

ANNEX I. EDGE Action Plan 2022 - 2024: Gender equality in the workplace

1. Fairness and diversity in recruitment and promotion

A more gender-equal workplace provides better outcomes for children. The gender gap in perception of transparency in recruitment and promotion, while narrowed since the last EDGE certification in 2020, is still very much present among UNICEF's employees. Actions in this area include training, policy changes, data analysis and target-setting.

Actions	Issue addressed	Accountability	Timeframe
<p>1.1. Continue monitoring gender parity at every level and implement corrective actions with a specific focus on the most imbalanced functional areas, at least one in Programmes and one in Operations. Temporary Special Measures may still be introduced in future if minimum thresholds are breached</p>	<p>EDGE Report: The gender gap in perception of transparency in recruitment and promotion, while narrowed, is still very much present among UNICEF's employees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHR Director • Functional area leads • Principal Adviser on Organizational Culture and DEI 	2022-23
<p>1.2. Country and regional leadership (Regional Directors and Representatives) to review recruitments for IP staff positions to ensure that qualified female candidates are shortlisted. When a there is a significant imbalance in gender parity (>15%), female candidates will be prioritized</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Directors and Country Representatives 	2022-23
<p>1.3. Systematically conduct bias training for all individuals involved in recruitment processes, making use of innovative social and behavioural change strategies, and make participation of individuals in recruitment processes conditional on having completed such training</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHR Director • Principal Adviser on Organizational Culture and DEI 	2023
<p>1.4. Conduct and regularly disseminate data analyses on gender parity and geographic diversity in recruitment panels; hiring managers' history of recruitment; and trends of staff movement across job categories, levels and functions, by gender and geographic diversity</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHR Director • Principal Adviser on Organizational Culture and DEI 	2023-24

ANNEX I. EDGE Action Plan 2022 - 2024: Gender equality in the workplace

2. Career progression and fair access to opportunities

Since the last certification, progress has been made on access to critical opportunities and mentoring. It is now the time to scale up the pilots and directly link HR management practices with gender diversity outcomes.

<i>Actions</i>	<i>Issue addressed</i>	<i>Accountability</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
2.1. Explore options whereby staff who take a break from work are facilitated to return to UNICEF or at least are given preferential consideration to compete for positions at their previous level and one level higher	EDGE Report: Progress has been made on access to critical opportunities and mentoring, and it is now time to scale up the pilots (ref. low numbers of staff taking mentoring, EDGE data table 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DHR Director 	2023
2.2. Scale up mentoring programmes: Harness the UNICEF Global Mentoring Initiative to create mentoring programmes, including at the regional and country levels, available to all personnel, and explore expanding the ESAR Female Talent Initiative to other regions			2022-24
2.3. Monitor access to critical career assignments: monitor and address access to stretch assignments, surge missions, standby partner deployments by gender, taking into consideration functional areas, tenure, categories, levels, etc.			2023

3. A healthy work-life harmony for all

While flexible working arrangements are used more than ever, very few employees believe that having a career and a family are compatible for women at UNICEF. It is time to change that.

<i>Actions</i>	<i>Issue addressed</i>	<i>Accountability</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
3.1. Continue advocacy for flexible work and work-life harmony, particularly through role-modelling of senior		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DHR Director Heads of Office 	2022-23

ANNEX I. EDGE Action Plan 2022 - 2024: Gender equality in the workplace

<p>managers, and monitor compliance with the new FWA Policy, particularly when FWAs are rejected</p>			
<p>3.2. Include caregiving responsibilities of immediate family members and/or undergoing fertility treatments as non-discretionary reasons to request special leave without pay</p>			2022
<p>3.3. Strengthen support on missions: explore increasing the support, in the form of plane ticket and DSA, to parents with young children while travelling on mission so that they can bring a childcare worker, and formalize a global approach for support for women staff who need a male escort or mahram</p>	<p>EDGE Report: Less than half women staff believe that having a career and a family are compatible for women at UNICEF (ref. EDGE Survey, Policies and Practices questions 18 and 19, EDGE data table 11)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHR Director 	2022-23
<p>3.4. Include spouses of staff among the list of prioritized groups in the selection process in the Staff Selection Policy. Proactively share resumes of spouses with other UN entities when staff are deployed in new duty stations</p>			2022-23
<p>3.5. Systematically encourage men to take parental leave and explore reasons of low uptake as reported in the EDGE assessment</p>			2022-24
<p>3.6. Take advantage of the freed space as a result of the HQEI and staff relocation from NY and Geneva and explore the possibility to establish on-site day-cares affordable to UNICEF personnel in those duty stations, and explore having more on-site day-cares in country and field offices</p>			2022-23
<h3>4. A working culture that is free of discrimination, harassment and abuse</h3>			
<p>While employees seem to know well how to report misconduct, trust among women in the integrity framework is low. We need to continue reiterating messages about zero tolerance for all forms of discrimination, harassment and abuse in the workplace on any basis.</p>			

ANNEX I. EDGE Action Plan 2022 - 2024: Gender equality in the workplace

<i>Actions</i>	<i>Issue addressed</i>	<i>Accountability</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
4.1. Identify clear global accountability (i.e., one lead office/focal point) for efforts aimed at preventing, tackling and monitoring sexual harassment to coordinate and accelerate efforts	EDGE Report: While policies are well known, trust among women in the integrity framework after reporting is low (ref. EDGE Survey questions on sexual harassment and Policies and Practices questions 26 and 27)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DED Management 	2022
4.2. Set up a core group of senior staff champions , men and women, from different regions, to brainstorm on how to address some of the implicit and explicit ways of exclusion, harassment and discrimination that can make the workplace challenging for women		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHR Director 	2022-23
4.3. Put in place social and behavioural change strategies to raise awareness on sexual harassment through regional- and office-level discussions to address social norms, change attitudes and model desired behaviours		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHR Director • Principal Adviser on Organizational Culture and DEI 	2023-24

5. Gender equality in non-family duty stations

The ratio of women employees working in humanitarian emergencies and conflict settings remains very low. The EDGE Survey this year has shed light on some of the issues that prevent women from being deployed to emergency duty stations, and these actions are intended to achieve gender parity in humanitarian emergencies, a critical element to deliver the best results for children.

<i>Actions</i>	<i>Issue addressed</i>	<i>Accountability</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
5.1. Put in place mandatory gender equality training for staff members who wish to be deployed to a humanitarian emergency, addressing harmful gender stereotypes and misogynistic attitudes reported in those settings		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHR Director • EMOPS Director 	2022-23

ANNEX I. EDGE Action Plan 2022 - 2024: Gender equality in the workplace

<p>5.2. Support women who get pregnant in emergency duty stations to work from either the closest safest duty station where they can access medical care, or from home, when possible</p>	<p>EDGE Report: Less than half staff think all employees are given fair opportunities to be deployed in humanitarian emergencies. The ratio of women employees in those settings remains low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal Adviser on Organizational Culture and DEI 	<p>2022-23</p>
<p>5.3. Regional Directors should make it a priority to host families of staff in humanitarian emergencies in the nearest possible location to the duty station or regional office location if requested by the staff member</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Directors 	<p>2022-23</p>

A note on budget

As of 1/January/2022 UNICEF has established a new team to work on Culture and Diversity in the Office of the Executive Director, for the next 2 years, with a fresh investment of approximately 1.5 million USD and the creation of 3 new positions: a P-5 Senior Adviser on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, a P-4 Social and Behavioral Change Specialist and a P-3 Data Specialist. These colleagues will join the current P-6 Principal Adviser on Organizational Culture and DEI, who heads the team, and the P-3 HR Specialist who has been transferred from the Division of Human Resources. While the portfolio of this team extends beyond the EDGE Certification to issues of organizational culture and diversity considerations that include race/ethnicity or disability inclusion, gender equality and the implementation of this Action Plan are and will remain top priorities.

A note on intersectionality

In line with UNICEF's commitment to implement the recommendations from the Task Team on Anti-Racism and Discrimination, the 2022 EDGE Survey made a deliberate attempt to collect as much demographic data as possible: on gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, race/ethnicity and nationality, among others, all on a voluntary and anonymous basis. Analysis of this data requires a system that prevents UNICEF from being able to personally identify respondents, and EDGE Strategy is currently building a tool to enable this.

While intersectionality is not part of the certification exercise as such, in a few weeks we will be able to complement this Action Plan with an intersectional analysis looking at specific patterns of inclusion and exclusion among our workforce, and will provide specific recommendations that speak to distinct barriers and challenges faced by diverse groups on account of multiple identity dimensions.