2 September 2014

Dear Mr. Moller,

Further to our letter of 20 December 2013, I thank you and your very effective gender team for its exemplary dedication and commitment to accelerate progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women and in particular, its comprehensive reporting on the UN-SWAP, the system-wide gender mainstreaming accountability framework.

In this context, it is my pleasure to attach to this letter: a) the report of the Secretary-General on Gender Mainstreaming in the UN system (E/2014/63) which presents the aggregated system-wide results of 2013 UN-SWAP reporting; and b) ECOSOC Resolution of 9 June 2014 which in paragraph 12 requests the UN system to fully implement the UN-SWAP.

Also, as annexed to this letter, starting on page 3, you will find an overview of UNOG’s 2013 reporting results, including suggestions on potential next steps.

With specific reference to the UN-SWAP reporting results, permit me to make a few salient points:

First, UN Women is gratified to learn that UNOG is considering developing a gender policy, potentially in partnership with other support offices. UN Women encourages UNOG to start the development process for a new policy as soon as possible and offers its full support to do so. To date, half of UN-SWAP reporting entities, 29 out of 62, have gender policies in place, with 13 additional policies planned for 2014. The analysis of 2013 baseline reporting emphasized that the development of gender policies constitutes one the most effective drivers for accelerated understanding and requisite change with respect to gender relevant work. Analysis also demonstrated a positive correlation between strong gender policies and meeting or exceeding all other UN-SWAP Performance Indicators. It is expected, therefore, that a UN-SWAP aligned policy will greatly enhance UNOG’s contribution to gender equality and the advancement of women by strengthening accountability and providing direction for the achievement of all the UN-SWAP performance criteria by 2017.

Mr. Michael Moller
Acting Head
United Nations Office at Geneva
Second, UN Women welcomes UNOG’s expressed interest in improving its performance in the areas of capacity assessment and development. Capacity assessment and development in gender mainstreaming continue to be two of the weakest areas of performance for the UN-SWAP, with only 24 and 25 per cent of entities meeting or exceeding requirements for the corresponding UN-SWAP Performance Indicators respectively. To address this issue, UN Women has produced an introductory, interactive and self-paced e-course on gender equality and the empowerment of women to be offered to all staff across the UN system starting in early Fall of 2014. The e-course includes 3 mandatory modules and 6 optional modules tailored to entity-specific mandates. In addition, UN Women has developed a capacity assessment tool that can be modified and used by individual entities.

Third, and very importantly, UN Women recognizes the work of Nicole Maguire and Thomas Neufing. We acknowledge with deep gratitude their sincere dedication and commitment to drive substantial progress in the broad area of gender mainstreaming and women’s empowerment, including comprehensive UN-SWAP reporting on behalf of UNOG. We know from our engagement with all 62 entities that have reported on the UN-SWAP that the work is challenging and the order is tall. We also know that it is people who drive progress. Without their attributes and push, the instrument is ineffective, no matter its quality and reach.

Finally, may we emphasize that UN Women keenly looks forward to strengthening the excellent partnership that we have developed in relation to the UN-SWAP, and to continued progress by UNOG on promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. In this regard, Aparna Mehrotra, who is leading work on the UN-SWAP, remains available to assist and may be contacted at aparna.mehrotra@unwomen.org.

Yours sincerely,

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka
Executive Director, UN WOMEN
ANNEX

Results and analysis of UNOG’s 2013 UN-SWAP reporting

About the UN-SWAP 2013 reporting

The UN System-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) implements the CEB Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (CEB/2006/2). It provides an overview of the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women for the UN system, and will allow tracking of progress towards the set of 15 common-system Performance Indicators that make up its core. In this regard, the report of the Secretary General on Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system provides analysis of year on year reporting on the UN-SWAP for the whole of the UN system, including identification of areas of strengths and weaknesses.

In this reporting cycle, the second of the UN-SWAP, 90 per cent of the UN system (62 out of 69 reporting entities) submitted reports. The UN system as a whole evidenced encouraging progress between 2012 and 2013, demonstrating that with intensified efforts and senior management leadership supplemented with adequate resources and capacity, the UN system has the potential to achieve most UN-SWAP performance standards.

Analysis of UNOG’s 2013 report

Breakdown of UNOG’s ratings for all Performance Indicators

The figures below depict UNOG’s ratings for 2013. The first figure demonstrates UNOG’s performance by indicator and the second shows the distribution of UNOG’s ratings for all performance indicators.
Relative to 2012 reporting, in 2013 UNOG demonstrated impressive improvement in its performance on UN-SWAP indicators. In particular, the rating of "meets requirements" significantly increased from 20 per cent of all indicators in 2012 to 40 per cent in 2013. Correspondingly, the "approaches requirements" rating decreased from 6 performance indicators in 2012 (40 per cent of all indicators) to 2 performance indicators (13 per cent) in 2013.
Comparative analysis of UNOG’s performance

As shown in the figure below, in comparison to both the Secretariat as a whole and the rest of the UN system, UNOG’s performance was relatively on par for the percentage of indicators it met requirements for. In 2013, the Secretariat as a whole met or exceeded requirements for 41 per cent of all performance indicators and the UN system as a whole met or exceeded requirements for 42 per cent. In comparison, UNOG met requirements for 40 per cent of indicators.

![UNOG (2013): Visual Comparison Report](image)

Potential improvement

Gender equality policy

- Gender equality and the empowerment of women policies constitute a key driver of progress and demonstrate institutional commitment to promoting accountability for gender equality and women’s empowerment. Accordingly, the UN-SWAP has paid substantial attention to policy development, including through the development and distribution of guidance document and terms of reference for their completion. UN Women encourages UNOG to consider the opportunity of developing its gender equality policy in partnership with other support offices across the UN System, in order to maximize the effectiveness, efficiency and relevance of the process and capitalize on lessons learnt gathered by other offices and departments with a similar mandate. UN Women stands ready to offer its full support in this regard.

Performance Indicators

- The UN-SWAP constitutes both a snapshot in time as well as an aspirational scale of performance standards. UN Women encourages UNOG to strive to meet the requirements in areas in which it currently has ratings of “missing” and “approaching” requirements and “exceed” in areas where it currently meets them. As mentioned earlier, focusing on the areas of gender policy development and capacity assessment and development will greatly enhance UNOG’s overall performance. UN Women, therefore, encourages
UNOG to act wherever possible on its own recommendations and offers support as feasible in these undertakings.

**Gender architecture and parity**
- The area of gender parity and architecture constitutes an area of weakness for most of the UN system. Therefore, like most entities, from 2012 to 2013 UNOG continued not to meet the standards for this Performance Indicators. While fully cognizant of the constraints in this area across the UN system, such as the need to await retirements and departures to fill posts, UN Women encourages UNOG to target this area for improvement, including through a strengthened focus on organizational culture which bears on the sustainability of progress achieved. Persistent and focused effort continues to be required in order to create positive change.
UN-SWAP Next Steps

As follow-up to the second round of UN-SWAP reporting, UN Women looks forward to continued dialogue and engagement concerning progress. In this regard, some upcoming UN-SWAP activities may be relevant to note:

- Gender Policies: continued support for the development of UN-SWAP aligned gender policies, including offers of cost-sharing for the development of these;
- Capacity Assessment: dissemination of gender equality and empowerment of women capacity assessment tool (planned for early Fall 2014);
- Capacity Development: dissemination of an introductory, interactive and self-paced e-course on gender equality and the empowerment of women to be offered to all staff across the UN system (planned for early Fall 2014);
- Coherence: promotion and support for UN-SWAP peer reviews, to enhance accountability, coherence, and cross-entity learning;
- Knowledge and Information Management: creation of knowledge sharing platform including specific user friendly knowledge sharing products (e.g. brochure, fact sheet, compilation of good practice etc.) and an improved web-based reporting system;
- Performance Indicator Workshops: on overall reporting and specific UN-SWAP Performance Indicators, similar to those carried out in the last six months on evaluation, gender marker systems, and gender equality and the empowerment of women policies;
- Focused technical support: for parts of the UN system that lag behind UN system averages in many of the UN-SWAP performance indicators.