

Evaluation of UNEP's Gender Policy and Strategy (GPS) 2015-2021

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Evaluation Process, Methods and Sources of Data

- ▶ International experts with strong experience in the UN on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE)
- ▶ Evaluation conducted between August 2021 and January 2022
- ▶ Desk review of key documents
- ▶ 46 semi-structured interviews
- ▶ 3 Focus groups with Gender Focal Points and Regional Presences
- ▶ 2 surveys - Perception Survey (58% response)
Gender Focal Point Survey (33% response)

Strategic Relevance : Significance of the UNEP's Gender Policy and Strategy

- ▶ Most staff interviewed **aware of the GPS** and welcomed it as a statement of policy to establish GEWE as a UNEP priority.
- ▶ However, GPS was not seen as providing **actionable guidance** for programming.
- ▶ Alignment of MTS and relevant PoWs with GPS—limited during the period under review. The MTS and PoW recognize gender equality as an operating and guiding principle - but lack gender results.
- ▶ Current MTS (2022-2025) includes a gender result.

Effectiveness: in what ways has UNEP delivered expected results of the Gender Policy and Strategy / Implementation Plan

- ▶ GPS 2015-2020 was **ambitious and detailed**. First formal gender policy, long overdue. Adopted a SWAP framework.
- ▶ GPS and MTS were to be “**progressively integrated until we have a single gender response Medium Term Strategy and corresponding Programme of Work**”. This is yet to be achieved.
- ▶ Structurally, presentation of Gender Policy and Strategy paid **disproportionate attention** to the Business Model/institutional Arrangements **rather than focusing on Programmatic results**

Effectiveness: Programmatic results

- ▶ At programme and project level, there appear to be a few **“islands of promise/success”** (eg: Empower, Poverty Environment Action etc)
- ▶ The most visible efforts are when **UNEP partnered / collaborated with UN agencies** such as UNDP and UN Women. Also, when **funders like GEF and GCF require Gender Analysis.**
- ▶ Ensuring **gender disaggregated data collection** has also been a challenge. Generally, involved counting the number of workshops and webinars attended by women and not sufficiently focused on gender-related changes in programmatic results.

Effectiveness: SWAP reporting

- ▶ Annual SWAP reporting can be viewed as having eclipsed systematic monitoring of the Gender Policy and Strategy itself. (External recognition of progress in the “Notable Progress recognition certificate from UN Women” in early years.)
- ▶ Gender Focal Points were not consistently asked to contribute to SWAP, which was a missed opportunity in getting inputs from the frontlines and promoting networking.
- ▶ SWAP played a valuable role for reporting externally to the UN. But results have not been consistently publicized/ shared internally within UNEP, another missed opportunity.
- ▶ Overall, SWAP seen as a centralized exercise, in Nairobi (some interviews indicate limited knowledge of this exercise at regional levels)

Effectiveness: Equal representation of women

- ▶ **Gender Parity** received significant attention during the GSP period. UNEP has achieved 50/50 parity at the senior levels.
- ▶ However, **little attention to transparency to staff on push for parity.** “More could have been done to go beyond numbers.”

Perception Survey indicates a view that “current imperatives are disenfranchising excellent male staff”

- ▶ Another downside of the parity gains is that many **staff equate gender parity as progress in terms of gender results**

Efficiency: Overall findings

- ▶ Organizational arrangements and commitments have not been adequate to support the implementation of the Gender Policy and Strategy.
- ▶ Support from gender architecture (Gender and Safeguards Unit & Gender Focal Points) has not been consistent or systematic.

Efficiency: Gender Architecture

Gender and Safeguards Unit (GSU)

- ▶ Contributed to the establishment of institutional processes to mainstream gender
- ▶ Relevant role providing technical support to mainstream gender into projects in design and approval processes
- ▶ BUT not sustained strategic engagement to mainstream gender at the corporate level, supporting divisions and subprograms, or amongst regional presences as established in the gender policy and strategy.

Gender focal points / gender coordinators—not an effective mechanism for mainstreaming gender in the work of the organization

Key challenges:

- 1) Lack of clarity about their role
- 2) High demands on their time
- 3) Lack of adequate guidance and training to carry out their functions
- 4) Lack of coordination and communication
- 5) Lack capacity to influence decision making

Efficiency: Gender marker

The Gender Marker has strengthened the integration of gender in project proposals and raised awareness among project managers—but has not resulted in systematic gender mainstreaming in programmatic work.

Main challenges:

- 1) It is voluntary
- 2) Gender mainstreaming in project logframes and budgets is insufficient
- 3) Staff's capacity to implement the gender marker is limited
- 4) More involvement of the Gender and Safeguards Unit in the planning stage is needed

Financial Management: Tracking mechanism

- ▶ Financial gender resource tracking and allocation have been persistent areas of weakness within UNEP (UN SWAP reports)
- ▶ UNEP's resource allocation to gender equality and women empowerment—not commensurate with the ambition and mandate of the Gender Policy and Strategy

MONITORING AND REPORTING: Overall findings

- ▶ The integration of gender in monitoring and reporting has not received adequate attention in projects and sub-programmes.
- ▶ The limited integration of gender in project logframes has prevented the current monitoring mechanism to adequately capture gender results.
- ▶ As a result, gender information has not been systematically collected and reported to be able to support decision making.

RECOMMENDATIONS

STRATEGIC RELVANCE:

- 1) To “Get Gender Right” - consider appointing a high-level, internal Task Force to undertake a time-bound exercise to foster organization-wide attention to gender mainstreaming in both programme and institutional domains and reach MTS UN/SWAP goal of 82% by 12/23 (from 47% in 2020)
- 2) Convene independent, external Gender Expert Advisory Group to provide SMT and Task Force with guidance on key areas relating to the nexus between gender and the environment

EFFECTIVENESS:

- 3) Make better use of UN-SWAP as an accountability and management instrument
- 4) Optimize the application of the Gender Marker in project design, implementation, monitoring and performance assessment / evaluation

This effort confirmed in the MTS 2022-25 commitment “UNEP will provide programme and project implementation support to ensure gender issues are integrated across the programme cycle, not just in design, but throughout project lifecycle, including implementation, project evaluation and feedback loops for continuous improvement”

Recommendations (Continued)

EFFECTIVENESS:

5) Develop communication strategy vis-à-vis gender parity

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT:

6) Establish a financial benchmark on GEWE resources and a tracking system for gender allocations linked to the Gender Marker

EFFICIENCY:

7) Strengthen the Gender Architecture; consider possibilities for; gender advisors, greater engagement of the Gender and Safeguards Unit in corporate processes and revitalization of the Gender Focal points network

MONITORING, REPORTING AND EVALUATION

8) Move away from describing activities / compiling statistics - and towards robustly monitoring progress towards gender results-

9) Update Guidance Note on evaluating Gender and integrate it as part of the overall guidance to evaluation consultants

10) More comprehensive assessment information for MTS/PoWs - beyond numbers

Recommendations (final)

SUSTAINABILITY:

- 11) Review platform for distribution/socialization of gender-related knowledge and revise knowledge sharing strategy
- 12) Revisit the use of gender goals in the ePAS performance management.

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