![UNHCR - The UN Refugee Agency logo]

UN GENDER EQUALITY MARKER IN UNHCR

Methodological note to implement the UN Gender Equality Marker in UNHCR reporting (UNSWAP and CEB)

December 2025

1. Purpose

This document responds to the requirements of the UNSWAP 3.0 reporting system, demanding that each reporting organization provides a supporting document on its methodology to apply the UN Gender Marker.

The document highlights the modality of UNHCR's adoption of the UN Gender Marker, necessary for compliance with the updated UN Gender Equality reporting.

2. Background - Updated requirements for UN wide reporting on Gender Equality

The United Nations System Chief Executive Board for Coordination (UN CEB) and the UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality (UNSWAP) have updated and aligned the UN-wide reporting on expenditures for Gender Equality. From 2025 onwards, UN Entities must adopt the UN Gender Marker and use it to report on gender equality related expenditures to the CEB as well as through the UNSWAP 3.0.

In 2022, the UN CEB adopted formally the UN Gender Equality Marker (UN GEM) as a new financial standard introducing a common methodology and format for tracking the contribution of United Nations activities to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls[1]. In 2024, the CEB decided to mandate the reporting of gender equality marker data in its financial statistics.

The revised UNSWAP (3.0) requires the adoption of the UN GEM by all Entities to meet some of its Key Performance Indicators. Notably, UNSWAP 3.0 KPI 9 requires that *the UN GEM be applied through the Entity Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, in alignment with the CEB data standards and that quality assurance for the application of the UN GEM is ensured and supported through capacity building and guidance.*[2]

3. The UN Gender marker - UN GEM

The UN GEM has a scale with four categories to define how activities, projects or programs contribute to advancing Gender Equality[3].

General Definition	Coding	Considerations
The objective is not expected to contribute to gender equality/women's empowerment	GEM 0	There is no consideration of gender equality issues, and there are no results relating to gender equality or women's empowerment / rights.
The objective contributes to gender equality/women's empowerment in a **limited** way	GEM 1	While consideration has been given to gender considerations/impact, the overall contribution to gender equality and /or the empowerment of women and girls is limited. Attention though is paid to addressing women's needs. As such, a gender analysis and/or collection/analysis of sex-disaggregated data is included, but no or only limited gender

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[1] https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/Data%20Standards%20March%202024%20edition.pdf see page 48.

[2] https://gendercoordinationandmainstreaming.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-12/UN-SWAP%203.0%20Performance%20Indicator%20Framework.pdf

[3] https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/imported_files/Guidance%20Note%20on%20Coding%20Definitions%20for%20GEMs%20-%20for%20dissemination.pdf

		equality results (minor to the overall objectives of the initiative) are anticipated.
Gender equality/ women's empowerment is a **significant** objective.	GEM 2	These are usually considered gender equality mainstreamed initiatives or initiatives that make a substantial contribution to gender equality/women's empowerment. There is at least one high-level result related to gender equality placed at the outcome rather than output level. Criteria for meeting this code include: • gender assessment/analysis has been done. • gender assessment/analysis has informed the results. • there are explicit high-level results that narrow gender inequalities or support the rights of women and girls
Gender equality/ women's empowerment is the **principal** objective.	GEM 3	Gender equality objectives are the primary intended result(s) of the unit of analysis. Narrowing inequalities between men and women and/or boys and girls, transforming gender norms, or strengthening the empowerment of women and girls is the main reason the initiative is being undertaken. A key question is: would the activity have been undertaken without its gender equality objective?

4. UNHCR's approach to adopt the UN GEM and reporting on related expenditures

In 2021 UNHCR had introduced an organizational Gender Marker, integrated into the COMPASS, UNHCR's results-based management (RBM) approach that captures how the organization plans, implements, monitors, and reports on its work for refugees, internally displaced, and stateless people. The organizational UNHCR Gender Marker is applied by operations at output level with a yes/no scale that is mapped to the 4-point scale of the UN GEM, requiring considerable annual investment across the organization, including for quality assurance.

In December 2025 UNHCR adjusted its methodology for the Gender Marker to further align itself with the required UN system-wide reporting. Instead of relying on manual application of the UNHCR internal marker at output level, UNHCR's new methodology applies the UN GEM organization wide at outcome level. The new approach is underpinned by a solid methodology that will facilitating reporting during the UNSWAP 3.0 reporting cycle starting from the year 2025, followed by the CEB reporting in April 2026.

As part of the new methodology UNHCR applies the UN GEM against all Outcome and Enabling Areas of UNHCR's Global Results Framework and related expenditures/expenses as reported also in UNHCR's Global Report[4]. Under this approach, a GEM code is assigned to each Outcome Area and Enabling Area of the Global Result framework, considering the extent to which UNHCR's activities under each Outcome / Enabling Areas contributes to gender equality. This approach is within the scope of the methodologies under the UNSWAP[5].

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[4] https://www.unhcr.org/media/unhcrs-results-areas

[5] UNSWAP technical guidance on the UN GEM

This methodology has the advantage of being calculated at global level, sparing country operations from engaging in additional analytical and manual tasks in a period of dwindling human resources and multiplying demands. It also allows for a consistent expenditure reporting methodology.

Considering the wide scope of activities included in UNHCR Outcome Areas, some of which may contribute to advancing gender equality to different degrees, UNHCR is aware that this methodology may sometimes lead to an underrepresentation of UNHCR GEM 3 activities that may fall within certain Outcome Areas (e.g. Sexual and Reproductive Health within the Healthy Lives Outcome Area).

The following matrix summarizes the UN GEM scoring for each Outcome and Enabling Areas for UNHCR institutional reporting (CEB and UN SWAP 3.0). The suggested coding for each Outcome Area is based on anreview conducted by UNHCR technical experts in the respective sectors of interventions and included in Annex 1.

Table: UN GEM marking coding for UNHCR's global reporting

OUTCOME / ENABLING AREA	UN GEM coding
OA 1 Access to Territory, Registration and Documentation	**GEM 2**
OA 2 Status Determination	**GEM 2**
OA 3 Protection Policy and Law	**GEM 2**
OA 4 Gender-based violence	**GEM 3**
OA 5 Child Protection	**GEM 2**
OA 6 Safety and Access to Justice	**GEM 2**
OA 7 Community Engagement and Women's Empowerment	**GEM 3**
OA 8 Well-being and Basic Needs	**GEM 1 and GEM 2 (CBI)**
OA 9 Sustainable Housing and Settlements	**GEM 2**
OA 10 Healthy Lives	**GEM 2**
OA 11 Education	**GEM 2**
OA 12 Clean Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	**GEM 2**
OA 13 Self-reliance, Economic Inclusion, and livelihoods	**GEM 2**
OA 14 Voluntary Repatriation and Sustainable Reintegration	**GEM 1**
OA 15 Resettlement and Complementary Pathways	**GEM 2**
OA 16 Local Integration and Other Local solutions	**GEM 1**
EA 17 Systems and Processes	**GEM 1**
EA 18 Operational Support and Supply Chain	**GEM 1**
EA 19 People and Culture	**GEM 2**
EA 20 External Engagement and Resource Mobilization	**GEM 1**
EA 21 Leadership and Governance	**GEM 2**

The following matrix outlines the UN GEM scoring for each Outcome Areas for UNHCR's institutional reporting as endorsed by the organization. The matrix reflects the consensus of sector experts in the various Outcome Areas across UNHCR's internal Divisions and Entities. For consistency and strengthened accountability, in assigning the UN GEM score to each Outcome Area, evidence is provided on the rationale for the coding based on existing UNHCR's Policies and Guidance as well as reference to the way they are applied.

OUTCOME AREA (OA)	Rationale for the UN GEM Score	UN GEM coding
OA 1 Access to Territory, Registration and Documentation	UNHCR ensures that forcibly displaced women and girls have equal access to territory, registration, and documentation. This is included in UNHCR AGD Policy (Core Action 6d) and in UNHCR Commitments towards Women and Girls embedded in the Policy. On procedural aspects of registration, UNHCR Guidelines on Registration and Identity Management put emphasis on individual registration and documentation procedures, to safeguard legal identity and access to services for women and girls. They also include gender-sensitive registration procedures (e.g. presence of female registration staff, confidential spaces), consultation with women on barriers to registration, as well as involvement of women in outreach and information on registration and documentation. UNHCR includes gender-sensitive procedures in its Guidelines as well as advocacy and capacity support for inclusive national registration and documentation systems. Individual registration also allows for a complete breakdown of the population by sex and age, which facilitates targeting of assistance e.g. female headed households for cash assistance, referrals, and protection interventions. Individual documentation also facilitates access to education, health, and other government services in many countries. Some recently introduced innovative practices (Digital Gateway) can also provide improved accessibility to individual registration for women and ownership of their own data.	**GEM 2**
OA 2 Status Determination	UNHCR supports gender-sensitive asylum procedures under its own mandate and promotes gender sensitive national asylum systems where women and girls can access fair and efficient status determination procedures. This follows from the commitment to provide individual registration and documentation in UNHCR AGD Policy (Core Action 6b). **UNHCR 2020 Procedural Standards on RSD** provides detailed operational standards for UNHCR staff conducting RSD under its mandate.	**GEM 2**

OUTCOME AREA (OA)	Rationale for the UN GEM Score	UN GEM coding
	It explicitly references UNHCR's Age, Gender, and Diversity (AGD) Policy as a core standard for due process and applies it throughout the RSD process.	
	- Operational procedures reflect gender equality considerations: applicants may request interviewers and interpreters of a specific gender; gender-sensitive interviewing techniques are required, especially for survivors of sexual or gender-based violence; confidentiality is emphasized to protect applicants who may not have disclosed gender-related persecution to family members.	
	- Training requirements are included, with UNHCR staff who must be trained in gender-sensitive interviewing, working with LGBTI individuals, and recognizing gender-related vulnerabilities.	
	- Gender considerations should be included for physical facilities and security procedures to ensure equal access to procedures. Considerations on gender applicable to children are also included with special procedures outlined for child applicants, with attention to gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity.	
	UNHCR implements **internal learning programs on RSD** mainstreaming gender considerations. The *Interviewing for Protection* Learning Package includes components related to gender considerations in interviews; the RSD Learning Programme include case study related to gender-related persecution.	
	UNHCR approaches its support to strengthen national asylum systems with the same gender focus as its mandate procedures.	
	- **UNHCR** Global Strategy to Strengthen national Asylum Systems (2025 – 2030) promotes gender-sensitive triaging and case processing, emphasizing the importance to identify applicants with specific needs, including those related to gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity, during registration and triaging.	
	- **UNHCR** "Asylum Capacity Self-Assessment How-To Guide" (2025 edition), developed to guide national asylum authorities through a structured process in evaluating and strengthening their asylum systems, has gender considerations mainstreamed in several steps, including in the assessment and gender sensitive data collection methods. The Guide encourages stakeholders to identify root causes of systemic weaknesses, which may include gender-insensitive procedures, or lack of adequate protection considerations in the assessment of the claims.	
	- Handbook for Parliamentarians (2017). UNHCR supports States to ensure that asylum procedures are implemented in a gender-sensitive manner so that female asylum-seekers can present their claim effectively. UNHCR encourages legislators to recognize gender-related forms of persecution as able to result in recognition	

OUTCOME AREA (OA)	Rationale for the UN GEM Score	UN GEM coding
	of refugee status. Procedural aspects highlighted include information and legal advice that is adapted to an applicant's gender.	
OA 3 Protection Policy and Law	UNHCR advocates for legal frameworks that uphold the rights of displaced women and girls. This includes strategic litigation, law and policy reform, and capacity-building for national institutions to address gender-based discrimination and ensure access to justice. Under UNHCR's supervisory responsibility, UNHCR issues legal interpretative and policy guidance on issues affecting refugee protection, including advancing gender equality in the context of refugee status determination and the rights of refugees. UNHCR Handbook on Procedures and Criteria for Determining Refugee Status (2019), a foundational and interpretative guidance for UNHCR and States, incorporates several authoritative Guidelines on International Protection developed by UNHCR addressing various forms of gender-related persecution. - UNHCR Guidelines on Gender-Related Persecution (GIP No. 1), recognizing gender-based violence (including FGM, domestic violence, trafficking) as forms of persecution; emphasizing that laws or practices rooted in gender discrimination may constitute persecution; highlighting the importance of assessing claims from women and LGBTI individuals with sensitivity to gender norms and risk - UNHCR Guidelines on Membership of a Particular Social Group (GIP No. 2), and UNHCR Guidelines on Claims to Refugee Status based on Sexual Orientation and/or Gender Identity (GIP n. 9), where gender and sexual orientation are recognized as potential grounds for refugee status. - UNHCR Guidelines on International Protection No. 7 (2006), reflect a nuanced understanding of the distinct vulnerabilities faced by women and girls in the context of trafficking; recognize that trafficking for sexual exploitation is a form of gender-based violence, disproportionately affecting women and girls and that gender is a critical factor in assessing claims for refugee status; address the heightened risks of re-trafficking, social stigma, and ostracism that female victims of trafficking may face. - UNHCR's Guidance Note on Female Genital Mutilation and the Guidelines on Child Asylum Claims (GIP No. 8) further underscore the need for an AGD-sensitive approach, highlighting the specific protection risks faced by women and girls, including harmful traditional practices and gender-based violence as forms of persecution. - The Handbook also promotes equal treatment of all applicants regardless of gender, including in the context of family unity and derivative status determinations.	GEM 2

OUTCOME AREA (OA)	Rationale for the UN GEM Score	UN GEM coding
	UNHCR's Country Guidance and Country of Origin Information are developed with a strong emphasis on age and gender-sensitivity. Gender, children and LGBTI individuals are commonly included in reports providing information and guidance on profiles of groups at risk of persecution in their country of origin as applicable. UNHCR's global law and policy database Refworld includes a thematic section on Gender Equality and disseminates gender-sensitive legal and policy resources. It supports the integration of gender perspectives in humanitarian protection and asylum processes through curated gender equality resources and access to foundational UN Documents. This facilitates operational support, tracking gender considerations in national and international protection frameworks, and supporting training, research, and advocacy efforts by offering a centralized repository of best practices, evaluations, and thematic analyses related to gender and forced displacement. Under its **statelessness mandate**, UNHCR advocates for the removal of gender discrimination provisions in relation to acquisition, conferral, and loss of nationality. The removal of gender discrimination in nationality laws is one of the 11 actions of the Global Action Plan to End Statelessness. UNHCR engages with many of the twenty-four countries that still discriminate based on gender in nationality conferral.	
OA 4 Gender-Based Violence	Under this Outcome area UNHCR implements comprehensive GBV prevention and response programs in line with its Policy on the Prevention of, Risk Mitigation and Response to Gender-based Violence, which applies to all Operations. The Policy objectives highlight the imperative not only to respond to violence once it has occurred through adequate and timely access to services, but also to prevent GBV by addressing its root causes, mitigating risks, and embedding gender equality in aspects of UNHCR's work. It considers gender equality and GBV programming as complementary, with gender equality and women empowerment programming as essential to any long-term effort to address GBV. The Policy aligns with UNHCR's Policy on Age, Gender, and Diversity (AGD), which includes commitments to women and girls with concrete and measurable actions to strengthen our work in promoting gender equality. Under this Outcome Area: - Survivors of GBV are supported by specialized social workers in Women and Girls Safe Spaces, where basic psycho-social support is provided to enhance survivors' well-being and mitigate further risks of GBV. - Access to other critical services such as GBV case management, health, safe shelters, legal and justice is supported.	**GEM 3**

OUTCOME AREA (OA)	Rationale for the UN GEM Score	UN GEM coding
	- Cash assistance is integrated into programming to help survivors cover urgent needs including relocation when facing immediate risks of GBV. - UNHCR identifies durable solutions for refugee women and girls who have been subjected to violence, including submission to emergency resettlement for survivors at imminent risk of further violence. - UNHCR implements programs to prevent GBV through engaging men and boys as well as interventions focused on empowering women and girls.	
OA 5 Child protection	UNHCR's child protection actions are designed to address the specific protection needs children in all their diversity. In line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNHCR Policy on Child Protection, and the Inter-Agency Minimum Standards for Child Protection, UNHCR promotes access to age- and gender-appropriate protection services for displaced and stateless children. UNHCR's child protection programming advances gender equality by integrating age, gender, and diversity (AGD) principles. UNHCR policy on child protection, mandatory for all operations: - promotes non-discriminatory access to protection services and explicitly addresses the unique protection risks facing girls, including child marriage, gender-based violence (GBV), and harmful gender norms. - has a systemic and strategic focus on narrowing gender inequalities calling for improved access to protection and empowerment for all children, including girls at the result level (e.g. child-friendly solutions, supplementary services and community-based protection), and with high-level objectives contributing to reduce gender-based risks and promote the rights of girls. - outlines a multisectoral approach that includes reinforcing protective gender norms, supporting participation and leadership of girls, ensuring child survivors of GBV receive specialized, survivor-centred support through gender-responsive case management, supporting unaccompanied and separated children, including girls, through alternative care and community—based protection.	GEM 2
OA 6 Safety and Access to Justice	UNHCR supports access to justice for displaced women and girls by providing targeted legal assistance (awareness, counselling, representation), by contributing to address risks such as trafficking and exploitation of women and girls, and by integrating gender considerations in immigration detention monitoring and general guidance on immigration detention. Gender considerations based on needs analysis are integrated in the design of UNHCR programs to provide legal services and ensure access to legal aid for displaced and stateless women and to empower them to access justice.	GEM 2

OUTCOME AREA (OA)	Rationale for the UN GEM Score	UN GEM coding
	UNHCR legal assistance programs under this Outcome Area support the advancement of the rights of women and girls through a range of activities. This includes: - dedicated awareness sessions on legal topics targeted to women to improve awareness of their rights according to the national legal framework. - counselling and legal assistance to retrieve or obtain personal civil documentation including documentation of vital events such as births, marriages, divorces. - counselling and assistance to resolve housing, land, and property (HLP) rights-related issues. - legal aid interventions to support women in situations of heightened protection risks such survivors of gender-based violence and trafficking, or to address disputes over custody, alimony, and inheritance. A gender analysis also informed the development of various operational tools guiding UNHCR staff, frontline workers, and other decision makers working on **immigration detention**, including UNHCR Monitoring Immigration Detention Practical Manual, UNHCR/IDC Vulnerability Screening Tool and UNHCR Guidelines on the Applicable Criteria and Standards relating to the Detention of Asylum-Seekers and Alternatives to Detention. All Guidelines and tools integrate gender considerations. While promoting alternative to detention, the Guidelines call for taking to account the specific circumstances and needs of women asylum-seekers at risk of or in detention, particularly women with specific needs and vulnerabilities (pregnant women, nursing mothers etc.). Where detention is unavoidable, the Guidelines call for gender-sensitive conditions in detention, including access to appropriate hygiene, protection from sexual violence, trauma-informed support, medical care, and legal aid. The Guidelines also promote other gender-sensitive measures (female guards, trained staff on gender-specific needs and rights of women) and call for independent investigations when women report abuse in detention, upholding the principle of confidentiality and protection from retaliation.	
OA 7 Community Engagement and Women's Empowerment	UNHCR adopts a community-based approach that actively promotes leadership and participation of marginalized and underrepresented groups, including women, girls, and LGBTIQ+ persons, in decision-making processes. Central to the activities in this Outcome Area is the commitment to empowering communities and ensuring that forcibly displaced people, particularly women and girls, are meaningfully engaged in UNHCR activities, and act as agents of protection in their communities (Understanding Community Based Protection (2013)) .	**GEM 3**

OUTCOME AREA (OA)	Rationale for the UN GEM Score	UN GEM coding
	Activities under this Outcome Area support the use of participatory methodologies, inclusive communication, safe and accessible feedback and response mechanisms, and the strengthening of community governance structures that reflect gender diversity. While outputs address broader community engagement, numerous activities under this Outcome Area contribute to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls by: - fostering inclusive participation of women and girls in leadership and decision-making roles - identifying and addressing barriers to the meaningful engagement of women and girls, such as cultural norms, digital illiteracy, safety concerns, and lack of access to resources - building leadership and advocacy skills among women and girls to enhance their agency and influence - raising awareness on gender equality, women's rights, and the importance of equitable representation - ensuring that communication and feedback and response channels are informed by the preferences and needs of women and girls and are safe and accessible to them. - ensuring participation of women and girls in user testing and research during development of new digital tools to help address barriers and bridge the digital divide. - supporting women-led organizations and women-led community structures, to identify and address protection risk faced by women and girls and advance empowerment.	
OA 8 Well-being and Basic Needs	UNHCR AGD Policy (Core Action 6d) and UNHCR Commitments towards Women and Girls embedded in the Policy require that women and girls have equal access to assistance, including food, household, and domestic items (e.g. solar lanterns and hygiene kits) and cash assistance. In addition, policy guidance reflecting gender considerations in the implementation of cash-based interventions are included in UNHCR Policy on Cash-Based Interventions and in the Guideline on Cash Assistance and Gender and in recent internal guidance on options to increase cash assistance for women. Under this Outcome Area UNHCR: - Prioritizes financial assistance to enhance dignity and choice by all recipients and reduce negative coping strategies, including those that put women and girls at risk of violence, abuse, exploitation. - Emphasizes the importance of involving women and girls of diverse backgrounds at all stages of cash assistance programming—from assessment of risk to feedback on programs (mandatory post-distribution monitoring) – considering their specific recommendations.	GEM 1 (for non-CBI) and GEM 2 (for CBI)

OUTCOME AREA (OA)	Rationale for the UN GEM Score	UN GEM coding
	- Encourages households to have the choice of both female and male collectors to withdraw the financial assistance on behalf of the family, aiming for higher access by women as recipients, where context allows. Such approach aims to improve equitable access to and control over financial resources by women, as well as progress towards their financial inclusion. - Includes in its modalities of cash assistance "Cash for protection" interventions as part of GBV survivor-centred case management. - supports dignity of women and girls through including menstrual hygiene items in standard NFI packages. - integrates gender-sensitive NFI distribution practices, also based on consultations and feedback from women and girls. - promotes clean cooking and lighting solutions with a protection lens, to ensure AGD approaches are mainstreamed. UNHCR has developed specific guidance to help field operations implementing protection-sensitive access to clean cooking and lighting programs, particularly targeted to GBV risk mitigation and health benefits for women and children (reduction of indoor air pollution). - In its Refugee Environmental Protection approach, UNHCR adopts a community-based delivery models and a gender-intentional approach that involve women in production, dissemination, and behaviour-change campaigns - supporting local ownership and long-term sustainability. **The wide range of assistance activities captured under this Outcome Area (NFI, CBI, clean energy) challenge the possibility to attribute a unique GEM coding for the whole Outcome Area.** Sector experts have indicated a GEM 1 coding for activities related to in-kind assistance/NFIs, also considering the non-mandatory nature of PDM (contrary to cash), the non-systematic feedback from female recipients on the quality and use of item distributed, specifically for female hygiene kits/ menstrual hygiene items. Similarly, while UNHCR promotes safe, accessible, and gender-sensitive energy solutions for displaced women and girls, it responds to the broad needs of all displaced people, and not all aspect of the energy programs have a direct link to gender equality or women empowerment. UNHCR CBI activities, through MPCA and sectoral cash assistance (especially "cash for protection"), are considered to make a substantial contribution not only to risk mitigation but also to gender equality/women's empowerment and are proposed to be considered for a GEM 2 coding.	

OUTCOME AREA (OA)	Rationale for the UN GEM Score	UN GEM coding
OA 9 Sustainable Housing and Settlements	UNHCR supports safe, accessible, and gender-sensitive settlement and shelter solutions for displaced people, paying specific attention to groups and individuals with specific protection needs, such as women and girls, elderly, children, persons with disabilities and in vulnerable situations. For women and girls specifically, this includes: - promotion of gender-sensitive shelter designs contributing to mitigate risks of gender-based violence (GBV), including upgraded shelter kits, communal lighting, secure locks, separation of communal shelters - innovative emergency shelter solutions such as decreasing the environmental footprint of tents, while maintaining attention to features that ensure privacy and dignity (e.g. material that does not allow to see through during both day and night hours). - inclusive planning processes, with development of infrastructure and design that consider the input of various groups of displaced and host population, including women and girls, to reflect their needs and preferences in terms of safety, privacy, and dignity. (e.g. current field test on new emergency solutions). UNHCR promotes such approach from the onset of an emergency response, as highlighted in the UNHCR Emergency Handbook – Safe and Secure Settlements.	GEM 2
OA 10 Healthy Lives	UNHCR health interventions follow UNHCR AGD Policy, requiring that women and girls have equal access to quality health services (Core Action 6d). Through policy and guidance, in relevant operations UNHCR promotes: - Access to essential health services for women and girls, including sexual and reproductive health, mental health, and psychosocial support. It also supported national health system inclusion and addressed barriers to care for displaced women. - Investments in sexual and reproductive health services to advance equitable access to care. A specific focus of the programs is the introduction of innovative approaches to reduce maternal and newborn deaths. UNHCR global public health strategy 2021 – 2025 highlights the importance of addressing the needs of women and girls and provides guidance on how to advance their equitable access to care. Annex C of the strategy details targeted approaches to advance access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) care. Complementary to the global strategy, the UNHCR Guidance Community Health in Refugee Settings aims to advance unified community health approaches in UNHCR. Throughout the document, specific considerations are	GEM 2

OUTCOME AREA (OA)	Rationale for the UN GEM Score	UN GEM coding
	made on advancing the engagement of women in the community health workforce, as well as specific approaches to reach women and girls through community health interventions.	
	Specific UNHCR guidance is available to enhance Adolescent SRH, including ensuring the availability of adequate information, care and support for adolescent girls to take informed decisions about their reproductive health.	
OA 11 Education	UNHCR's education work is grounded in UNHCR Age, Gender, and Diversity (AGD) Policy and Commitments to Women and Girls, which include equal access to quality education for displaced and stateless people; participation of women and girls in decision-making related to education; gender-sensitive learning environments and materials.	GEM 2
	UNHCR promotes access to inclusive and equitable education for girls at all levels, including through school construction, scholarships, teacher training, and community engagement to address gender-related barriers such as early marriage.	
	UNHCR Education Strategy (Refugee Education 2030) promotes gender equality by making gender a cross-cutting priority. It commits to removing barriers that keep refugee girls out of school, fostering safe and inclusive learning environments, and ensuring equitable access at all levels of education.	
	UNHCR tracks the evolution of gender disparity by computing the refugee Gender Parity Index (GPI) at primary and secondary level.	
	UNHCR tertiary education "15 by 30 Roadmap" and scholarship program (DAFI) Policy & Guidelines define standards for female enrolment and outline good practice for promoting retention, completion, and transition of refugee girls from secondary education to tertiary education. UNHCR is committed to achieving gender parity in higher education scholarship programming by 2025.	
	UNHCR supports women-led organizations (WLOs) and refugee women's committees to strengthen community-based education initiatives. These groups play a key role in advocating for girls' education; designing culturally appropriate interventions; enhancing women's participation in decision-making related to education.	
OA 12 Clean Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	UNHCR considers access to clean water and sanitation essential not only to the survival and well-being but is also as a precursor to economic development of displaced and stateless people, including women and girls. As such, UNHCR applies an Age, Gender, and Diversity (AGD) approach to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) programming, recognizing that women and girls have unique vulnerabilities and capacities.	GEM 2

OUTCOME AREA (OA)	Rationale for the UN GEM Score	UN GEM coding
	In its programs, UNHCR considers that ensuring safe access to water sanitation contributes to ending malnutrition, providing safe and inclusive learning environments, ending preventable child deaths, and ending violence against women and girls.	
	Based on participatory assessments and on inclusive community-based approaches (water users' committees and hygiene promotion groups), under this Outcome Area UNHCR implements various gender-sensitive WASH interventions:	
	- invests in access to safe services for women and girls with attention to proximity of water points to reduce the need for women and girls to travel long distances and mitigate the risks of harassment or assault.	
	- invests in safe and private and dignified sanitation facilities such as toilets and bathing areas, with attention to the needs of women and girls (e.g. segregation, lighting). Availability and improved access to household latrines for increased privacy and safety also continues to be included in UNHCR WASH programs.	
	- supports menstrual hygiene management to enhance dignity for women and girls.	
	- promotes women's participation in WASH planning and feedback mechanisms. Community feedback systems further ensure that services addressed inequalities and reflected the needs of women, girls, and other at-risk groups.	
	UNHCR's WASH, protection and accountability Briefing Paper highlights the importance of protection and accountability in UNHCR WASH programs in refugee contexts, common challenges and suggestions on how to implement WASH activities that mitigate protection risks and favour protection outcomes, also for women and girls.	
OA 13 Self-reliance, Economic Inclusion and Livelihoods	UNHCR's Age, Gender, and Diversity (AGD) Policy (Core Action 6d) mandates equal access to economic opportunities for women and girls.	**GEM 2**
	2023 and 2025 Global surveys on livelihoods and economic inclusion data capture gender-specific barriers and opportunities in each country where UNHCR operates, contributing to inform UNHCR livelihood programs and initiatives.	
	Under this Outcome Area UNHCR promotes gender equality through targeted livelihood initiatives and economic inclusion interventions such as technical education and vocational training, entrepreneurship, and financial inclusion. These efforts aim to reduce dependency, enhance resilience, and empower women and girls.	

OUTCOME AREA (OA)	Rationale for the UN GEM Score	UN GEM coding
	Several activities in this Outcome Area also address gender-specific barriers to economic inclusion. These include services such as childcare, psychosocial support, and safe spaces for women entrepreneurs—particularly in contexts where caregiving responsibilities, trauma, and mobility constraints limit participation. UNHCR also mainstreams gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and risk mitigation across livelihoods programming, in line with the UNHCR GBV Policy and the IASC Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls in Humanitarian Action. The upcoming 2025–2030 global strategy on livelihoods and economic inclusion reinforces UNHCR commitment by emphasizing gender-responsive analysis and programming to advance employment, self-employment, inclusion in resilient and sustainable agricultural and food systems, and financial inclusion and well-being. These approaches are further supported by tools such as the UNHCR Gender Equality Toolkit and the Empower-Protect-Innovate Bootcamp model, which promote inclusive digital and economic empowerment.	
OA 14 Voluntary Repatriation and Sustainable Reintegration	UNHCR's policies and guidance on voluntary repatriation apply an age, gender, and diversity (AGD) approach to preparing, planning, and implementing voluntary repatriation activities, and identifies women and girls as categories that may require specific support. - UNHCR assesses voluntariness of the decision to return at household as well as at individual level, where needed. Taking into consideration that household structures still tend to be male dominated, UNHCR makes efforts to promote active participation of women in family decision-making process. - Intention surveys, conducted to understand refugees and IDPs plans vis-à-vis return and solutions, integrate gender considerations via sampling methodologies, and are designed to include the perspective of woman and girls and to capture their specific needs. - Counselling and information on voluntary return reflect UNHCR's understanding of how the context affects different population groups, as per age, gender, and diversity considerations, including consideration on the needs of women and girls. "Go and See" visits consider the representation of women. - UNHCR ensures that the specific needs, protection risks of returning women and girls are assessed, identified, and addressed in voluntary repatriation and reintegration programs, including legal documentation and access to services areas of return. - Return monitoring/protection monitoring aims to identify specific challenges, barriers women and girls are facing in the country of origin/return to inform UNHCR and other partners' response.	**GEM 1**

OUTCOME AREA (OA)	Rationale for the UN GEM Score	UN GEM coding
OA 15 Resettlement and Complementary Pathways	UNHCR's resettlement activities play a significant role in advancing the rights of women and girls by offering protection, empowerment, and long-term solutions away from contexts where they face heightened risks. In its Resettlement Handbook (2023), UNHCR highlights the needs and provides guidance on the identification and resettlement of women and girls facing multiple and intersecting protection risks and discrimination as refugees. This includes: - Unaccompanied or separated girls, girls with disabilities, girls with caretaking responsibilities. (See Children and Adolescents at Risk) - Women and girls survivors or at risk of gender-based violence in the country of asylum. (See Survivor of Violence and/or Torture) Under the category "Women and Girls at risk" UNHCR prioritizes these profiles for resettlement consideration to address their specific protection needs or vulnerabilities and offer physical safety and psychological recovery in a safe environment in a third country. UNHCR Resettlement Handbook (2023) provides guidance on ensuring an age, gender, and diversity (AGD) approach, recognizing the need to ensure women and girls, and men and boys from diverse backgrounds can access resettlement opportunities on an equal footing with others. This includes guidance on communication and counselling, access to UNHCR offices, and trained interviewers.	GEM 2
OA 16 Local Integration and Other Local Solutions	In line with the objectives of the Global Compact of Refugees, UNHCR supports opportunities for local integration of all refugees and stateless persons and their inclusion into national systems, notably by promoting access to legal residency, and access to national services including social protection systems. In its upcoming strategy and guidance on engagement with national social protection system to favour the inclusion of refugees, UNHCR recommends integrating a gender dimension in its assessment of the social protection system, feasibility analysis for inclusion. UNHCR advocates with other UN partners and development actors on the importance to consider gender equality while addressing barriers to inclusion of refugees in social protection systems. In engaging with national social protection entities, UNHCR's focus remains on advocacy and technical support for inclusion of refugees with less emphasis in making national social protection policies and programs gender transformative. This is considered the focus of other normative agencies with whom UNHCR coordinates.	GEM 1

OUTCOME AREA (OA)	Rationale for the UN GEM Score	UN GEM coding
17. Systems and Processes	As an organizational enabler, systems and processes contribute to the broader objective of gender equality. At the same time, gender equality is neither the primary nor a significant objective of UNHCR's systems and processes. The enabling area on systems and processes captures results and budgets related to systems renewal, partner management, budgeting and financial management systems, results and resource information management systems, operational data management systems, planning and implementation management systems, digital transformation, data governance.	GEM 1
18. Operational Support and Supply Chain	As an organizational enabler, operational support and supply contribute to the broader objective of gender equality. At the same time, gender equality is neither the primary nor a significant objective of UNHCR's operational support and supply chain interventions. The enabling areas captures results and budgets on operational support and supply chain captures IT support, travel, finance, vehicle fleet management, warehousing, supply chain processes and procedures, procurement, supply workforce development, transport, inventory management, greening the blue, emergency preparedness and response capacity, security management architecture.	GEM 1
19. People and Culture	As an organizational enabler, UNHCR's work on people and culture significantly contributes to the gender equality. Achieving gender equality in its workforce is a UN wide objective that all UN Entities have committed to and work towards, including UNHCR. This enabling area captures results and budgets related to human resources management, learning and development, organizational legal and technical counsel, policy oversight and coordination, risk management and ethics. It also encompasses UNHCR's DEI Strategy, progress toward gender parity at senior levels, and gender-responsive policies such as flexible work, parental leave, and safeguarding measures. Through gender-sensitive recruitment practices, tailored learning sessions on inclusive behaviours, and strengthened workforce analytics the People and Culture function plays a substantial and intentional role in advancing gender equality across the organization (https://www.unhcr.org/get-involved/work-us/careers-unhcr/diverse-workforce).	GEM 2
20. External Engagement and Resource Mobilization	As an organizational enabler, external engagement and resource mobilization contribute to the broader objective of gender equality. At the same time, gender equality is neither the primary nor a significant objective of UNHCR's external engagement and resource mobilization.	GEM 1

OUTCOME AREA (OA)	Rationale for the UN GEM Score	UN GEM coding
	This enabling area captures results and budgets on communication and advocacy, public and private sector fundraising, and strategic partnership management, including through operational partnerships and inter- agency coordination.	
21. Leadership and Governance	As an organizational enabler, leadership and governance contribute to the broader objective of gender equality. At the same time, gender equality is neither the primary nor a significant objective of UNHCR's leadership and governance.

This enabling area captures results and budgets on executive direction, governance liaison and coordination, evaluation, audit, IGO.

Gender Equality is a relevant aspect of UNHCR Strategic Directions 2022 – 2026. UNHCR leadership is committed to the UN Secretary General Gender Equality Acceleration Plan (GEAP) and has in place a Gender Equality Steering Committee that meets periodically to lead in advancing gender equality through the Policies and culture of the organisation, including through the adoption of an organisation-specific Gender Action Plan. The High Commissioner and another representative of UNHCR senior leadership are international Gender Champions and other members of the Senior Management Team have expressed the intention to join the pool. | GEM 2 |

Main References

UNHCR Result Areas

https://www.unhcr.org/media/unhcrs-results-areas

General on UN Gender Marker

https://gendercoordinationandmainstreaming.unwomen.org/building-block/gender-equality-marker

CEB document on UN Gender Marker

https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/Data%20Standards%20March%202024%20edition.pdf

https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/imported_files/Guidance%20Note%20on%20Coding%20Definitions%20for%20GEMs%20-%20for%20dissemination.pdf

https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/imported_files/Guidance%20Note%20on%20QA%20of%20GEMs%20-%20for%20dissemination.pdf

UNSWAP 3.0 Accountability Framework and Guidelines

https://gendercoordinationandmainstreaming.unwomen.org/building-block/un-swap-30

https://gendercoordinationandmainstreaming.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-12/UN-SWAP%203.0%20Performance%20Indicator%20Framework.pdf

https://gendercoordinationandmainstreaming.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-12/UN-SWAP%203.0%20Technical%20Guidance.pdf

Training Modules GEM

https://gendercoordinationandmainstreaming.unwomen.org/gender-equality-markers-gem-training-modules

UNCT guidelines on UN Gender Marker

https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/UNCT-GEM%20Guidance%20Note%5B13%5D%5B3%5D%20%281%29.pdf