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**Enhancing the role of institutions in achieving gender equality
in the Arab region****Mainstreaming gender equality in public institutions****Summary**

In view of the challenges faced by national machineries for women's advancement, and to accomplish the goals set out in the Beijing Platform for Action on mainstreaming gender to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment and the fifth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) on gender equality, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) is developing a project on mainstreaming gender in public institutions. The project aims to support national women's machineries in achieving gender equality and empowering women, by formulating and launching an innovative accountability framework to measure efforts on gender equality and women's empowerment in the Arab region. The project draws upon ESCWA expertise in implementing the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, which has been amended and adapted for implementation in government institutions.

In the project's first phase, the technical manual of the Action Plan was translated into Arabic. A regional workshop was then held to adapt the technical manual to the needs of Arab countries, and to develop a standardized Arab framework to measure efforts on gender equality in public institutions. The project is currently in its second phase aimed at providing financial and technical support to implement the Arab framework in the Jordanian National Commission for Women, with the ultimate objective of disseminating it to other Arab countries in the next phase.



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Introduction

1. The main role of national machineries for women's advancement is to support the mainstreaming of gender at all levels, and to achieve gender equality and empower women. Their key functions include developing policies and strategies aimed at advancing women, mainstreaming gender issues in plans and programmes, building institutional capacity, and strengthening institutional culture to support gender equality and women's empowerment.
2. Studies show that national machineries for women's advancement in the Arab region have adopted institutional measures to support gender mainstreaming in public institutions and departments, but such efforts are largely fragmented and do not follow a clear structure for coordination, follow-up and accountability. Those machineries face several obstacles and challenges, such as limited funding, a lack of human resources and tools for mainstreaming gender concepts at the institutional level, and weak political will and monitoring and accountability mechanisms. Several gaps remain in many fields, including in institutional culture, gender balance in the workplace, working conditions, and capacity-building and institutional development.
3. In view of the challenges faced by national machineries for women's advancement, and to achieve the goals set out in the Beijing Platform for Action on mainstreaming gender to achieve gender equality and empower women and the fifth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) on gender equality, pursuant to recommendation 4 (e) issued by the Committee on Women at its seventh session, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) has developed a project on mainstreaming gender in public institutions. The project aims to support national machineries for women's advancement in achieving gender equality and empowering women, by formulating and launching an innovative accountability framework to measure efforts on gender equality and women's empowerment in the Arab region.
4. The project draws upon ESCWA expertise in applying the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women that has resulted in positive changes in the organizations' work, with ESCWA being ranked first of 72 United Nations organizations because of its success in implementing the Action Plan. The technical expertise of and lessons learned by ESCWA can assist Arab countries' national efforts to strengthen administrative efficiency and optimize human resources, while supporting gender equality and empowering women at all levels and in all fields within public institutions.

I. UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM-WIDE ACTION PLAN ON GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

5. The United Nations has tackled gender equality issues since its establishment. Its various organizations and bodies have interpreted the principle of gender equality differently, and developed specialized mechanisms and entities to promote efforts by the United Nations system, member States and all partners in this field. In 2006, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination approved a policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women in the United Nations system; the first of its kind within the Organization in terms of comprehensiveness, depth and ambition.
6. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) prepared an action plan to implement the policy developed by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination in 2006, which included 15 indicators on the following six elements specified in the policy: accountability; results-based management; oversight; human and financial resources; capacity; and coherence, knowledge and information management. The Action Plan was designed to facilitate monitoring progress of indicators in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. After its adoption in 2012, the Action Plan became binding for all United Nations entities as the first accountability framework for mainstreaming gender equality.

7. UN Women also published a technical manual to assist United Nations entities in conducting self-evaluations to prepare periodic reports on the implementation of the Action Plan, including guidelines on measuring performance indicators in accordance with the following five classifications: ‘exceeds requirements’, ‘meets requirements’, ‘approaches requirements’, ‘missing’, and ‘not applicable’. The manual stresses the need to ‘meet requirements’ as a minimum for all indicators, and to strive to ‘exceed requirements’ to ensure that the United Nations is a pioneer in achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment. The aim of these classifications is to raise awareness and analyse performance and future expectations – the evaluation system is a tool to promote leadership, guidance and consistency.

8. Preparing reports entails submitting reform plans on all indicator classifications, including a realistic timetable on bridging gaps, on the necessary resources to improve performance, and on follow-up responsibilities. They thus highlight areas that require special attention and additional resources.

II. ESCWA EXPERIENCES IN IMPLEMENTING THE ACTION PLAN

9. In late 2011, ESCWA was one of eight United Nations entities to participate in piloting the Action Plan. ESCWA performance was classified as ‘meeting requirements in only 21 per cent of the 15 indicators, as ‘approaching requirements’ in 65 per cent of the indicators, and as ‘missing’ in 14 per cent of the indicators. No indicators came under ‘exceeding requirements’. Those results indicated gaps in mainstreaming gender within ESCWA, and the absence of systems to achieve this objective, especially in terms of an active strategy on gender equality or an effective focal point network tackling gender. The evaluation also highlighted several challenges, notably weak women’s representation in senior posts and a lack of capacity-building programmes for staff members on gender equality.

10. Since then, ESCWA has developed a plan to gradually bridge gaps that allows for the accumulation of knowledge and expertise. In 2012, it operationalized a focal point network on gender issues, comprising a staff member from each ESCWA division. The network’s role was specified and an annual workplan was developed to mainstream gender in ESCWA divisions, causing a slight improvement in some performance indicators. In 2013, ESCWA performance improved in five indicators. Key achievements included evaluating staff member capacity in the field of gender equality, resulting in the identification of several gaps; and revising the ESCWA policy on project evaluation to incorporate the principles of equality and human rights in the evaluation criteria.

11. In 2014, ESCWA achieved significant progress in implementing the Action Plan. Improvements were recorded in nine indicators, and many other achievements were accomplished, such as developing plans and policies on institutionalizing gender at ESCWA, revising procedural systems to improve the work environment and tackle gaps in implementing the Action Plan, preparing the ESCWA gender equality policy 2014-2018, and formulating a management plan to increase women’s representation. Accomplishments also included the first participatory audit at the ESCWA level, a media and knowledge strategy on gender, and flexible working arrangements to increase women’s representation. An award was also established to commend staff efforts in improving gender equality and women’s empowerment. The award was presented in 2014 and 2016 to staff members for their distinguished achievements in this field.

12. In 2015 and 2016, ESCWA was at the forefront of United Nations entities in implementing the Action Plan. Key achievements included implementing several specialized training programmes, thus strengthening gender mainstreaming and gender equality in all ESCWA divisions; developing a financial tracking system to determine the funds spent on promoting gender equality in the region; and setting a financial goal for implementing the gender equality mandate in the region.

TABLE 1. ESCWA PERFORMANCE IN GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT INDICATORS, 2012-2016

	Performance levels (%)				
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Exceeds requirements	0	0	33	73	73
Meets requirements	13	40	40	20	20
Approaches requirements	67	47	27	7	7
Missing	13	13	0	0	0
Not applicable	7	0	0	0	0

13. ESCWA performance has surpassed that of the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations system as a whole. Table 2 shows that 93 per cent of ESCWA performance came under 'exceeds requirements' or 'meets requirements', exceeding the overall performance of the United Nations system at 64 per cent in those two classifications. No ESCWA indicators came under 'missing' or 'not applicable', while the United Nations system registered 13 per cent under those two classifications.

TABLE 2. ESCWA PERFORMANCE EVALUATION COMPARED TO OTHER ENTITIES IN GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT INDICATORS, 2016

	Performance levels (%)		
	ESCWA	Secretariat	United Nations system
Exceeds requirements	73	18	19
Meets requirements	20	53	45
Approaches requirements	7	19	23
Missing	0	0	6
Not applicable	0	10	7

14. The various activities undertaken by ESCWA have resulted in the organization exceeding requirements in 73 per cent of indicators, thus classifying ESCWA as the top entity in the United Nations. This success has led to a project idea to transfer ESCWA expertise to member States.

III. TRANSFERRING EXPERTISE TO ESCWA MEMBER STATES

15. ESCWA experience in implementing the Action Plan highlighted the importance of identifying an institutional plan to support gender equality and women's empowerment efforts within executive bodies concerned with decision-making. Technical expertise and lessons learned from this experience provide an opportunity that should be invested and built upon to support Arab countries' national efforts in increasing administrative efficiency and optimizing the use of human resources, while supporting gender equality and women's empowerment at all levels and in all fields within public institutions. Given the success of ESCWA in implementing an institutional plan, and the resulting progress in its capacity to effectively advance its programme of work and workplace improvements, ESCWA is striving to disseminate the plan and transfer its experience to national machineries for women's advancement in member States, and to adapt the plan to countries' needs and specificities.

16. ESCWA developed a project entitled "Mainstreaming gender in public institutions", which was presented to member States at the seventh session of the Committee on Women, held in Muscat in January 2016. Member States approved the project, and recommended supporting the secretariat in its efforts to mainstream gender in all its activities and administrative structures, and strengthening its pioneering role within the United Nations system; working with national women's machineries to implement the project; establishing an Arab framework to measure progress towards achieving gender equality in public institutions; and mainstreaming gender in government institutions.

17. The project aims to design and launch the first accountability framework in the Arab region to measure efforts on gender equality and women's empowerment. It also seeks to support and enable national machineries for women's advancement to work with government institutions and civil organizations in the long run, to mainstream gender in their work by adapting the framework to national contexts and laws.

18. The project employs a participatory approach. In the first phase, ESCWA translated the technical manual of the Action Plan into Arabic, in collaboration with the Supreme Council for Women of Bahrain, which offered a generous grant.

19. ESCWA, in partnership with UN Women at New York, held a regional workshop on the project in November 2016 to build member States' capacity in mainstreaming gender in public institutions. The translated technical manual was presented with the aim of adapting it to Arab countries' needs, and developing a standardized Arab framework for measuring efforts on gender equality in public institutions.

20. Workshop participants stressed the importance of the framework, and of following a systematic approach to integrate gender in public institutions. They emphasized the link between the framework and national strategies and policies on gender. They indicated many gaps in the work of national machineries, such as the absence of internal strategies and programmes to evaluate staff efficiency on gender and build capacity, thus requiring the implementation of the standardized framework to improve the efficiency of those national machineries. At the end of the workshop, ESCWA announced its preparedness to provide technical and financial support to pilot the framework at the level of national machineries for women's advancement in one member State, upon request.

IV. ARAB FRAMEWORK FOR MEASURING EFFORTS ON GENDER EQUALITY IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

21. The following table sets out the performance indicators of the Arab framework developed following the discussions and outcomes of the workshop held in November 2016. The framework is expected to result in successful experiences, good practices and national references for countries applying the indicators. The table shows the grouping of indicators according to the required functions and activities, to achieve one of the following three evaluation classifications: 'approaches requirements', 'meets requirements', and 'exceeds requirements'.

A. Accountability		
1. Performance indicator: Policy and plan		
This indicator relates to the internal policy of an organization, which governs its working mechanisms. It must not be contingent upon the availability of a national policy on gender equality. To meet the requirements for this indicator, entities must have both up-to-date gender equality and women's empowerment policies/plans that include equal representation of women and gender mainstreaming.		
Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
1 (a) The institution has taken measures to develop policies and plans on gender equality and women's empowerment, including on the equal representation of women	1 (b) The institution has implemented up-to-date policies and plans on gender equality and women's empowerment, including on the equal representation of women	1 (c.i) The institution has implemented up-to-date policies and plans on gender equality and women's empowerment, including on the equal representation of women
		and 1 (c.ii) A specific senior level mechanism or written commitment is in place to ensure accountability

2. Performance indicator: Gender responsive performance management

This indicator relates to the inclusion of the gender equality principle in an institution's core values, which are used to assess all staff.

Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
2 (a) The institution is working on including the principle of gender equality in its core values	2 (b) The institution's core values include the principle of gender equality	2 (c.i). The institution's core values include the principle of gender equality, and staff members are evaluated on that basis at all levels and 2 (c.ii) The institution has a system of incentives and recognition in place for excellent work promoting gender equality and women's empowerment

B. Results based management**3. Performance indicator: Strategic planning**

This indicator stresses the need for an institution's central strategic planning document, such as the strategic framework or plan or multi-year funding framework, to include adequate gender analysis.

Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
3 (a.i) The institution's central strategic planning document and main country programme documents contain gender-sensitive analysis	3 (b.i) The institution's central strategic planning document and main country programme documents contain gender-sensitive analysis	3 (c.i) The institution's central strategic planning document and main country programme documents contain gender-sensitive analysis
or	and	and
3 (a.ii) The institution's central strategic planning document includes at least one specific outcome/expected accomplishment and one specific indicator on gender equality and women's empowerment	3 (b.ii) The institution's central strategic planning document includes at least one specific outcome/expected accomplishment and one specific indicator on gender equality and women's empowerment	3 (c.ii) The institution's central strategic planning document includes more than one specific outcome/expected accomplishment and more than one specific indicator on gender equality and women's empowerment

4. Performance indicator: Monitoring and reporting

This indicator focuses on monitoring achievements and submitting reports. Reporting should measure the main gender equality and empowerment of women results in accordance with the gender-sensitive indicators included in the central strategic planning document.

Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
4 (a.i) The institution reports on gender equality and women's empowerment results in relation to the central strategic planning document	4 (b.i). The institution reports on gender equality and women's empowerment results in relation to the central strategic planning document	4 (c.i) The institution reports on gender equality and women's empowerment results in relation to the central strategic planning document
or	and	and
4 (a.ii) The institution's key entity data is sex-disaggregated, or there is a specific reason noted for not disaggregating data by sex	4 (b.ii) The institution's key entity data is sex-disaggregated, or there is a specific reason noted for not disaggregating data by sex	4 (c.ii) The institution's key entity data is sex-disaggregated, or there is a specific reason noted for not disaggregating data by sex

4. Performance indicator: Monitoring and reporting *(continued)*

Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
		and 4 (c.iii) The institution's mainstreams gender equality and the empowerment of women in its results-based-management approach

C. Oversight**5. Performance indicator: Evaluation**

This indicator evaluates projects implemented by an institution, and their gender sensitivity.

Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
5 (a) The institution meets some norms and standards for women's advancement	5 (b) The institution meets all norms and standards for women's advancement	5 (c.i) The institution meets all norms and standards for women's advancement and 5 (c.ii) The institution follows the United Nations Evaluation Group's guidance on evaluating from a human rights and gender equality perspective in its projects

6. Performance indicator: Gender responsive auditing

This indicator focuses on institutional audits of an institution's gender-sensitive work, to identify risks related to its strategies and plans on gender equality and women's empowerment. Audit results should be used to review an institution's internal strategy, highlight weaknesses, and determine remedial measures to ensure the establishment of internal laws and systems and to promote technical output, in a manner conducive to gender equality and women's empowerment.

Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
6 (a) The institution has begun consultations with national auditing bodies to ensure the mainstreaming of risks related to gender equality and women's empowerment as part of the risks faced by a country	6 (b) An internal team within the institution audits the risks related to gender equality and the empowerment of women, as part of the risk based audit annual planning cycle	6 (c.i) Consultations with the national auditing body has resulted in mainstreaming gender equality in the audit at the national level and 6 (c.ii) The institution conducts an ILO Participatory Gender Audit at least every five years

7. Performance indicator: Programme review

This indicator measures the extent to which gender is mainstreamed in programme and project design, but does not assess the quality of programmes.

Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
7 (a) Programmes and projects partly integrate gender analysis	7 (b) Programme and projects fully integrate gender analysis	7 (c.i) Programme and projects fully integrate gender analysis and 7 (c.ii) The institution recognizes programmes that excel in gender equality and women's empowerment

D. Human and financial resources**8. Performance indicator: Resource tracking**

This indicator relates to the availability of a mechanism to determine the funds used by an institution to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
8 (a) The institution is working towards a financial resource tracking mechanism to quantify disbursement of funds that promote gender equality and women's empowerment	8 (b) The institution has implemented a financial resource tracking mechanism to quantify disbursement of funds that promote gender equality and women's empowerment	8 (c) The institution has implemented a financial resource tracking mechanism to quantify disbursement of funds that promote gender equality and women's empowerment and 8 (c.i) The institution includes the results of financial resource tracking in central strategic planning on budget allocation, in accordance with tracking recommendations

9. Performance indicator: Resource allocation

This indicator focuses on the need for a temporary financial benchmark to implement an institution's internal commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
9 (a) The institution is working towards a financial benchmark to ensure its commitment to achieving its gender equality and women's empowerment mandate	9 (b) The institution's financial benchmark for resource allocation for gender equality and women's empowerment mandate is met	9 (c) The institution's financial benchmark for resource allocation for gender equality and women's empowerment mandate is exceeded

10. Performance indicator: Gender architecture and parity

This indicator focuses on the need to appoint gender focal points at all levels within an institution, on gender parity in staffing, and on the availability of sufficient financial and human resources for a gender unit.

Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
10 (a.i) Gender focal points or equivalent exist at the level of ministries: a. Appointed from middle management, with decision-making powers	10 (b.i) Gender focal points or equivalent exist at the level of ministries: a. Appointed from middle management, with decision-making powers	10 (c.i) Gender focal points or equivalent exist at the level of ministries: a. Appointed from middle management, with decision-making powers
and	and	and
b. Appointed gender focal points have written terms of reference	b. Appointed gender focal points have written terms of reference and 10 (b.ii) The institution provides the necessary resources to manage the gender unit	b. Appointed gender focal points have written terms of reference and c. The institution provides the necessary financial resources to support the functions of gender focal points and 10 (c.ii) The institution provides the necessary resources to manage the gender unit

11. Performance indicator: Institutional culture

This indicator focuses on a positive institutional culture that support all employees, reflected in the ways in which the institution conducts its business, treats its employees and partners; the extent to which decision-making involves workers (irrespective of rank, grade or opinion); and the availability of information.

Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
11 (a) Institutional culture partly supports the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women	11 (b) Institutional culture fully supports the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women	11 (c) Institutional culture fully supports the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women
		and
		11 (c.i) Senior managers demonstrate leadership and public championing of women's equal representation at all levels

E. Capacity**12. Performance indicator: Capacity assessment**

This indicator focuses on the importance of evaluating staff capacity in gender equality and women's empowerment; and of continually building capacity.

Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
12 (a) The institution evaluates the capacity of staff and gender focal points at headquarters, and regional and country offices in gender equality and women's empowerment	12 (b.i). The institution evaluates the capacity of staff and gender focal points at headquarters, and regional and country offices in gender equality and women's empowerment	12 (c.i) The institution evaluates the capacity of staff and gender focal points at headquarters, and regional and country offices in gender equality and women's empowerment
	and	and
	12 (b.ii) The institution has established a capacity development plan for staff and gender focal points, which is updated at least every five years	12 (c.ii) The institution has established a capacity development plan for staff and gender focal points, which is updated at least every three years

13. Performance indicator: Capacity development

This indicator focuses implementing mandatory training for all staff members, and on providing tailored gender training to senior managers.

Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
13 (a) Working towards ongoing mandatory training for all levels of entity staff and gender focal points at headquarters, and regional and country offices	13 (b.i) Ongoing mandatory training for all levels of entity staff and gender focal points at headquarters, and regional and country offices	13 (c.i) Ongoing mandatory training for all levels of entity staff and gender focal points at headquarters, and regional and country offices
		and
		13 (c.ii) Senior managers receive tailored training during their orientation

F. Coherence, knowledge and information management

14. Performance indicator: Knowledge generation and communication

This indicator focuses on the production and analysis of information on gender equality and women's empowerment, and on systematically documenting, exchanging and disseminating this information.

Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
14 (a) The institution produces material on gender quality and women's empowerment, and attempts to disseminate such knowledge and information	14 (b) The institution had adopted a clear approach to documenting and disseminating knowledge on gender equality and women's empowerment	14 (c.i) The institution had adopted a clear approach to documenting and disseminating knowledge on gender equality and women's empowerment
	and	and
	14 (b.i) The institution's communication plan includes gender equality and women's empowerment as an integral component of internal and public information dissemination	14 (c.ii) The institution's communication plan includes gender equality and women's empowerment as an integral component of internal and public information dissemination
		and
		14 (c.iii) The institution is actively involved in the exchange of expertise with other institutions and experts in the field of gender equality and the empowerment of women

15. Performance indicator: Coherence

This indicator focuses on participation in inter-agency meetings to exchange information, and on participation in peer reviews to promote accountability and the exchange of expertise.

Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
15 (a) The institution participates in an <i>ad hoc</i> fashion in inter-agency coordination mechanisms on gender equality and the empowerment of women at the national, regional and international levels	15 (b.i) The institution participates systematically in inter-agency coordination mechanisms on gender equality and the empowerment of women at the national, regional and international levels	15 (c.i) The institution participates systematically in inter-agency coordination mechanisms on gender equality and the empowerment of women at the national, regional and international levels
		and
		15 (c.ii) The institution participates in a peer review process on gender equality and the empowerment of women

V. PILOTING THE ARAB FRAMEWORK FOR MEASURING EFFORTS ON GENDER EQUALITY IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS IN JORDAN

22. In the second phase of the project entitled "Mainstreaming gender in public institutions", ESCWA collaborated with the UN Women Regional Bureau for Arab States to provide financial and technical support for piloting the Arab framework at the national level in one member State. Following the workshop held in November 2016, the Jordanian National Commission for Women was the first to submit an official request to ESCWA for support in piloting the Arab framework at the national level.

23. In May 2017, ESCWA began working with the National Commission on implementing the project. It was necessary to first study the current status of the Commission to fully understand the situation; a participatory gender-sensitive audit was therefore conducted within the Commission. The participatory audit

aimed to bolster commitment to gender equality by monitoring progress in mainstreaming gender; determining the baseline, gaps and challenges; proposing solutions; and documenting good practices. The audit at the Commission employed a participatory approach, which took into account objective data and staff comments to ensure a better understanding of the situation. The participatory audit was expected to launch a wider discussion on concerns and interests; its results would highlight issues beyond gender, such as long working hours, time constraints, and a lack of structures for participation, learning and adaptation.

24. The audit included comprehensive research on the Commission's work, covering the following: staff recruitment and evaluation processes; work regulations and working conditions; internal working procedures and mechanisms (finance, procurement and management); mechanisms for allocating financial and human resources; capacity-building and institutional development mechanisms; internal and external knowledge management processes; planning, programme development, follow-up and evaluation mechanisms; and training needs to mainstream gender. Many of the Commission's documents were studied, including its annual reports, rules of procedure, human resources systems, the budget and job descriptions, and newspaper reports on the Commission.

25. In May 2017, the ESCWA consultant conducted a three-day field visit to the Commission's headquarters to meet the audit team. She also held a participatory training workshop for the Commission's employees to assess their knowledge and awareness of gender issues, and to build their capacity on gender concepts and requirements for mainstreaming gender in the Commission's work. In collaboration with the Commission's audit team, she developed a plan to conduct personal interviews with Commission employees to gather additional information for the research. In August 2017, a meeting was held with employees to present the key outcomes and recommendations of the audit. The final audit report set out the principle outcomes, highlighted good practices, and made recommendations to improve performance, thus providing a basis for future work.

26. The Commission will develop a plan to adopt the indicators over the period 2017-2020, including a timetable and necessary annual resources to tackle the gaps highlighted by the audit; and to build the Commission's capacity to achieve the desired outcomes. ESCWA and the UN Women Regional Bureau for Arab States will provide technical and financial support to enable the Commission to implement the plan and adopt the Arab framework for measuring efforts on gender equality in public institutions.

VI. THE WAY FORWARD

27. UN Women has adapted the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women so as to link it to the 2030 Agenda. In August 2017, it issued a second draft of the Action Plan, which included some amendments to the performance indicators and two additional indicators. The amendments aim to stress the importance of the achieved outcomes. The 17 indicators have been divided into the following two categories:

- (a) Gender-related SDG results;
- (b) Institutional strengthening to support achievement of results.

28. The two additional indicators are on leadership and women's equal representation. The second draft of the Action Plan is expected to be adopted by United Nations organizations in 2018.

Performance indicator: Leadership		
This indicator focuses on the vital role of senior managers and their commitment to supporting the implementation of the framework for measuring efforts of gender equality in public institutions.		
Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
(a) Senior managers support gender equality and women’s empowerment at the institutional level	(b) Senior managers support gender equality and women’s empowerment at the institutional level and beyond	(c.i) Senior managers support gender equality and women’s empowerment at the institutional level and beyond
		and (c.ii) Senior managers proactively encourage improved performance in indicators that do not approach or meet requirements
Performance indicator: Women’s equal representation		
This indicator focuses on women’s equal representation at all administrative levels.		
Approaches requirements	Meets requirements	Exceeds requirements
(a) The institution has developed a plan to ensure women’s equal representation in all administrative cadres over the next five years	(b) Women’s equal representation has been achieved in administrative cadres	(c) Women’s equal representation has been achieved in administrative cadres and among senior managers at headquarters, and regional and country offices

29. ESCWA will build member States' capacity in implementing some of the plan's performance indicators, upon request, by holding capacity-building workshops to disseminate the proposed framework at the level of government institutions in member States. ESCWA will also provide technical support to member States, upon receiving a formal request. An electronic platform will be established to document and exchange member States' experiences in implementing the framework, and to follow progress in applying the indicators.
