarily a human resources plan on GE, therefore the title is misleading. Stakeholders and even colleagues think that it is about GE programming but it is not
71	The focus on men and women is very gender binary and excludes gender diverse persons
72	Stop talking and writing about sex and start talking and writing about gender
73	Stop the Binary Approach
74	Include no-binary and gender fluid expression identities an expressions
75	I would act in line with feminist principles and not only talk about them
76	By treating everyone the same, we are treating virtually no one "fairly".
77	Equity and Equality, although frequently used together, are diametrically opposed concepts.

78	where is the programme that identifies potential in staff - and nurtures them, provides them with leadership opportunities... now wouldn't be nice to have gender (which is women, let's be honest) action plan that works IN PARALLEL (HAVE BOTH) with an action plan for new leadership development that is not related to gender? why do we divide? why not bring together? remove dichotomies, see a spectrum of genders...
79	expand gender definition - move towards sexual orientation and gender identity - they all define how our gender assigned at birth or identified with dictates our path - in our lives, in our careers, in our relationships, communities, places of worship, schools...ultimately gender equality is about everyone being equal and facing no inequities and inequalities because of their gender - whatever that is...
80	shouldn't this be about diversity ?
	END

Screenshot of Miro Board, 28th April 2021:

Annex 6: Coding Framework

Code System	Memo	Frequency
Code System		0
Forward-looking: ExD for a day		0
FGDs and KIIs		0
Miro		0
Sustainability		0
Direction GAP could take (new strategy & broad inequal framing		0
Alignment with other org dev initiatives		0
Impact of COVID and implications for GAP		0
Effectiveness		0
Opportunities		0
Other ideas		0
Architecture ideas e.g. gender unit, FPs etc		0
Accountability ideas		0
Learning: how has change happened?		0
How has change happened (facilitating factors)		0
What needs to change to allow meeting of targets?		0
Likelihood of meeting existing targets by 2023		0
Impact: so what? Have any changes been observed in workplace?		0
Challenges		0
Target 4: UN SWAP		0
Target 3: Empowerment		0
Target 2: L&D		0
Target 1: 50/50 parity		0
Other		0
Gaps		0
Other		0
Target 4: UN SWAP		0
Target 3: Empowerment (leadership progs)		0
Target 2: L&D		0
Target 1: 50/50 parity		0
Achievements		0

Code System	Memo	Frequency
Other		0
Target 4: UN SWAP		0
Target 3: Empowerment (leadership progs)		0
Target 2: L&D		0
Target 1: 50/50 parity		0
Relevance		0
Definition (i.e. broadening from non-binary)		0
Against broadening		0
For broadening		0
Opportunities		0
Challenges		0
Targets: how can they be made more relevant?		0
Target 4: UN SWAP		0
Target 3: Empowerment		0
Target 2: L&D		0
Target 1: 50/50 parity		0

Annex 7: Visual to support Recommendation 2

Organisational Change Landscape: Locating the Gender Action Plan. This graphic feeds into thinking for Recommendation 2.

Organizational change landscape: locating the Gender Action Plan, Recommendation 1

1: A clear WHY

The Global AIDS Strategy: End AIDS as a public health threat by 2030

The ultimate changes UNAIDS seeks to enable it to achieve its mandate.

Global AIDS Strategy is being actively used to frame all UNAIDS efforts – both workplace and programmatic.
Infusing an equality lens throughout.

The intermediate changes that need to be in place before change can happen.

The **Strategy intent and values are integrated within** programme and workplace **policies and systems.**

The foundation stones that are needed to support change.

UNAIDS staff are able to locate their roles in delivering the Global AIDS Strategy UNAIDS mandate and UNAIDS staff values.

2: A clear WHAT

The Alignment process

The right workforce and finances are in place to deliver the Global AIDS strategy optimally.

Gender, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Framework & team in place with required expertise and mandated to champion all equality issues within the workplace.

Gender, Diversity Equality and Inclusion plan in place defining UNAIDS feminist principles and approach to intersectionality.

3: A clear HOW

The culture transformation process

UNAIDS' organisational culture is equal, safe and empowering for all.

Senior Leadership Team are visibly walking the talk and ensuring undesirable behaviours are transparently and consistently addressed.

All UNAIDS staff are visibly walking the talk and ensuring undesirable behaviours are transparently and consistently addressed.

Required competencies, attitudes and behaviours for UNAIDS staff flow down from UNAIDS values. These are integrated within recruitment, retention, performance and learning systems.

The Problems: UNAIDS is not a safe, equal, empowering workplace for all. Staff at all levels need greater trust, confidence and respect for senior leadership staff. The current structure of UNAIDS is not set up to achieve the 2030 vision. Stronger institutional strengthening expertise in gender, diversity, equality and inclusion is needed to enable meaningful culture change.

Annex 8: Summary of progress against UN SWAP GEWE 2.0

UN SWAP GEWE 2.0 achievements as per the most recently available report to UN Women (reporting on 2020 progress):

Exceeds requirements	Meets requirements	Approaches requirements	NA
PI1 Strategic Planning Gender-Related SDG Results: exceeds requirements. 1ci. Main strategic planning document includes at least one high level transformative result on gender equality and the empowerment of women which will contribute to meeting SDG targets, and reference to SDG 5 targets. AND 1cii. Entity has achieved or is on track to achieve the highlevel transformative result on gender equality and the empowerment of women	**PI4 Evaluation: meets requirements**: 4bi. Meets the UNEG gender equality - related norms and standards. AND 4bii. Applies the UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in evaluation during all phases of the evaluation.	**PI10 Financial Resource Allocation: approaches requirements** (10a. Financial benchmark is set for implementation of the gender equality and women's empowerment mandate.)	PI3 Programmatic Gender-Related SDG Results not Directly Captured in the Strategic Plan: NA The UNAIDS Strategy includes a gender-related SDG result and hence reporting of all results under PI1 and PI2.
PI2 Reporting on Gender-Related SDG Results: exceeds requirements. 2ci. Reporting to the Governing Body or equivalent on the high level result on gender equality and the empowerment of women which will contribute to AND 2cii. Systematic use of sexdisaggregated data in strategic plan reporting AND 2ciii. Reporting every two years to the Governing Body or equivalent on implementation of the entity's gender equality and empowerment of women	**PI5 Audit: meets requirements.** 5b. Based on risks assessments at engagement level, internal audit departments have developed tools for auditing gender equality and the empowerment of women related issues (e.g. policy compliance, quality of reporting etc.) and apply these as appropriate in all relevant audit phases.	**P12: Equal representation of women: Approaches requirements.** 12a. Plan in place to achieve the equal representation of women for General Service staff and all professional levels in the next five years.	

policy meeting SDG targets, including SDG 5.		
16ci. Knowledge on gender equality and women's empowerment is systematically documented and publicly shared AND 16cii. Communication plan includes gender equality and women's empowerment as an integral component of internal and public information dissemination AND 16ciii. Entity is actively involved in an inter-agency community of practice on gender equality and the empowerment of women	**PI6 Policy: meets requirements.** 6b. Up to date policies and plans implemented on gender equality and women's empowerment, including gender mainstreaming and the equal representation of women.	PI14 Capacity Assessment: approaches requirements 14a. Assessment of capacity in gender equality and women's empowerment for individuals in entity is carried out.
PI9 Financial Resource Tracking: exceeds requirements. 9ci. Financial resource tracking mechanism in use to quantify disbursement of funds that promote gender equality and women's empowerment. AND 9cii. Results of financial resource tracking influences central strategic planning concerning budget allocation	**PI7 Leadership: meets requirements.** 7b. Senior managers internally and publicly champion gender equality and the empowerment of women.	
PI13 Organizational culture: exceeds requirements. 13ci. Organizational culture fully supports promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. AND	**PI8 Gender-responsive performance management: meets requirements.** 8b. Assessment of gender equality and the empowerment of women integrated into core values and/or competencies for all staff, with a	

13cii. ILO Participatory Gender Audit or equivalent carried out at least every five years	particular focus on levels P4 or equivalent and above. AND 11bii. Gender department/unit is fully resourced according to the entity mandate
	PI11 Gender Architecture: Meets requirements. (11bi. Gender focal points or equivalent at HQ, regional and country levels are: a. designated from staff level P4 or equivalent and above for both).
	PI15 Capacity Development. Meets requirements. 15b. Ongoing mandatory training for all levels of entity staff at HQ, regional and country offices.
	PI17 Coherence. Meets requirements. 17bi. Participates systematically in inter-agency coordination mechanisms on gender equality and the empowerment of women. AND 17bii. Participates in a UNSWAP peer review process

Annex 9: Suggested supporting actions for Recommendations

1: Secure ownership of the GAP.

1.1 **Locate the GAP within a Gender, Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion Framework.** This portfolio of institutional strengthening work could be led by a Gender, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion team, mandated to deliver on all equality driven aims. This group could also be widened to include 'Accessibility' to encompass disability inclusion.

1.2 **Secure a senior leadership champion within the ExO for the GAP** to hold its progress accountable. The evaluators recommend locating the strategic support for the GAP (within the broader Framework) in the ExO to ensure it receives visibility at the strategic and senior level of the organisation.

1.3 **Establish gender as an overarching lens for the Gender, Diversity, Equality, Inclusion** (and Accessibility) **Framework.** The Framework should be broadened to encompass Gender, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (and potentially Accessibility) that also address constraints imposed on it due to being located within the UN system. Gender transformative impact and outcomes sought within the Framework should be clearly articulated through the Theory of Change development process in Recommendation 2. Gender should be central within the Framework and an overarching entry point for analysis of equality and equity discussion and action.

1.4 **In addition, create a UNAIDS Gender, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (GDEI) lead and team.** This will require allocating resources to staff tasked with delivering on GDEI gender pillar (and broader DEI) outcomes. This is important to show organisational commitment to this area of work. The GDEI lead will be supported by a suggested team of 3-4 gender, diversity, equality, and inclusion experts. These experts will be tasked with embedding gender (and broader DEI) transformative behaviours and actions in the workplace and will be linked with programmes.

1.5 **Align and streamline the mandates and structures** of the Diversity and Inclusion Group, Gender Action Challenge Group, Dignity at Work Advisers (and any other relevant groups) into one Gender, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Group that comprises multi-dimensional expertise. **Switch the current GAP Challenge Group function to a GDEI Challenge Group function, providing a sounding board and connector with the diversity of UNAIDS staff.** This will ensure the GAP remains focused on needs raised by diverse groups. The new Challenge Group (i.e. broadened to encompass DEI) will provide broader connection with UNAIDS colleagues and diverse views. The Challenge Group would report to the ExO senior leadership champion for the GAP secured under supporting action 2.1 and work collaboratively with the GDEI lead and team.

1.6. **Include an advocacy function within GDEI** team for internal advocacy/comms and external advocacy with other UN bodies and e.g. the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) for progressive policy and practice change for gender equality. This function should align with the internal communications function.

2: Clarify the intent of the GAP.

2.1 **Develop a Theory of Change for the GAP** to a) clarify its intended impact and outcomes and b) to locate it within the broader Global AIDS Strategy. Unpack 'gender transformative' intent.

2.2 **Reconsider the GAP targets** during the Theory of Change development process to align with broadened definitions agreed.

3: Clarify UNAIDS definition and approach to gender equality.

3.1 **Clarify and define terms used within the GAP and broader culture transformation process** (i.e., gender equality, gender parity, women in all their diversity, men in all their diversity, feminist principles etc). Language should be used consistently throughout the organisation to avoid confusion and conflation of terms.

3.2 **Establish guidelines for 'gender-proofing' workplace initiatives** to make it easier for the organisation to screen in or out proposals that do not meet UNAIDS' gender equality ambition.

4. Collect diversity data to drive organisational decisions.

4.1 **Review the existing data collection policy** to ensure clarity on what data is currently collected, how it is collected and stored.

4.2 **Agree what data to collect.** For instance, what data parameters and how questions will be asked sensitively, to avoid staff feeling like they're being labelled or put in a specific gender identity box.

4.3 **Begin collecting data asap on diversity, equality, and inclusion parameters** so that the organisation has robust data to support action on addressing gender based and other inequalities. The evaluators understand that UNAIDS is already investigating this possibility for gender. As staff see and experience that the organisation is taking gender, diversity, equality, and inclusion seriously, alongside investments in the enabling, safe environment, one may expect current fear around sharing gender, sexual orientation and other diversity data to reduce.

4.4 **Provide information to staff on where and how they can access support around disclosing personal data** or other workplace concerns they may have or experience. UNAIDS could provide, for example, LGBTIQ or disability focal points within the organisation who could provide anonymous and confidential support and advice.

5. Strengthen the capacity of UNAIDS staff in gender.

5.1 **Evaluate the Gender and leadership programme training currently offered.** Ensure that these align with the Strategy and results of the change processes. Training methods should be fit for purpose, experiential and relevant to one's professional role. Consider maintaining women only spaces alongside a broader leadership programme open to all.

5.2 **Provide focused learning on gender, including engaging men, exploring disrespectful workplace practice, feminist principles, power, privilege, intersectionality, and leadership** in the context of gender (and broader DEI). This should be shared with managers and UCDs to cascade to their teams (linked to current GAP commitments 2.5 and 2.4). This should incorporate contemporary evidence-based approaches to achieving behaviour change such as through experiential learning techniques.

5.3 **Integrate post-learning discussions as an accountable action, to support attitude and behaviour change.** These should be integrated within the performance management system PALM (linked to current GAP commitments 2.4 and 2.5). **Build internal capacity to track and measure changes in individual attitudes and behaviour change and in organizational norms.** Tracking GAP KPIs (and other organizational change processes) going forward may depend on this capacity being in place.

6. Sustain an equalizing and flexible enabling environment for gender equality.

6.1 **Agree on a UNAIDS Compact that outlines concrete ways to ensure SLT members and UCDs commit to and proactively demonstrate UNAIDS value**s in their behaviours. Senior role models need to demonstrate and promote a level, flexible and enabling workplace. Including reprimanding behaviours not aligned with UNAIDS values and its commitment to gender equality Similar in idea to the UN Global Compact: https://www.unglobalcompact.org/

6.2 **Establish and promote a clear policy position related to flexible working arrangements during and post COVID-19.** (linked to current GAP commitment 3.8). Consider how the policy could proactively support the additional burden facing those in caring roles (mainly, but not limited to women) that are subject to less support and more burden during pandemics such as COVID-19.

6.3 **Promote continued use of technology to level opportunities for communication and collaboration.** Discourage inequity in access to information and opportunity by encouraging where possible all participants to join online meetings on an equal footing.
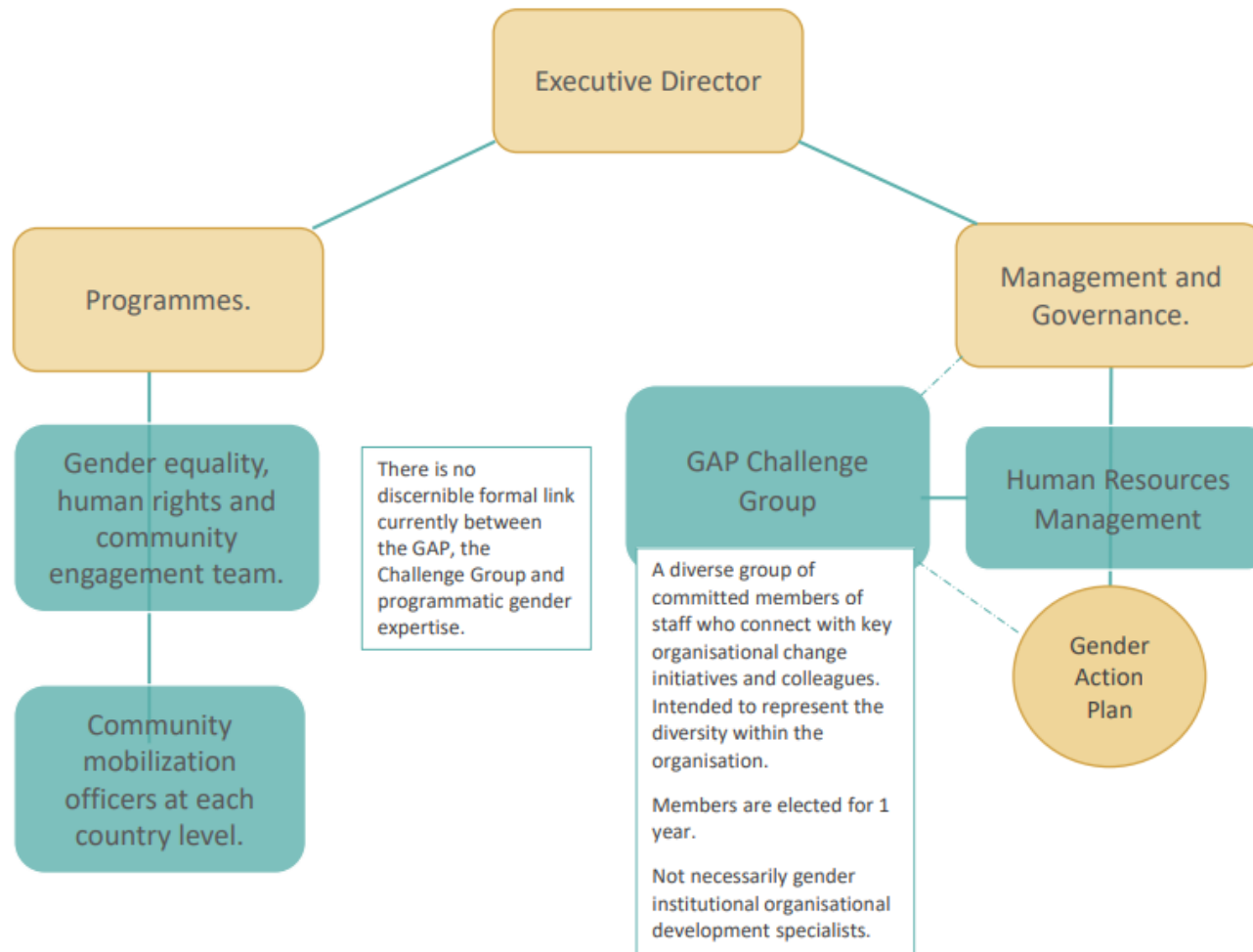
6.4 **Consider the inequality dimension of language** in understanding and being able to deliver an equitable enabling environment for all. Ensure this is addressed during formulation of UNAIDS GAP definitions.

6.5 C**onsider a mapping exercise to identify policy items of concern** and establish a plan to address policies that include unequal conditions between genders, as well as intersectional dimensions including international and national categorisation of staff.

Annex 10: The GAP link to Gender programming

Graphic to show that currently the GAP is not formally linked to programmes and available gender expertise within UNAIDS.

Other teams are engaged in delivering the GAP other than HRM. These are not included here for simplicity. This graphic was developed to support thinking on Recommendation 1.