



# UNDP Yemen

## Gender Equality Strategy

2022– 2025

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## Introduction and Rationale

This document outlines UNDP Yemen’s Country Office Gender Equality Strategy Update for the years 2022-2025 in linkage with previous strategic documents (2013-2015), (2017-2019) and (2019-2021). While it takes into consideration previous strategies, approaches and results, it also takes into consideration the current contextual factors, changes in stakeholder mapping and current programming and socioeconomic factors within the outlined period. UNDP’s global gender equality strategy is a key reference and guidance for the document.

The current strategy covers the fiscal years of 2022 – 2025 which correspond to UNDP’s corporate strategic plan and Gender Equality Strategy timeline. This timeline also coincides with the UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD). The present Gender Equality Strategy is aligned with the vision, objectives and the content of the UNDP Strategic Plan and UNDP Gender Equality Strategy, as well as to national priorities. The approach to the implementation of the GES relies on learning and experience sharing, the engagement of men and boys in supporting gender equality advocacy and action, and working collaboratively with other actors, including specialized UN Agencies, donors, government, private sector, and civil society.

UNDP Yemen’s overall Strategic Plan proposes a series of signature solutions that are collectively designed to address development in Yemen. Signature solution 6: **“Strengthen gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls”** addresses the challenges that persist in addressing gender inequality in Yemen that manifests as the unequal distribution of various resources including access to basic needs, decision-making, opportunities, and rights. This solution will focus on promoting increased participation and empowerment of women across different sectors. Additionally, it focuses on the integration of gender markers so that they are cross-cutting with various organizational, national, and global approaches.

The UNDP Yemen Country Programme Document (CPD) is fully aligned with national priorities and the UNDP strategic plan 2022-2025 outcome 3 “Strengthening resilience to shocks and crisis”<sup>1</sup>. However, and where feasible, UNDP Yemen will apply the six signature solutions, outlined in the strategic plan, in an interconnected fashion across all its program priorities. Signature solution six on “Strengthening gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls” will be applied throughout all three outcomes with both cross-cutting and dedicated interventions.<sup>2</sup> The UNDP Yemen Country Programme has defined three priorities to achieve its outcomes: (a) Economic Recovery and development; (b) Governance and the rule of Law; and (c) Peace Operation Support.

This document was developed in accordance with UNDP requirement that each business unit or CO develop its own GES aligned to the global one. Such requirement reflects the importance of gender equality in the UNDP mandate and emphasizes that there cannot be “on-size fits-all” approach suggesting that Units’ GES, while aligning to guiding parameters of the UNDP GES, shall address specific issues pertinent to each country’s context and needs.

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<sup>1</sup> UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-2025

<sup>2</sup> Country Programme document for the Republic of Yemen 2023-2024.

## National Context and Situation Analysis

Yemen is a low-income country and the poorest in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regions with a population of approximately 30.8 million people, 51.1 per cent of whom are female.<sup>3</sup> Around 62 per cent of the population live in rural areas, approximately 38 per cent of Yemenis are under 15<sup>4</sup> and 63 per cent are under 24 years of age<sup>5</sup>. The country's Human Development Index (HDI) for 2019 was 0.470, which put the country in the low human development category, positioning it at 179 out of 189 countries and territories.<sup>6</sup> Yemen ranks 155th of 156 countries in the 2021 World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index, depicting huge gender disparities<sup>7</sup>. Yemeni women remain significantly under-represented in public and elected office-holding only 4.1 per cent of managerial and decision-making positions and 0.3% in the former national parliament. Women and girls' access to education and employment opportunities are limited (35%, 6% respectively). Women are disproportionately affected due to restrictions of mobility, decision making power and lack of access and control over resources where only 2% of women have access to financial accounts<sup>8</sup>.

In Yemen, the conflict, pandemic, and natural disasters have added layers of vulnerability for women and girls and exacerbated existing gender inequalities especially among disabled, displaced, and marginalized women and girls. Women are disproportionately and severely affected by displacement caused by the conflict and natural disasters as more than 70 per cent of IDPs in Yemen are women and children, and approximately 30 per cent of displaced households are now headed by females, compared to 9 per cent before conflict escalated in 2015<sup>9</sup>. The impact of the conflict on overall family health, the security and education of their children, and the proliferation of small arms are only some of the issues that have put women under psychological strain and at physical risk. The pandemic has further exacerbated existing gender inequalities increasing the burden care work, decline in reproductive and paediatric health services (42%, 81% respectively)<sup>10</sup>, job losses<sup>11</sup>, increasing gender-based violence including child and early marriage.

The country has acute food insecurity verging on famine. Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis projects that in 2022, over 19 million people will need food assistance whilst 161,000 will face extreme hunger. Over 2.25 million cases of children aged 0 to 59 months, and more than a million pregnant and lactating women were projected to suffer from acute malnutrition in the course of 2021. The main driver of food insecurity is affordability, emanating from increased food prices amidst reduced incomes and livelihood opportunities.<sup>12</sup>

Moreover, women's participation and leadership in the public sector and formal and informal paid work is low as the rate of women's participation in the workforce in Yemen is only 6%. Structural inequality impedes women and girls' access to basic services, leading to a massive gender gap in literacy and basic education and high maternal mortality rates. The prevalence of female genital mutilation (FGM) remains high among young girls, producing an overall negative health effect, including bleeding and septicaemia (blood poisoning), and, in extreme cases, death.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/yemen-population/> (accessed on 29 March 2022)

<sup>4</sup> UN Data – Yemen Country Profile (<http://data.un.org/en/iso/ye.html>).

<sup>5</sup> arabdevelopmentportal.com. If provided with the right incentives and opportunities, the youth bulge offers significant potential for Yemen's future development.

<sup>6</sup> Human Development Report 2020

<sup>7</sup> Economic participation and opportunity 145, Educational attainment 152, Health and survival 95, Political empowerment 154.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/dac/dac-global-relations/Promoting-womens-financial-inclusion-May%202017.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Yemen\\_HNO\\_2021\\_Final.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Yemen_HNO_2021_Final.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.who.int/health-cluster/news-and-events/news/essential-health-yemen/en/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://sanaacenter.org/publications/main-publications/14703>

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.unicef.org/mena/media/11956/file/Child%20Marriage%20in%20the%20context%20of%20COVID-19%20MENA%20Regional%20Analysis\\_High%20Res%20\(1\).pdf.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/mena/media/11956/file/Child%20Marriage%20in%20the%20context%20of%20COVID-19%20MENA%20Regional%20Analysis_High%20Res%20(1).pdf.pdf)

Because women tend to reinforce socially agreed upon gender norms, neither formal nor informal systems provide them with adequate protection. Females taken into legal custody may be presumed guilty, detained without trial and are unable to access legal counsel. Those who are imprisoned are likely to be overseen by male guards and may face a wide range of human rights violations. It is also not unusual for female prisoners to be abandoned by their families – particularly when she is perceived as having committed a “moral” crime. Additionally, women face similar discrimination by health service providers and are often unable to access medical treatment for injuries associated with gender-based violence.

In the former national parliament, women held only 0.3% of the seats. Yemen performs poorly in terms of political empowerment. While women gained the right to vote in 1967, there are other rights that have not yet been granted to them. These include required guardian permission for mobility rights/access. Further, within the draft constitution, women are identified in relation to men and are not granted explicit individual rights. Due to the ongoing conflict, these concerns have been complicated.<sup>13</sup>

Women have minimal leadership roles in national and local peace agreements. Yemen adopted its first Women Peace and Security National Action Plan (NAP) in December 2019 for the period 2020-2022 with four overarching objectives, grouped under participation, prevention, protection, and relief and recovery, of the UNSCR 1325 pillars<sup>14</sup>. However, many gaps have been identified in supporting putting the NAP into action.

## Objectives of the UNDP Yemen Gender Equality Strategy

### Overall Objective:

To ensure that gender considerations and means supporting equal participation of women and men “through intersectional lens” are applied through all development interventions that are based on considerations of different needs, concerns and experiences of men and women become an integral part of programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and are supported by strong CO capacity, policies and practice, in line with the UNDP Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025 and UNDP Global Gender Equality Strategy 2022 – 2025 objectives, as well as with the specific country’s needs and strategic priorities.

By this **Objective**, UNDP Yemen reiterates that the advancement of gender equality is not a separate goal, but is a cross-cutting priority, the achievement of which will make UNDP more responsive and effective in addressing development challenges.

### Specific Objectives:

1. To ensure that a gender responsive and Human rights approach is applied in UNDP Yemen programming at design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages in alignment with the UNDP Strategic Plan and UNDP Gender Equality Strategy and the results are widely disseminated;
2. To ensure that UNDP Yemen applies gender responsive policies in its internal operational processes and builds relevant staff capacities;

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<sup>13</sup> Alqudwa Lina (2017), UNDP Regional Hub, Amman, Jordan.

<sup>14</sup><http://1325naps.peacewomen.org/index.php/yemen/#:~:text=Yemen%20adopted%20its%20first%20National,drafting%2C%20and%20reviewing%20the%20NAP.>

3. To achieve strong partnerships and strategic positioning with national and international partners to enhance the impact of gender equality work.

## Gender Equality in UNDP Yemen

UNDP Yemen is committed to gender equality based on the knowledge that gender equality is part and parcel of the successful outcomes of any development interventions. To this end, UNDP Yemen through the participation in global Gender Equality Seal process aims at institutionalizing a systemic approach to gender mainstreaming, through broad categories of involvement, i.e., planning, implementation; monitoring & reporting; communication and operations; and internal policies and practice. Under this work, UNDP will identify and address disparities between women and men by tackling structural gender inequality issues and underrepresentation of women while leaving no one behind. The present document spells out UNDP's strategy to operationalize and enhance its gender mainstreaming approach.

## Integration of Gender Equality in UNDP Yemen Country Programme

***Specific Objective 1: To ensure that a gender responsive and human right approach is applied in UNDP Yemen programming at design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages in alignment with the UNDP Strategic Plan and UNDP Gender Equality Strategy and the results are widely disseminated.***

UNDP Yemen Programming Framework, covering the period of 2023 – 2024, and subsequently aligned to the UNDP Strategic Plan. UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2025 provides entry points for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in each outcome of the Strategic Plan. UNDP Yemen GES' objectives are aligned to the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy to better integrate gender equality in the Country Programme framework 2023 – 2024.

The Country program framework aims at setting the stages for a situation where (1) People in Yemen, especially women, adolescents and girls and those in the most vulnerable and marginalized communities benefit from better, equal and inclusive access to nutritious food, sustainable and resilient livelihoods, and environmental stability; (2) People in Yemen, especially women, adolescents and girls and those in the most vulnerable and marginalized communities experience more rights-based good governance, comprised of effective people-centered, equitable and inclusive gender and age-responsive improved public services, and rule of law; and (3) People in Yemen, especially women, adolescents, girls and those at risk of being left behind, become more resilient to economic shocks by increasing their income security and access to decent work. The **overarching theory of change** of the country programme is: ***if*** food security and green, inclusive economic recovery and development are boosted, and ***if*** national and subnational governance structures are strengthened and preserved, and ***if*** confidence-building measures and national and local peace processes are supported; ***then*** Yemenis will experience ***better, equal and inclusive access to nutritious food, sustainable and resilient livelihoods, environmental stability and improved rights-based good governance, effective people-centred, equitable and inclusive gender- and age-responsive public services and rule of law, and confidence in the peace processes*** will be enhanced, laying the ground for sustainable peace.

UNDP Yemen will apply the six signature solutions, outlined in the strategic plan, in an interconnected fashion across its three program priorities, Economic recovery and development, Governance and the rule of law, and Peace operation support.

To complement the gender-responsive UNDP Country Office Monitoring and Evaluation plan, the gender marker will be reviewed periodically and shall remain the main tool to track budget and expenditures to monitor the country programme expenditures and to improve gender-responsive planning, implementation and monitoring. During the period of the present strategy, UNDP will aim to progressively achieve having 70 per cent of allocations to advancing gender equality and/or empowering women (gender marker attributes GEN-2 and GEN-3 combined)<sup>15</sup>. UNDP track 3 funding will progressively achieve 15 per cent of allocations to advancing gender equality and/or empowering women (gender marker attribute GEN-3). The Country Office programmes and projects will identify, at their design stage, at least one stand-alone gender-specific component<sup>16</sup> with at least 15 per cent of the total resources of the initiative allocated to this component. UNDP Yemen will explore innovative options such as establishing an internal ‘pool of funds’ within portfolios to finance gender capacities and strengthen programming.

UNDP Yemen will continue to invest in knowledge products. UNDP released its third and final report named “ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF WAR IN YEMEN: Pathways for Recovery” that presents the findings of a commissioned study on the impact of war on development in Yemen and recovery pathways, through several scenarios using the Sustainable Development Goals lens. The report stated that Empowered Women has significant effects in the medium term through reducing poverty and improving the Human Development Index (HDI) and has a greater effect on GDP per capita than even the Economic Development scenario. Building on this report, UNDP will ensure gender-inclusive approach to recovery. Finally, the adaptive management process will produce a yearly publication on gender UNDP Yemen gender related lessons learned on good and bad practice obtained during experimentation, area-based and conflict sensitive programming.

**Outcome 1: People in Yemen, especially women, adolescents, girls, and those at risk of being left behind, become more resilient to economic shocks by increasing their income security and access to decent work.**

The UNDP theory of change for programme priority one is: if macro-economic stability is enhanced, the cost of food is reduced, social protection systems are improved, value chains are diversified; and employment opportunities for vulnerable population groups are expanded, and if natural resources are managed sustainably, then food security and green, inclusive economic recovery and development will be boosted. This programme area addresses three Framework priorities: (a) increasing food security, creating livelihoods options and jobs; (b) driving inclusive economic structural transformation; and (c) building social services, social protection, and inclusion for all.

UNDP will continue empowering women to become catalysts of change for economic recovery and enhance their role in strengthening coping mechanisms to address priority livelihoods needs as well as expand their resilience and peacebuilding potential. Strengthening the role of the vulnerable women and women-headed households will enable position a constructive role of women in building the community and household resilience as well as enabling women to be less vulnerable to risks of violence, abuse, and exploitation. UNDP will continue enhancing women leadership roles in the pandemic recovery and response empowering women to lead the pandemic awareness, distribution of hygiene kits, in addition to supporting women entrepreneurs to sustain their businesses during the pandemic and while engaging them in the production of PPEs, and relevant hygiene and communication materials.



*Figure 1 Om Zakarya, Yemeni Women Take the Lead in the Fight Against COVID-19, YECRP*

<sup>15</sup> GEN 3 – Have gender equality and/or the empowerment of women and girls as the primary or principal objective. GEN 2 – Make a significant contribution to gender equality and/or the empowerment of women and girls

<sup>16</sup> Component should be understood as outputs of project documents

UNDP will work with central authorities and local governments to develop their capacities to elaborate, implement, and monitor policies and measures that foster inclusive entrepreneurship, equal participation by men and women in the labor force, and a positive business environment. UNDP will support the preparation of inclusive local economic recovery and development plans, integrating and addressing the needs of gender and other vulnerable categories. UNDP will develop communities' capacities to plan and implement development initiatives with an increased participation of women and attain increased transparency in the field of local gender-sensitive strategic planning and management and develop, test, and replicate a model of the integrated community-level response to GBV.

UNDP will continue enhancing women's access to financial, business development and social services while applying intersectional approach focusing on the most vulnerable including PWDs, marginalized, displaced women, pregnant and lactating women, etc. UNDP will continue supporting the nutrition and health conditions of children and lactating and pregnant women through conditional cash assistance and nutrition education.

UNDP will enhance social protection and safety nets to improve people's capacity to deal with shocks and stressors; scale up climate-resilient livelihoods and revive small businesses; boost the purchasing power and economic self-reliance of vulnerable households by providing access to gender-appropriate employment and income opportunities that take into consideration women's different vulnerabilities, unpaid care work; and enhance equal access to productive community assets and facilities. Working with micro-finance institutions and banks, UNDP will **promote value-chain development and access to innovative financial services** and products for entrepreneurs, particularly women entrepreneurs in the fishery sector.

Based on the assessment of employment opportunities, UNDP will provide vocational training, apprenticeships, and business development services to enhance the prospects for longer-term employment and sustainable income-generation, ensuring that provided support addresses the needs of women and youth. A specific focus will be on the creation of employment opportunities for youth and women in the solar value-chain, where demands for expertise in sales, installation or maintenance are increasing at all levels, from the larger importers to small shops at the district level.



*Figure 2 Eman Hadi, A Yemeni woman improves lives and changes minds, ERRY*

To empower women, UNDP will apply innovative approaches engaging women in new sectors including, waste management, energy sector, and the fisheries. UNDP has received the Ashden award for empowering women in the energy sector and supported several Yemeni young women to participate in many global events, such as the CoP26 and COY16), as well as the Regional Women Innovators Programme and the Fifth UN Conference on Least Developed Countries.

UNDP will advance its work to reduce and mitigate the gendered impact of climate change in water, food, and energy nexus with the contribution of women and men. UNDP will enhance women roles and address women vulnerabilities to climate change by adopting well-coordinated and integrated water-food-energy nexus approach to build climate adaptation and resilience, harmonies interventions, and mitigate trade-offs to improve sustainability. While reducing their vulnerabilities and enhancing their roles and decision-making power, women and girls will be leading the Fight Against Climate Change in Yemen leading the world to 2030.



**Outcome 2: People in Yemen, especially women, adolescents, and girls and those in the most vulnerable and marginalized communities experience more rights-based good governance, comprised of effective people-centered, equitable and inclusive gender and age-responsive improved public services, and rule of law.**

The theory of change for programme priority area two is: **if** subnational governance institutions, civil society and the private sector are enabled to foster local governance, and **if** rule-of-law institutions are capacitated to ensure the security, safety, and protection of Yemenis, **then subnational governance structures will be preserved and strengthened to deliver on their respective mandates.** This programme area addresses the Framework priority of **preserving inclusive, effective, and efficient national and local development, and systems strengthening.**

UNDP will continue enhancing women's, girls' contribution and benefiting from inclusive, accountable and gender responsive governance, at local and central levels. UNDP will provide support to a country-wide inclusive local governance system, anchored on formal local authorities, to deliver a range of gender responsive basic services, and empowering both women and men to seek redress where rights are denied.

UNDP will enhance the capacity of the private sector and civil society to engage with subnational authorities on local economic recovery and development; promote public-private partnership opportunities to improve community service delivery; and ensure that local economic recovery and development plans are inclusive, integrating, and addressing the needs of women, youth, and those at the risk of being left furthest behind, including the Muhamasheen, people with disabilities, internally displaced persons, and returnees.

UNDP will work on improving access to justice for women and girls including the most vulnerable, by working with civil society on legal rights awareness-raising; establishing legal help desks in police stations and other sites easily accessible by vulnerable groups; training legal aid providers; paralegal outreach; and providing access to direct legal aid through bar associations, lawyers networks and civil rights civil society organizations.

UNDP will provide support for criminal cases to the formal justice sector to improve the delivery of gender-responsive justice services including building the capacity of the judiciary and prosecutors to ensure effective delivery of justice, providing equal access to the formal justice system for women and men. Moreover, UNDP will support the improvement of prison conditions and their infrastructure, particularly for women and juvenile detainees.

The high penetration of mobile phones provides opportunities to deploy mobile applications to disseminate and gather information on gender-based violence. UNDP will support institutional capacity-building for key government institutions and enhance digital services and data management, exploring opportunities for South-South and triangular cooperation with countries in the region and beyond.



*Figure 3 Colonel Nadia, Yemeni Policewoman  
Dream of Building Peace and Protecting Yemenis,  
Rule of Law*

**Outcome 3: Yemenis contribute and benefit from peacebuilding processes.**

The theory of change for programme priority area three is: **if** social cohesion, livelihoods, productive assets, and production levels of crisis-affected communities are restored, trust is (re)built among conflicting parties; and **if** deep-rooted social divisions are addressed to overcome the threat of political tensions and social unrest, **then confidence among in the peace processes is enhanced, laying the ground for sustainable peace.** This programme area addresses the Framework priority of **increasing food security, creating livelihoods options and jobs and strengthening inclusive, effective, and efficient national and local development and systems.**

UNDP will deliver on national and local peace process support through three main areas under the Peace Support including track II peacebuilding at the community level, with an emphasis on women, youth, and civil society, collaborating with academia and the private sector.

UNDP will continue building resilience of conflict-affected communities. Women and men Water Users associations will be established and capacitated to prevent further water-related conflicts and build better water governance. Women will play leadership roles in natural resource conflicts mitigation and management.

UNDP will continue its efforts to address structural inequality on the premise that women are unable to participate in landmine control and explosive disposal awareness and raises awareness of the importance of women's participation in this area. The PSF project will continue the implementation of its gender strategy aiming to promote women's full and meaningful participation and the integration of gender perspectives in building sustainable peace through intersectional lens.

Through the PSF, UNDP will support the operationalization of Yemen NAP on WPS, which was approved by a ministerial cabinet decree in 2020 and implemented under the leadership of Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour in partnership with other ministries and civil society organisations. The operationalization of the NAP focuses on three objectives: 1) establishing an inclusive institutional structure for the NAP implementation and identifying the roles and responsibilities of different actors involved, including ministries, women and youth-based civil society organisations and private sector organisations; 2) building the capacity of key actors on how to Mainstream gender and WPS into institutions' structures, policies and practices and identifying priorities of policy-oriented interventions that meet the objectives of WPS agenda; 3) localizing Yemen NAP by conducting social exclusion and gender inequality analysis at local level (governances and districts) and identifying and designing responsive actions that meet women and girls' needs to security and peace at local levels.

Lastly, Persons and preferably women with “engines of peace” will be identified through the conflict and potential economy monitoring process and empowered to take the lead in local peace processes. This will not only provide women with leadership, negotiation and decision-making skills and better position them in their communities, but it will contribute to the success and sustainability of conflict resolution and peacebuilding.



*Figure 4 UNDP supports the operationalization of the WPS agenda in Yemen, PSF*

## Gender and Institutional Effectiveness

**Specific Objective 2: To ensure that UNDP Yemen applies gender responsive policies in internal operational processes and builds relevant staff capacities.**

### **Gender principles in programming**

Programme UNDP's corporate requirement suggests that gender concerns, both as gender mainstreaming and gender equality outputs are integrated at all stages of the programme/ project cycle, starting from the design phase. This can be achieved following the below strategic entry points;

- Conducting **gender analysis and gender screening** at the design stage, ensuring gender is mainstreamed in the implementation stage, and imbedding gender considerations in monitoring and evaluation of the projects;
- Comply with the compulsory **environmental and social screening** procedure introduced as a mandatory project level screening requirement at the corporate level as an additional instrument helping in assessing the project's gender equality impact and engagement with women;
- Enhance efforts to ensure gender equality is mainstreamed in the new **Country Programme Document 2023 – 2024**;
- Ensure that Programme **performance indicators are gender sensitive** and sex-disaggregated data on programme beneficiaries provided;
- Engage **the gender specialist** in project development, implementation, and evaluation.

### **Gender architecture**

The Gender Equality Strategy underscores the importance of strong leadership and accountability for gender equality, both in UNDP's development assistance interventions and in each workplace. Gender Equality targets and indicators are an important part of the performance monitoring to hold all managers accountable for advancing gender equality.

As Yemen Office has more than USD 25 M annual delivery, the CO has recruited a dedicated **Gender Specialist**. The gender specialist will be engaged in providing specialized expertise and advice to the CO. **Dedicated gender capacities** will be acquired to large projects or projects with sensitive component/dimensions of gender. Currently, UNDP Yemen has 6 dedicated gender capacities for different projects and in the process of recruiting another two.

Moreover, a **Gender Seal Committee** led by the Resident Representative has been established. It is multidisciplinary, composed of the representatives of Programme and Operations Units and the projects from all three thematic Clusters. It is capacitated to offer expertise and has an ability to respond effectively to the challenges of gender equality within their respective areas. It is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Strategy and offers technical inputs/support for its implementation. Gender Seal Committee will closely collaborate with the Staff Association Committee and Global Staff team in order to provide immediate response to violations of rights of UNDP staff, harassment, and other discriminatory practices, as well as in cases of poor working conditions. It will set targets to achieve equal gender representation at all levels and positions in the organization through the use of positive action for the underrepresented gender.

Each CO Unit and project have their own Gender Focal Points that are liaisons between the Gender Seal Committee/Gender specialist and Units/projects. **GFP team** support the coordination and implementation of the strategy and reports to the staff about results achieved and challenges encountered. The GFP team will enhance communication between staff in the CO and in projects on the use of systematically collected gender-disaggregated data, and new trends and developments in the implementation of gender equality activities.

At the same time, there is a common understanding that **gender mainstreaming is a responsibility of every staff member of UNDP**. Demonstrating the ability to integrate gender equality concerns in one's own work is largely considered as part of UNDP's value and competency. All **UNDP Managers** are requested to have a dedicated performance goal related to gender equality, while all other staff are encouraged to set such a goal, or a particular indicator.

### **Gender Marker**

In 2009, UNDP launched the gender marker, which requires managers to rate projects against a four-point scale indicating its contribution toward the achievement of gender equality. The gender

marker enables UNDP to track and monitor how gender-responsive each financial allocation and expenditure is. It also enables managers to analyze trends by outcome and focus area. The gender marker is based on the following criteria:

GEN 0 – Zero contribution to gender equality

GEN 1 – Contribution to gender equality in some way (5 % of the total project budget)

GEN 2 – Gender equality is a significant objective (30 % of the total project budget)

GEN 3 – Gender equality is a principal objective (100 % of the total project budget)

As per the UNDP Yemen Portfolio Review Dashboard<sup>17</sup> established and reflecting data of 2021 up to date, UNDP Yemen cumulatively GEN 2 and GEN 3 projects make up 97% of the total programme budget (94% GEN 2+ 3% GEN3). On the other hand, there are no projects rated at GEN 0, which demonstrates general consciousness of the fact that any project could and should have meaningful gender aspects.

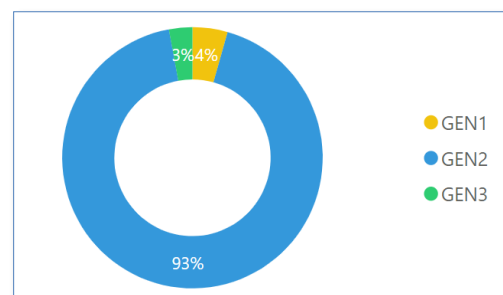


Figure 5 Percent Utilization By Gender Marker

Through the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy, UNDP Yemen will aim at further minimizing/excluding the number of GEN 1 projects, at achieving of a higher share of GEN 2+GEN3 projects, as well as at achieving sound progress in GEN 3 projects. To note that for this UNDP will have to overcome a serious challenge, as the term “gender” itself is still often considered in Yemen as a “Western” idea, foreign to Islamic and Arab Societies.

The CO will undertake the following measures to improve gender marker rating:

- Gender Marker Code Checklist will be designed and submitted by the prodoc developer during the LPAC and signed by the RR to ensure the correct gender marker is assigned or upgraded if possible;
- A representative of Gender Seal Committee/GFP team/ Gender specialist will ensure gender perspective will be mainstreamed **in the project design** at the adequate level with scope to increase the number of GEN3 projects and reduce the share of GEN1 projects;
- Gender Seal Committee/GFP team/ Gender specialist will work with the Portfolio and Project Managers to seek means for improving gender mainstreaming through the **gender review** of the projects and the follow-up gender marker improvement plans, for GEN 1 projects, that shall lead to a significant improvement of the cross-programme Gender Marker;
- A training on Gender in programming, including the gender marker, will be organized for all staff;
- Gender Focal Team will offer **screening of the CO reports**, Strategic Notes and the Integrated Work Plan suggesting ways for strengthening gender aspects;
- The **gender marker results** will be included in the annual reporting exercise;
- **Gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation plans** for projects are implemented and Gender Focal Team will recommend improvements when necessary;
- Programme staff will monitor and edit as needed quarterly and annual reports for **quantitative and qualitative gender indicators**.

This is in addition to the below measure to increase the allocation of the gen3 ratio;

<sup>17</sup> <https://app.powerbi.com/groups/me/reports/85cca03c-84fe-4183-979f-e396d8b9cffa/ReportSection7f5b308c7d11a5d56596?ctid=b3e5db5e-2944-4837-99f5-7488ace54319>

- Gen3 activities with high expenditures will be separated into gen3 outputs for reporting measures while ensuring the responsible parties' capacity to reconcile/report against these expenditures separately.
- At least one new gen3 output will be added to every new project that should be based on deep gender analysis so as to identify the needed/ possible gender responsive activities.
- GEN3 resource mobilization mission will be conducted with the support of the gender regional team to raise awareness of the UNDP programmes/project developers, national and international stakeholders (including donors) of the UNDP global commitment towards gender responsive programming, identify gender needs/gaps in Yemen and identify possible area of partnership on GEN3 programming.

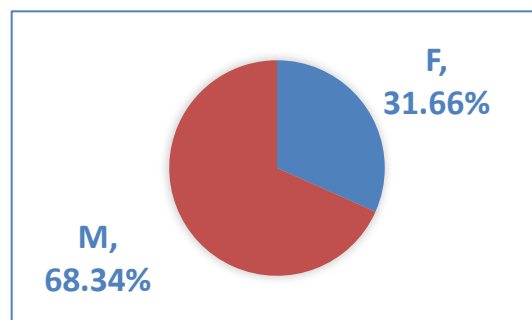
### **Gender Equality Seal**

To increase capacity and accountability for gender mainstreaming, UNDP introduced a gender equality seal in 2012-2013. The seal provides a framework to guide senior managers in meeting specific performance standards and aims at strengthening gender responsiveness across all areas of work. UNDP Yemen committed to follow the process in the (2018-19) cycle and achieved the silver award. UNDP Yemen renewed its application for the round (2021-2022) aiming for the gold and has already made major progress in the different gender seal pillars except for the gender parity and the 15% expenditures of the GEN3 programming. UNDP will continue to implement its commitments over the period of this Gender strategy with a major focus on these two benchmarks. As the Gender Equality Seal combines quality assurance with capacity building of staff and links gender equality at the workplace with development results, the process greatly assists in achieving strong results in gender work. The Gender Seal Committee in the Yemen country office will be responsible for following on all recommendations of the seal process throughout the period of this gender strategy.

### **Gender Parity**

Recognizing that no organization can reach its full potential where gender equality and parity is not achieved, UNDP Yemen applies gender sensitive recruitment and procurement policies and practice, however, it is still challenging to attract qualified female candidates.

UNDP Yemen will take immediate actions to achieve better gender parity among staff by creating an inclusive work environment and by attracting and encouraging women and men to apply to the positions and levels where the particular sex is underrepresented:



*Figure 6 Gender Representation in UNDP Yemen, 2021*

- **Vacancy announcements** for the positions where women or men are underrepresented will include a statement “Qualified female/male candidates are strongly encouraged to apply”;
- Screening, written assessment and interview **panels are gender balanced**;
- **Interview techniques** will be gender-sensitive;
- **Job Descriptions** will be reviewed in order to ensure gender aspects of particular positions are included;
- Gender aspects’ inclusion in **procurement procedures** will be strengthened;
- Line managers will support **flexible working arrangements**;
- **Work/life policy** will be implemented;
- Time-Off for **Breastfeeding policy** to be continuously implemented;
- Staff awareness of the unconscious **gender-based biases** will be increased;
- **Zero-tolerance culture** towards gender-based harassment will become a practice.

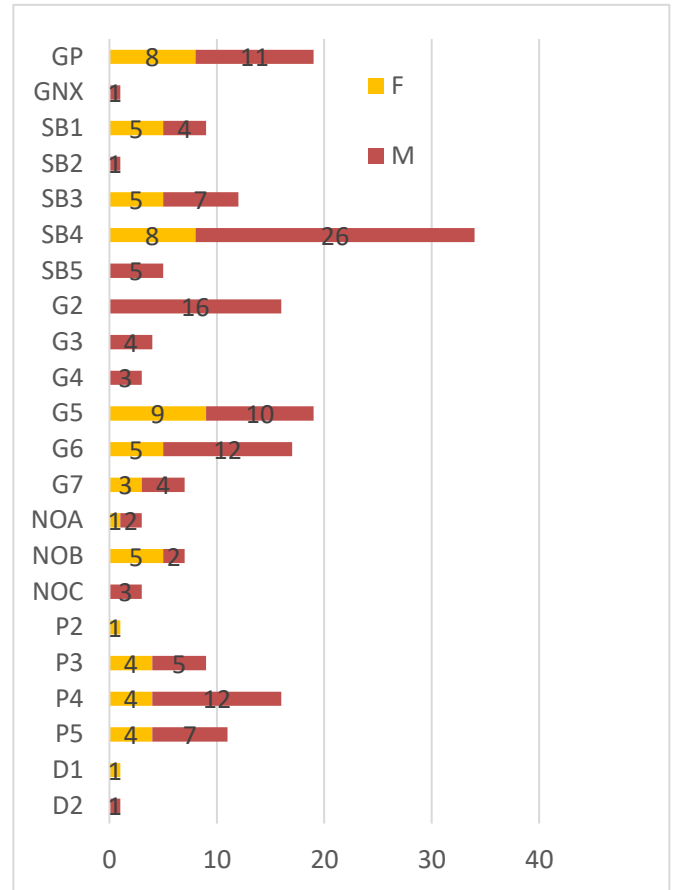


Figure 7 Gender Parity Distribution by Grade

More attention will be also paid to achieve a better parity within the units and teams, as well as in different Committees (Contracts, Assets and Procurement Committee, Compliance Review Panel, and Staff Association Committee). In the same context, institutional mechanisms, and structures to ensure appropriate representation and ensure gender equality will be strengthened by the following means:

- Compulsory **gender-related performance results** included in the performance evaluation system of senior managers, portfolio managers and project managers;
- **Induction package for newcomers** will include relevant reference materials on gender and a dedicated Induction session on gender equality;
- **Gender-responsive staff performance management** by including results related to gender equality in staff work plans and appraisals implemented.

### **Gender Capacity Development**

Although most UNDP Yemen staff members have an understanding and adequate technical capacity for gender mainstreaming, some still lack the capacity and others haven’t completed some of the five related training courses “Gender Journey Course: Thinking out of the Box”, “Ethics and Integrity at UNDP”, “Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of the Local Population (PSEA)”, “UNDP Legal Framework: What every staff should know”, and “United Nations Course on Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority” courses yet. Gender Seal Committee/GFP team with the support of the Learning Manager will follow up and monitor the level of passing of the courses by all the staff including the newly recruited ones as well as the UN CLINC. Additionally, the gender specialist will organize regularly training/learning sessions. Engagement of the Gender Seal Committee members in project appraisal, Gender check-list

compilation, identification of the appropriate gender marker attributes and in the Gender Audit of the project can be also used as in the framework of the gender mainstreaming capacity development efforts.

Recruitment procedures have been reviewed to ensure that staff and consultants have gender core and functional competencies. All new personnel and consultants should possess the basic understanding, skills, experience, and commitment required to work in a gender-sensitive manner. The lack of these attributes will be regarded as a sufficient reason to reject a candidate for any UNDP staff or consultancy assignment.

The capacity will be further developed by:

- **mandatory gender equality related training courses accomplished**, and knowledge application ensured;
- **regular gender mainstreaming training**/Gender Equality Market Place organized, open to all staff;
- **CO Gender Equality Fact Sheet** reflecting gender parity in the office, gender marker status and main gender results achieved in programme will be elaborated and the updated version disseminated annually.

### **Knowledge management and communications**

UNDP Yemen is still to develop communication Strategy. Till then UNDP will mainstream gender in its communication guidelines/action plan. UNDP will ensure gender covers all means of communication, including traditional media and social media tools to advocate for gender equality and promote results achieved. In line with the gender seal requirement, UNDP will ensure to mainstream gender in the UNDP website, and communication/knowledge products/social media with at least two knowledge products produced on gender equality and women's empowerment "yearly" and 15% of social media messages on gender equality and women's empowerment. UNDP will develop Guidance and raise the staff awareness on gender-sensitive language/communication. UNDP Yemen communication will promote for proactive and constant visibility throughout print media and social media of women's leadership role and of images of men and women acting outside of the 'gender norms and stereotypes. In UNDP Yemen communication, women shall not be depicted only as 'vulnerable groups', but as active agents of changes. Gender will be reflected in communicating all areas of work, including those that are usually not seen as gender related. Communication Unit have been working and will continue to ensure gender equality and women's empowerment perspectives feature prominently in all media products and communication materials.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning**

UNDP Yemen will ensure gender responsive monitoring and evaluation through developing SOPs and building the staff/ third party monitors/consultants/ responsible parties' capacity on how to mainstream gender in monitoring and evaluation including in designing TORs, tools, data collection, analysis and reporting. UNDP will ensure decentralized evaluations have been designed and conducted in accordance with the norms and standards for evaluation in the United Nations system, including the gender-related norms and standards. The CO will continue evaluate the progress on gender indicators through projects and Outcome evaluation exercises in compliance with the template evaluation Term or References for programmes/projects that are compiled in compliance with gender norms and standards. UNDP will conduct periodic gender review to review the gender marker expenditures and suggest gender marker correction or corrective measures to maintain the gender marker. Lessons learned will be continued to be disseminated through the

gender lessons learned platform and relevant knowledge products will be developed and disseminated<sup>18</sup>.

## Coordination and Partnership

**Specific Objective 3: To achieve strong partnerships and strategic positioning with national and international partners to enhance the impact of gender work.**

In Yemen today, 254, mostly national and local, partners work under the umbrella of the humanitarian country team. As a result of the conflict, relatively few international NGOs, no bilateral partners and no international development banks are present in the country. The UN country team is present with 18 agencies, funds, and programmes.

While the number of local, national, and international organizations working on development and peacebuilding is small, UNDP will strive to implement the country programme through partnerships with national and local authorities, and civil society, most of which will need significant capacity development support to contribute to the planned outputs set out in the CP results and resources framework.

Under the programme priority area one, Economic Recovery and Resilience, UNDP will continue partnering with World Bank, European Union, Japan, the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre, other donors, UN agencies, the private sector, and local institutions to ensure women, adolescents, and girls and those in the most vulnerable and marginalized communities' benefit from better, equal and inclusive access to nutritious food, sustainable and resilient livelihoods.

Under the programme priority area two, Governance and Rule of Law, UNDP will continue partnering with World Bank, Sweden, the United Kingdom, European Union, Japan, the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea, Civil Society organizations, other donors, the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, UN agencies including the UN WOMEN, local institutions, the private sector, women led organizations, national gender academies, national women committee and machineries to ensure women, adolescents and girls and those in the most vulnerable and marginalized communities experience more rights-based good governance, comprised of effective people-centered, equitable and inclusive gender and age-responsive improved public services, and rule of law.

Under programme priority area three, Peace Operation Support, UNDP will continue partnering with Canada, Denmark, the European Union, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the United Kingdom, the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, UNMHA and the Resident Coordinator's Office, FAO as well as women led organizations, national gender academies, national women committee and machineries to ensure women, adolescents, girls and those at risk of being left behind, become more resilient to economic shocks by increasing their income security and access to decent work.

To ensure gender equality in coordination and partnership, UNDP will implement the following strategic steps;

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<sup>18</sup> <https://undp.sharepoint.com/teams/YEM/home/management/advisory/Lists/Gender%20Lessons/AllItems.aspx>



- Conduct GEN3 resource mobilization mission to identify gender gaps in Yemen, raise awareness of donors, international and national stakeholder on the UNDP commitment towards gender equality and women's empowerment and to define possible area of partnership;
- Contribute to the UNCT joint support to the formulation and implementation of the next **National Gender Equality Strategy**;
- Collaborate with the **national gender machinery** (Ministry of Health, Labor, and Social Protection; gender focal points at the central and local public administration institutions; Social Fund for Development) through all development interventions;
- Provide guidance and advise on the monitoring of the nationalized **SDGs gender-responsive indicators** and support achieving a steady progress on the gender-related indicators;
- Extensively participate in the **Gender network/women protection sub cluster/PSEA network/Feminists Coalition** platform for the identification and joint implementation of new gender initiatives.

UNDP will work closely with other United Nations Agencies, such as UN Women, UNFPA, UNICEF, OHCHR, ILO, WHO, IOM, etc., and INGOs such as CARE and OXFAM on advocacy, policy work and programme implementation advancing gender equality. UNDP with other actors will coordinate its work with local authorities to be more gender responsive. UNDP is an active member of the GenCap project that aims at ensuring and strengthening a gender sensitive and equal approach in UN's humanitarian operations through the full engagement of international and national stakeholders including local authorities.

UNDP Yemen will support and partner with civil society in the implementation of the strategy. Where feasible (the south of Yemen), UNDP will be an active advocate for making space for CSOs such as Yemen Women Union at policy-making and decision-making tables, with a particular focus on engaging influential, experienced women's organizations and networks that represent grassroots and excluded groups. UNDP Yemen will engage and build the capacity of CSOs in its own policy and programme development, as well as in the formulation of United Nations system-wide priorities.

Partnerships with three other sectors of society have particular relevance to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment: academia, the media, and the private sector. UNDP will continue to engage academic institutions that support gender equality such as the Gender and International development program at Sana'a University to advance theory, analysis, and evaluation on gender equality.

UNDP will continue to partner with mainstream, social and alternative media organizations, including as a vehicle to engage younger men and women in advancing gender equality. As possible, support will be offered to media to achieve a different portrayal of gender in popular media, including the one geared towards youth. UNDP will also aim at setting a positive model of its own communication materials offered to media that use the gender-sensitive language and break the existing stereotypes based on the traditional gender roles.

UNDP will also work with the private sector, which is increasingly important to efforts to link gender equality with inclusive growth and sustainable development. In contribution to this goal, UNDP will support women entrepreneurs by increasing their access to gender-sensitive business development services and networks. Additionally, UNDP will seek to facilitate the inclusion of women entrepreneurs in public policy forums to ensure their voices are contributing to this important dialogue.

## Reporting on and Evaluation the Gender Equality Strategy

Reporting on the strategy will be aligned with annual reporting at output and outcome levels, as well as with ROAR. Key parameters to be used to monitor progress and achievements under the gender strategy will include:

- 100% of all active projects apply the gender mainstreaming approach;
- Not less than 70% of all projects are scored as at least GEN 2 + GEN 3 in PowerBI;
- At least 15% of all project resources are allocated to gender-specific interventions GEN3;
- At least 85% of all project reports include demonstrative gender results;
- Yearly update of CO gender profile demonstrating specific legal, policy, and programmatic achievements in the area of gender equality linked to ROAR;
- Monthly meetings with the Gender Seal Committee/GFP team to review the progress on the strategy and recommend improvement actions are held;
- Induction on UNDP's gender equality commitment is provided to 100% of newly recruited employees;
- The learning budget of UNDP CO includes training on gender equality;
- 100% of UNDP staff to complete online training Gender Journey Course: Thinking out of the Box", "Ethics and Integrity at UNDP", "Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of the Local Population (PSEA)", "UNDP Legal Framework: What every staff should know", and "United Nations Course on Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority"
- 100 % of communication materials are screened with a gender lens and at least two materials are produced per year on gender equality and women's empowerment;
- 100% of talking points, speeches, press releases, success stories, and blogs are screened with a gender lens and where necessary include gender-targeted messages;
- Recruitment of staff, project staff, and consultants strive to achieve gender parity;
- Gender-sensitive procurement is constantly applied, and SOP is developed.

## **Glossary:**

**Gender** refers to the roles and responsibilities of women and men that are created in our families, our societies and our cultures. The concept of gender also includes the expectations held about the characteristics, aptitudes and likely behaviors of both women and men (femininity and masculinity). Gender roles and expectations are learned. They can change over time, and they vary within and between cultures. Systems of social differentiation such as political status, class, ethnicity, physical and mental disability, age and more, modify gender roles. The concept of gender is vital because, applied to social analysis, it reveals how women's subordination (or men's domination) is socially constructed. As such, the subordination can be changed or ended. It is not biologically predetermined nor is it fixed forever.

**Sex** describes the biological differences between men and women, which are universal and determined at birth.

**Gender Equality** means that women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and for contributing to, and benefiting from, economic, social, cultural and political development. Gender equality is therefore the equal valuing by society of the similarities and the differences of men and women, and the roles they play. It is based on women and men being full partners in their home, their community, and their society.

**Gender Equity** is the process of being fair to men and women. To ensure fairness, measures must often be put in place to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from operating on a level playing field. **Equity is a means. Equality is the result.**

**Gender-mainstreaming** is a process rather than a goal. Efforts to integrate gender into existing institutions of the mainstream have little value for their own sake. We mainstream gender concerns to achieve gender equality and improve the relevance of development agendas. Such an approach shows that the costs of women's marginalization and gender inequalities are born by all. UN ECOSOC describes gender mainstreaming as "the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies, or programmes, 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 programmes in all political, economic, and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality". (ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions 1997/2)

### **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**

CEDAW, which was adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, is also known as the international bill of rights for women. Currently, over 90% of the members of the United Nations are party to the Convention, making it the second most ratified convention, following the Rights of the Child. CEDAW articulates the nature and meaning of sex-based discrimination and gender equality and lays out State obligations to eliminate discrimination and achieve substantive equality. The Convention covers not only discriminatory laws, but also practices and customs, and it applies not only to State action, but also State responsibility to address discrimination against women by private actors. The Convention covers both civil and political

*rights (rights to vote, to participate in public life, to acquire, change or retain their nationality, equality before the law and freedom of movement) and economic, social, and cultural rights (rights to education, work, health, and financial credit). CEDAW also pays specific attention to particular phenomena such as trafficking, certain groups of women, such as rural women, and specific areas where there are special risks to women's full enjoyment of their human rights, such as matters related to marriage and the family. CEDAW also specifies the different ways in which States Parties are to eliminate discrimination, including through appropriate legislation prohibiting discrimination, or positive action to improve the status of women*

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