



UNITED NATIONS
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GROUP

UNCT GENDER THEME GROUPS: STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES ANNEX

GTG GOOD PRACTICE COMPENDIUM

2024



Photo: Carlos Ngeleka, UN Women DRC. Annual retreat of the UN Gender Theme Group in the Democratic Republic of Congo, September 2022

BACKGROUND

UN Gender Theme Groups (GTGs) have their origins in the broader framework of United Nations (UN) reform processes and in the global normative framework for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

The good practices featured in the compendium was collected during the rollout of the UNSDG Gender Theme Groups Standards and Procedures¹ in 2022-2023. The objective of the rollout was to assess the suitability of the document in different contexts, and to identify good practices and tools.

The inter-agency rollout process was managed by UN Women and DCO regional offices with the support of UN Women UN System Coordination Division, in close collaboration with UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA and DCO, representing the UN Gender Equality Network, at a global level.

More than 300 UN staff at country and regional level participated in the rollout process where the featured best practices were collected. The examples are meant to inspire the work of more than 100 GTGs globally to respond to members states request to increase UN system-wide results for women's empowerment and gender equality wherever the UN is present.

The good practices below follows the same structure as the chapters of the Gender Theme Groups Standards and Procedures. It is recommended that the GTG Standards and Procedures is reviewed together with the GTG Good Practice Compendium to inform the development of similar practices in a GTG.

1. WHAT IS THE GENDER THEME GROUP?

1. Mandate

✓ *GTG Terms of Reference*

Bangladesh GTG Terms of Reference is updated to align with the GTG Standards and Procedures and highlights the distinction and complementarity of the role of the GTG and Gender Results group (also known as Strategic Priority on GE and eliminating GBV).

1.2 Composition and Architecture

✓ *Nomination of GTG members*

In **Viet Nam**, all UN Heads of Agencies are required by the Resident Coordinator (RC) to nominate senior staff as members of the GTG. Each agency had to nominate one member and one alternate member. Participating UN entities were strongly encouraged to consider gender equality expertise in their nomination of the gender focal point to the GTG.

All members of the GTG in **China** are nominated by Heads of Agencies and appointed by the RC. An official appointment letter is issued to each GTG member by the RC in which the roles and responsibilities of the GTG member are clearly defined. The letter also indicates that the GTG member's contributions will be reflected and acknowledged in the annual performance review.

The GTG in **Guatemala, Mexico, Syria** and **Viet Nam** include representatives from other coordination groups (e.g., Results Groups, Communication Group, Monitoring for Strategic Results Group) in the GTG. Having members from other inter-agency groups facilitate collaboration and advance gender mainstreaming in the

implementation across coordination mechanisms and in the UNSDCF. It also supports the system-wide implementation of the UNCT-SWAP Gender Equality Scorecard Action Plan.

In **Rwanda** the share of male members of the GTG and working group on Prevention Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) has increased, reinforcing positive masculinity.

1.3 Leadership

✓ *GTG Chair and Co-Chair*

In **China**, the Chair and Co-Chair, who are Country Representatives, actively participate and moderate every GTG meeting which are held regularly to ensure senior leadership and accountability.

1.5 Gender theme group accountability and reporting

The GTG in **Bangladesh** work very closely with the UN Resident Coordinators Office (RCO) to make gender equality a standing item (at least once a quarter) on the agenda of UNCT Heads of Agency meetings. The GTG see this as critical in order to work together to strengthen UN accountability towards gender equality. The GTG plays a vital role in supporting UNCTs to deliver on gender equality, however investments are needed to strengthen GTG capacity. This also needs to be acknowledged in GTG work plans to ensure accountability and recognition.

✓ *GTG Annual Report*

Bahrain GTG developed an annual report for the UNCT on the implementation of its annual work plan. The report will feed into the UNCT annual report and be shared separately with the national women's machinery, to increase awareness of the impact of gender coordination on the UNCT's joint work.

2. WHAT ARE THE MAIN FUNCTIONS OF GENDER THEME GROUPS?

2.1. Programme support

Common Country Analysis, its annual updates, and other joint analyses

GTG in **Syria** ensure that inter-agency studies and assessment include gender mainstreaming as an integral part of the methodology, from the conceptualization to data analysis to formulation of recommendations. The consistent involvement of the GTG means that all the joint work of UN agencies mainstream gender throughout different thematic areas of joint studies, assessments, projects, etc. and that gender equality is not only addressed as a separate section/issue.

Bahrain and **Jordan** GTG compiled gender data collectively for a shared database, which directly contributing to the CCA development.

In **Tanzania**, the annual update of the CCA will use data from the new Country Gender Equality Profile, with the support of GTG, to strengthen reference to gender data.

Cooperation Framework Design

With its clear mandate, the GTG **Viet Nam** made coordinated efforts to advance

gender mainstreaming and ensure GTG inputs were provided in the UNSDCF 2022-2026. Regular meetings were organized by the GTG to share the gender priorities among UN agencies for the period 2022-2026 to advance gender equality in all outcome areas of the UNSDCF 2022-2026.

UNCT **Rwanda**, decided to separate the PSEA network from the GTG to ensure that the GTG had more dedicated resources to influence the development of the UNSDCF.

Cooperation Framework Implementation

GTGs in **Guatemala**, **Mexico** and **Viet Nam** coordinate with other results groups and coordination mechanisms to provide strategic guidance and technical assistance on gender equality to the Programme Management Team (PMT).

In **Syria**, the GTG collected information and prepared a presentation based on different approaches to gender transformative programming implemented by members of the GTG. These approaches were presented to the PMT.

✓ *UNCT Gender Equality Markers*

In **Bahrain**, at the start of the UNCT Joint Work Plan development process for 2023 - 2024, a comprehensive, practical training on all three markers in UN INFO (UNCT Gender Equality Marker, Human Rights Marker, and the Sustaining Peace Marker) was delivered by UN Women, DCO and OHCHR, with the RCO. A dedicated check-list tool was developed by the GTG to consistently address over-coding of the gender equality marker and a gender marker narrative was made mandatory in UN INFO.

GTG in **China** developed UNCT-Gender Equality Marker (UNCT-GEM) guidelines and conducted UNCT-GEM coding peer-review of the 2021-2022 Joint Work Plan and gave feedback to the Results Groups. GTG

identified GEM over-coding and worked closely with the RCO and their Monitoring & Evaluations Specialist to add more detailed requirements for Results Groups, to guide agencies applying the UNCT-GEM in the next Joint Work Plan.

The UNCT in [Indonesia](#), under the leadership of UN Women and RCO, developed a [brief document](#) to share its good practices on the UNCT-GEM and tracking financing for gender equality within the Joint Work Plan in UN INFO. This brief contains a description of the process, results, challenges, reflection and learning, good practices, and future perspectives. The UNCT also developed a [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document on the UNCT-GEM.

[Serbia](#) GTG shared its experience on capacity building, coding exercises and insights from the application of the UNCT-GEM during the GTG Standards and Procedures close-out webinar for UNCTs in March, 2023.

✓ *Joint Programmes*

[Albania](#) GTG developed a [Gender equality screening tool for Joint Programming](#). The tool reviews each component of a Joint Programme document from a gender equality perspective, and assess whether gender has been taken into consideration across the context analysis, results framework, partnerships, monitoring and evaluation and management arrangements of a UN Joint Programme. The tool also provides guidance to allocate a gender equality marker score to the UN Joint Programme.

The GTG in [Kenya](#) was launched recently by the RC in partnership with Heads of Agencies from UNICEF, WFP, IOM, UN WOMEN and UNDP, sending strong signal on the importance of having viable UNCT gender architecture in place. Following this

launch, all GTG members, including representatives from the Operations Management Team, Project Management Team, UN Communications Group, were trained on the UNCT-GEM and UNCT-SWAP Gender Equality Scorecard.

3. HOW DO GENDER THEME GROUPS OPERATE?

3.3 Working methods

✓ *GTG Work Plan*

The GTG work plan and annual report from [Viet Nam](#) have been presented to the UNCT Heads of Agency meetings annually, which keeps the UNCT informed of progress in implementation. The GTG work plan is developed through a participatory process and will be systematically aligned with the UNCT-SWAP, the UNCT and Results Groups' work plans to ensure coherence. Further, the GTG work plan includes specific deliverables for cross-cutting results to support Results Groups and other inter-agency groups. GTG also contributes to the UNCT Annual Reports.

In GTG [China](#) the GTG work plan and its progress is regularly reviewed in UNCT Heads of Agencies meetings. The GTG also identify agencies within the GTG that can work jointly on activities in the workplan, both as lead agencies and as contributing agencies.

In [Bahrain](#), the GTG work plan includes a column to note the linkage between the activity and the relevant Performance Indicator of the UNCT-SWAP Gender Equality Scorecard, facilitating strategic focus of the GTG on the accountability standards, and on the implementation of the UNCT-SWAP Gender Equality Scorecard Action Plan to improve scoring.

Bangladesh GTG bi-annual work plan builds on the UNCT-SWAP Scorecard Action Plan for greater efficiency in results and reporting. This also means that the GTG and other inter-agency working groups are working closer together on joint efforts in the UNCT.

In **Madagascar**, the UNCT-SWAP Gender Equality Scorecard Action Plan is also imbedded into the GTG work plan and used as entry points to organize GTG retreats jointly with the Project Management Team (PMT) and Operations Management Team (OMT) to ensure GTG work is included in the PMT and OMT annual workplans.

The GTG work plan in **Mali** has nine results, where four results are considered 'most rational', three results 'most delightful', one a 'darling' result and the final one is a 'long shot'.

Kenya GTG Annual Work Plan aligns with the external coordination mechanisms which includes the government and development partners. This linkage increases acceptance and results for the GTG.



Photo: Carlos Ngeleka, UN Women DRC; Maritza Formisano, UN Women West and Central Africa Regional Office, facilitating a session at the GTG annual retreat, September 2022

ii) Gender Theme Group meetings
– internal to UN:

Good practices identified by participants from **Arab States** for GTG meetings included:

- ☑ Create a regular outlook calendar invitation to schedule time and frequency for the meetings to facilitate attendance.
- ☑ Share the agenda ahead of the meeting so colleagues can prepare for the discussion, influence the agenda and decision points.
- ☑ Draft action-oriented agendas to encourage engagement of all members.
- ☑ Include periodic review of the annual work plan on the GTG agenda to facilitate monitoring and corrective action if needed for the GTG to stay on-track.
- ☑ Facilitate knowledge-sharing through joint online platforms such as Outlook Teams and SharePoint.
- ☑ Scheduling the GTG meetings so the decisions/action points can feed into the UNCT meetings to support gender discussions in the UNCT agenda (per the Scorecard PI 4.1 criteria a) to facilitate any UNCT-level decisions.
- ☑ Share learning experiences and document/present how solutions were reached.
- ☑ Provide capacity-building opportunities e.g., advocacy, application and quality assurance of the UNCT-GEM.
- ☑ Pay attention to power dynamics within the membership and promote inclusive meetings.

iv) Extended Gender Theme Group meetings
– external stakeholders:

Serbia established, “*Open Doors*,” a GTG platform that aims to nurture dialogue between UNCT, women civil society groups and gender experts. The goal is to understand challenges in promoting gender equality and to increase engagement across different actors. The platform has 254 participants (14 men and 240 women) and 95 CSOs. Serbia GTG also publish “[Men and Women in Serbia: at a glance](#)” every six months, which includes results and plans of the GTG. The publication is meant to draw attention of the government, civil society and development partners towards how the UNCT is working in partnership on gender equality.

For **the Pacific**, Gender Coordination Group includes members of the CF Outcome Group, representatives from inter-governmental organizations, women-led and feminist civil society and development partners/donors. It has become a platform for information sharing, discussion, strategizing, and collaboration. The Gender Coordination Group has been an effective way to engage with a wide range of stakeholders. However, there is a need to strengthen capacity on analysis of gender issues coming from the expanded gender coordination group to ensure that the UNCT use this information for system-wide engagement on the UNDSCF.

In **Kenya**, the linkages with the GTG and the government coordination mechanism and donors, creates acceptance, ownership and greater results. A comprehensive gender assessment was done by the GTG and spurred broader interest in the work of the UN GTG.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has an extended GTG co-led at the State-level with the Gender Equality Agency named the International Working Group on Gender Equality (IWGE). The IWGE discuss domestic and international priorities on gender equality.

3.4 Financial resources

✓ GTG Budget

Examples of having a sustained GTG budget and approved workplan (UN agencies' voluntary contributions with endorsed workplan tied to UNCT-SWAP Gender Equality Scorecard action plan) include UNCTs in **Europe and Central Asia, Saudi Arabia** and **Bangladesh**.

The GTG **Pakistan** presented its financial model during the GTG Standards and Procedures global close-out webinar. The GTG is Co-chaired by UN Women and UNFPA and has a GTG Secretariat. The UNCT Pakistan allocates funds from respective agencies to finance the GTG secretariat. The allocation of these resources is categorized as small, medium and large contributions ranging from 6% to 13%. The same formula is applied to contributions for funding the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS). The percentage was calculated based on the financial resources available in each agency and the size of the financial portfolio. For example, if UNDP has a larger portfolio and UN Women has a smaller portfolio, the percentages were divided between them on this basis. The funds are used to support the GTG secretariat staff, communication, travel, research and other programme related costs.

In **Central African Republic, Senegal and Zambia**, UN agencies are encouraged to provide a budget line with funds dedicated to the work of the Gender Them Group and clearly address the issue of resource mobilization.

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