DGACM New York

2021 ACTION PLAN ON GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

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Action Plan 2021

Introduction

DGACM is fully committed to achieving gender equality and empowering women, as well as to creating an inclusive work environment for all staff. Since 2016, it has adopted annual Action Plans aimed at reaching these goals in the framework of its mandate and in line with the United Nations gender-related policies, strategies and guidance.[1]

The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically changed the working conditions and environments of DGACM staff as telecommuting has been in effect since mid-March 2020 and some form of flexible working arrangements might be the rule for an undetermined period in some functions. In addition, the resumption of in-person meetings from September 2020 onwards particularly affected staff servicing those meetings, especially parents, when schools were operating fully remotely in the New York City metropolitan area, and staff with other caregiving responsibilities. In addition to the impact of the pandemic, the liquidity crisis is affecting the resources available and the Department is required to find creative ways to meet the requirements of the Action Plan. Increased familiarity of staff with online platforms presents opportunities to offer forums for exchange of experience at relatively low cost, including among different duty stations.

In 2020, none of the training activities initially planned could be held due to the lack of resources and the sudden new constraints, as well as additional workload caused by adjusting to the online working environment. The aim, for 2021, is therefore to build on the achievements of the Action Plans 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 and to continue working towards the following objectives while coping with the consequences of COVID-19 and the liquidity crisis:

- maintaining gender parity
- ensuring managers are accountable for promoting gender equality and creating a more inclusive workplace for staff of all genders
- improving the organizational culture by mitigating unconscious bias based on gender stereotypes and promoting gender equality and inclusion
- promoting equal opportunities for career development and progression for women and men
- raising awareness of gender issues

The Action Plan 2021 is fully aligned with the Secretary-General's System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity (henceforth the Gender Strategy). In addition, it includes measures aimed at implementing some of the recommendations of the Enabling Environment Guidelines, their Supplementary Guidance and the guidelines adapted to the COVID-19 crisis entitled "Ten Ways to Create an Enabling Environment

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[1] System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity, Enabling Environment Guidelines and Supplementary Guidance.

during COVID-19" and at improving the departmental UN-SWAP performance, based on the UN-SWAP report[2] submitted by DGACM.

The Action Plan is structured around the Gender Strategy main areas of work:

- monitoring progress for parity
- leadership and accountability
- recruitment, retention, progression and talent management
- creating an enabling environment

and two additional cross-cutting areas

- communication on gender-related issues, and
- collaboration with system-wide gender networks and projects.

Under each of these areas a number of objectives have been identified, along with the activities or measures that will be implemented to achieve them, their expected impact and a time frame for implementation. Activities or measures that have not been included in the Action Plan may be carried out throughout the year as new necessities or opportunities arise. Similarly, planned activities or measures may be modified due to new priorities or exigencies of service.

Due to the inability to fill vacancies, the workload in 2020 was extremely high, which created considerable pressure to deliver the main outputs; training and networking activities scheduled in the Action Plan were therefore not implemented.

Representation of women in DGACM New York

As at 31 December 2020, women occupied at least half of posts at all levels in DGACM, New York: D-2 (60% female), D-1 (66.7%), P-5 (51.3%), P-4 (54.3%), P-3 (61.1%), P-2 (66.7%) and General Service (54.8%). The table below shows that the Department is well ahead of the 50% annual target set to reach gender parity in the System-Wide Strategy on Gender Parity at all levels from P2 to D2. This is the result of the successful efforts to increase the representation of women, which is important at the P2 and P3 levels given that women have been traditionally underrepresented at the higher levels and gains at the P4 and P5 levels are fragile. Good female representation at the lower levels provides a good pipeline for their representation at higher levels.

It is worth highlighting that parity has been surpassed in senior posts (P-5 to D-2) at DGACM New York (59.3%) and in DGACM overall (60.8%). It will be important to maintain or exceed parity for women in case of staff movements, given that relatively few posts can affect the balance at senior levels.

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[2] UN-SWAP is the United Nations System Wide Action Plan for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. It is the implementation tool of a policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women adopted by the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) in 2006 ([CEB/2006/2](#)). It establishes a common understanding of, and minimum requirements and aspirational guides for, Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

In DGACM New York, the representation of women is particularly high at the entry levels P-3 and P-2 (61.1% and 66.7% respectively). Most staff at those levels are language staff recruited through language competitive examinations (CELPs), which are gender-blind exams.

In addition to this, across Divisions in the Department, female staff are assigned to positions with supervisory responsibilities such as Training Officers, Programming Officers, Officers-in-Charge and First and Second Reporting Officers. DGACM also strives to achieve gender balance in all aspects of its operations, including competency-based interview panels, staff given special projects, assignments, working groups, staff assigned to conference rooms and external activities and other representative functions.

Table 1: Representation of women in all categories in DGACM New York and overall, as at 31 December 2020

Female representation all categories (Regular budget posts only)										
	USG	ASG	D-2	D-1	P-5	P-4	P-3	P-2	GS	Total Female
New York	0 (1) 0%		3 (5) 60%	8 (12) 66.7%	60 (117) 51.3%	119 (219) 54.3%	102 (167) 61.1%	6 (9) 66.7%	171 (313) 54.8%	469 (843) 55.6%
Overall - NY and duty stations	0 (1) 0%	-	3 (5) 60%	13 (18) 72.2%	102 (203) 50.2%	219 (402) 54.5%	173 (311) 55.6%	8 (16) 50%	369 (646) 58.9%	887 (1,602) 55.4%

Source: DGACM Executive Office

* The numbers presented in parenthesis are the total numbers of staff at that level (both male and female)

** On 4 March 2021, the Secretary-General appointed Ms. Cherith Norman Chalet as Assistant Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management

Action Plan 2021: objectives, impact, activities/measures, time frame

A. Monitoring progress for gender parity and equality

Objective	Expected impact	Activity/Measure	Time frame
Monitor the representation of women in DGACM	Information on gender parity is up to date and readily available to managers	Sex-disaggregated statistics on the representation of women are included in DGACM/EO human resources monthly report to the Directors	Ongoing
Monitor progress in all areas leading to gender equality	Room for improvement, successes and challenges are identified	Annual UN-SWAP report is prepared and follow-up with UN-Women is ensured, as appropriate	January, follow-up as required
		Gender Focal Points follow-up on areas where there is room for improvement as identified in UN-SWAP 2020	Ongoing
		UN-SWAP results are shared by USG with Directors and discussed at a Directors' meeting	Upon receipt

B. Leadership and accountability

Objective	Expected impact	Activity/Measure	Time frame
Monitor compliance and hold managers accountable for meeting gender parity targets	Managers play an active role in monitoring and reaching gender parity targets	**Under-Secretary-General**, as per Compact, implements the goals related to achieving gender parity at each internationally recruited staff level within available positions	Ongoing
		Assistant Secretary-General as per the ASG's Compact with the USG, supports the USG to meet the gender equality and parity goals	Ongoing

		All staff with supervisory/hiring responsibility (a) take into account departmental statistical status on gender parity and the implications of the recommendation of candidates for gender parity, (b) include in their work plans a gender-SMART goal related to contributing to gender equality and parity (see Annex I), (c) include in their performance appraisal an assessment of their performance in this area	Ongoing
DGACM USG champions gender equality internally and publicly	DGACM's involvement in promoting gender equality and empowering women serves as an incentive for other entities	Under-Secretary-General follows up on specific commitments to enhance gender equality and parity as a member of the International Gender Champions	Ongoing
Increase staff involvement in promoting gender equality and empowering women	Staff play an active role in promoting gender equality and empowering women	Gender-SMART goals or gender-related actions included in 2020 work plans of staff are reviewed in conversations with FROs and SROs as part of performance appraisals and new goals or actions are included in their 2021/22 work plans (see Annex I)	First semester
		FROs are consulted as to the implementation of gender-SMART goals	First semester

C. Recruitment, retention, progression and talent management

Objective	Expected impact	Activity/measure	Time frame
Provide increased networking and mentoring opportunities to female staff members	More access to career advice and support for career development for female staff members, support and exchange of experience on how to cope with the different working environment	Online networking and mentoring events for female staff (number tbd depending on available funding and technical solutions used)	Tbd
Support the development of female staff members´ skills	Talent pipeline of women in the Department is strengthened	Events on leadership and communication and coping with the "new normal" for female staff (number tbd depending on available funding and technical solutions used)	Tbd

D. Creating an enabling environment

Objective	Expected impact	Activity/measure	Time frame
Increase opportunities for discussion and exchange on managing and/or working in inclusive and diverse teams	Staff members are aware of their own stereotypes and are encouraged to build a work environment that embraces equality, inclusivity and diversity	Co-ed workshops on dignity and inclusion in the workplace – UN for All (if they can be held remotely)	Tbd
		Online unconscious bias workshop(s) (number tbd depending on available funding and technical solutions used)	Tbd
Assess the qualitative aspect of organizational culture	Better understanding of potential gender-related reasons why staff leave the Department	Implementation of the exit questionnaire for DGACM staff under the responsibility of the Executive Office and follow-up	First semester
Promote the use of gender-inclusive language among staff	Staff are aware of how to use language that does not discriminate against a particular sex or gender and does not perpetuate gender stereotypes	Ad-hoc advice on gender-inclusive language [3] to the UN system, upon request	Ongoing
		Identify ways to further help staff use gender-inclusive language	Ongoing
Mainstream gender in DGACM projects and activities	DGACM contributes to gender equality from its areas of expertise	Gender Focal Points meet with DGACM Project Managers to identify potential for gender mainstreaming in their projects, with a focus on data,	Tbd

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[3] Recommendations on how to use gender-inclusive language, are available in this multilingual website developed by DGACM, DGC, DOS/MSPC and UN-Women.

		language tools and conference services[4]	

E. Communication

Objective	Expected impact	Activity/measure	Time frame
Raise staff gender awareness among staff and keep them informed on gender-related activities and implementation of the Gender Strategy	Increased gender awareness of DGACM staff and high level of participation in gender-related activities	Section on gender is included in all bimonthly USG DGACM's messages	Ongoing
		Gender team, the Office of the USG, Directors and Chiefs keep staff informed of gender-related activities and measures, either departmental or UN-wide, as appropriate	Ongoing
Share DGACM's experience on gender-related work via various communication channels	DGACM plays a leading role in the implementation of the Gender Strategy	Content on DGACM's lessons learned and experiences is produced and disseminated through DGACM social media, articles on iSeek, the dedicated DGACM iSeek page "Gender Equality in Action", and other channels as appropriate	Ongoing
Mainstream gender in DGACM communication resources	DGACM staff have enough tools to ensure communication products are gender-inclusive	Gender-related resources, for example, on gender-inclusive communication, and a gender perspective are included in the DGACM Communications Strategy, knowledge management platforms, such as the self-paced online training tool (SPOT), and outreach materials	Ongoing

Formal Communications Strategy to be finalized and implemented in 2021 under the responsibility of OUSG |

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[4] Opportunities for gender mainstreaming in DGACM projects may include the protocol database, DGACM in-house developed language tools, the summary records project.

F. Collaboration with system-wide gender networks and projects

Objective	Expected impact	Activity/measure	Time frame
Support the implementation of the Gender Strategy and other UN gender-related initiatives	DGACM is actively involved in UN-system initiatives for gender equality and the empowerment of women and shares experiences with other entities	DGACM continues to engage in exchanges and build partnerships with relevant stakeholders in the UN system (UN-Women, UN System Gender Focal Points network, UN-SWAP network, Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE), inter-agency working group on gender-inclusive language, etc.)	Ongoing

Human and financial resources

Implementation of the Action Plan 2021 will be guided by the following team:

- Under-Secretary-General provides strategic advice and support to the gender team as well as reviews and endorses the Action Plan 2021 and UN-SWAP report.

- Gender team designs the Action Plan 2021, guides its implementation and prepares the UN-SWAP report:

Cecilia Elizalde, Director of the Documentation Division
Emer Herity, Chief of the ECOSOC Affairs Branch, General Assembly and ECOSOC Affairs Division
Abigail Loregnard, Special Assistant to the USG
Tracey Parsons, Gender Affairs Coordinator
Imre Karbuczky, Director of the Meetings and Publishing Division (provides input to UN-SWAP report)
Xin Tong-Maywald, Chief of the Meetings Management Section, Central Planning and Coordination Division (provides input to UN-SWAP report)

The work of the gender team is supported by staff members who provide their expertise in other areas such as UN policies, budgeting, administration, communication and graphic design.

The plan will be implemented within the Department's existing resources.

Strategic Objective on Gender for Divisional Work Plans

Strategic Objective:
- Promotion of gender equality

Expected Accomplishment:
- Maintenance of gender parity[5]
- Creation of an enabling environment, allowing flexibility for staff with caring responsibilities[6]
- Striving for a balanced representation of women and men at internal events, conference-servicing missions and other representative functions, and in internal and external information materials and products

Outputs:
- Gender-sensitive or gender-neutral language is used in all documents, communications and during internal meetings and events
- Inclusion of gender goal in all staff work plans
- Inclusion of gender considerations in recruitment and promotion exercises, including in the composition of panels

Responsible Party:
- Director, Chiefs, Supervisors (SROs and FROs)

Timeline:
- Ongoing

Partners:
- OUSG, EO, OHR, Departmental Focal Points on Women

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[5] Explanatory note: the definition of 50:50 gender balance that comes from the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action established the goal of 50:50 for the Professional level and above. However, the SG's System-wide Strategy (p.12) says that: "While the goal is 50/50 parity, it is recognized that sustainability at that number is unlikely and for the purposes of this strategy parity is considered to be within the 47%-53% margin."

[6] Explanatory note: Enabling environment guidelines adapted in the context of the pandemic

Gender-SMART goal[7] to be included in 2021-2022 individual work plans

1. Directors and Chiefs

Goal: Support the implementation of the UN System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity

Description and related actions:

- Keeping hiring managers informed of departmental statistical status on gender parity;
- When acting as hiring manager, take into account departmental statistics on gender parity and the implications of the recommendation of candidates for gender parity, and ensure recruitment processes are gender-inclusive: recruitment panels are gender-balanced; recruitment panel members have completed the "I Know Gender" training and, if available, unconscious bias training[8]; relevant recruitment documentation, for example, job announcements, is gender-inclusive[9];
- Strive for a balanced representation of women and men at internal and external events (including virtual events), conference-servicing missions and other representative functions, and in internal and external information materials and products[10];
- Mainstream a gender perspective[11] in policies, procedures, work methods and related manuals;
- Provide women and men with equal opportunities to assume supervisory responsibilities and/or other activities required for promotion;
- Keep staff regularly informed of and encourage staff to participate in gender-related activities (including those organized by virtual means) in the Department;
- Promote the use of gender-inclusive language by staff;
- Use gender-inclusive language;
- Create an enabling environment, allowing flexibility, subject to exigencies of service, for staff with caring responsibilities[12];
- Support the organization of online mentoring/training events and the staff organizing these events.

Success criteria: gender balance is reached or maintained, and the staff member contributes to creating an enabling work environment conducive to gender equality

2. First and Second Reporting Officers

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[7] The System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity recommends including gender-SMART goals in workplans of staff with supervisory and/or hiring responsibility, to be assessed as part of the performance appraisal (see pages 18 and 19.)

[8] Unconscious bias training may be provided in 2021 by DGACM or by OHR. Please consult your Training Officers or the Gender Affairs Coordinator or check Inspira.

[9] The Gender Decoder tool may be used to ascertain whether a job announcement has been drafted in a gender-inclusive manner and the Gender-inclusive Language Guidelines provide useful linguistic recommendations.

[10] To learn more about how to strive for a balanced representation of women and men as well as their fair and diverse portrayal, please check the "Tips for gender-sensitive communication in DGACM."

[11] Gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetrated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality. (Definition included in the 1997 agreed conclusions of ECOSOC.)

[12] See "Ten ways Ten Ways to Create an Enabling Environment during COVID-19".

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Goal: Support the implementation of the UN System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity

Description and related actions:

- When acting as hiring manager, take into account departmental statistics on gender parity and the implications of the recommendation of candidates for gender parity, and ensure recruitment processes are gender-inclusive: recruitment panels are gender-balanced; recruitment panel members have completed the "I Know Gender" training and, if available, unconscious bias training; relevant recruitment documentation, for example, job announcements, is gender-inclusive;
- Strive for a balanced representation of women and men at internal and external events (including virtual events), conference-servicing missions and other representative functions, and in internal and external information materials and products;
- Mainstream a gender perspective in policies, procedures, work methods and related manuals;
- Provide women and men with equal opportunities to assume supervisory responsibilities and/or other activities required for promotion;
- Keep staff regularly informed of and encourage staff to participate in gender-related activities (including those organized by virtual means) in the Department;
- Promote the use of gender-inclusive language by staff;
- Use gender-inclusive language.

Success criteria: gender balance is reached or maintained, and the staff member contributes to creating an enabling work environment conducive to gender equality

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3. Staff with no supervisory role

For staff with no supervisory role, it is recommended that staff members discuss with their First and Second Reporting Officers and decide how they can support the implementation of the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity in the context of their duties. At least one related action should be included in one or more of the goals of their work plans. "Success criteria" should be defined by staff members in consultation with their FRO/SRO.

A separate guidance note that contains examples of gender-related actions will be circulated to staff.

End-of-year report on the implementation of DGACM New York Action Plan 2020

In 2020, none of the training set out in the Action Plan was held due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the liquidity crisis. Nevertheless, the Department still managed to implement some of the activities listed in the Action Plan. A summary is provided below.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND MONITORING OF GENDER TARGETS

- Sex-disaggregated statistics on the representation of women were included in DGACM/EO human resources monthly report to the Directors.
- Parity targets were included in USG Compact.
- USG joined the International Gender Champions initiative.
- Gender-SMART goals were included in the work plans of staff with supervisory and hiring responsibility and gender-related actions were included in the work plans of staff members with no supervisory role.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

- Advice was provided to UN bodies on gender-inclusive language upon request: for instance, the Rules of Procedure for Meetings of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (https://undocs.org/SPLOS/2/Rev.5) were reviewed by the translation services to make them more inclusive in all languages, in a collaborative effort with the authors in the Office of Legal Affairs.
- Gender-inclusive writing was mainstreamed in translation, revision and verbatim reporting manuals, terminology records and internal communications, as appropriate.
- Gender considerations were included in DGACM budget document for 2021.

COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

- Gender issues continued to be discussed at a number of Directors' meetings.
- UN-SWAP results were shared with Directors.
- Articles on gender-related activities were published in some of DGACM USG's bimonthly messages.
- DGACM gender-related activities were promoted in social media, especially during the social media campaign organized with the Department of Operational Support (DOS) and UN-Women, in the framework of International Women´s Day on 8 March.
- An interview with the USG about his role as an International Gender Champion was featured in the April issue of UN Today.
- Efforts were made by the gender team and the communications team to ensure a balanced, and stereotype-free, gender representation in all released content and this will continue in the new period.
- The new DGACM website was launched featuring a Gender Equality page available in the six languages. The UN-SWAP results are presented on that page.

SYSTEM-WIDE STRATEGY ON GENDER PARITY (Gender Strategy)

- DGACM provided updates on the implementation of the Gender Strategy to the Secretary General.
- The Gender team prepared an Action Plan for 2021 fully aligned with the Gender Strategy.

COLLABORATION OF DGACM WITH UN SYSTEM

- Members of the Gender team took part in UN system gender focal points meetings, including the Annual Global Meeting of Gender Focal Points, held online from 5 to 7 October.
- The Gender Affairs Coordinator also participated in a Gender Focal Points session on vacancy announcements on 29 January, where she shared DGACM's practice on the use of gender-inclusive language when translating senior vacancy announcements.
- Active participation in regular Gender Focal Points meetings organized by UN-Women.
- Advice to other Departments, upon request
- Preparation of the DGACM UN-SWAP report for 2020.