

Key messages of the workshop

“Cooperation with the multilateral system: UN women, World Bank”

There was a large interest to know better the involvement of SDC in the multilateral system. One of the key issues discussed with the participants was the incentives and benefits of increasing cooperation with multilateral entities, such as UN Women. One of the objectives discussed was to scale up initiatives at the field and national level.

Multi-bi cooperation is one of the means. It does not only pool additional resources together, it also enlarges operational networks with additional implemented partners. This network increases knowledge, expertise and reality checks. It may lead to a widening of development impact and gender awareness, in particular if local and national authorities are involved at their levels to empower women.

One mechanism to support existing networks, in particular women's associations, is the Fund for Gender Equality that is giving grants to CSOs. It ensures a demand driven process that is anchored in local realities. The Head of the Fund presented the activities on women economic empowerment in fragile contexts, in particular in Lebanon, to help women gain additional income through the consolidation of handicrafts value chains. The objective is to make those initiatives viable so that they could continue when the grant has been used. Therefore networks building are important such as including national players at the meso and macro level. The support of UN Women country offices is also important to bring the issues to the attention of national authorities.

Participants made the following final observations:

- In Ukraine, UN Women is well respected and is helping strengthening strong civil society.
- In Moldova, UN Women and UNDP represent one stop shop. They have established their networks and connect with migrants.
- In Bosnia Herzegovina and Albania, UN Women should pay more attention to the existing long term experience of local NGOs
- In Georgia, UN Women brings credibility and competence. The government is taking its recommendations on board. UN Women has also a strong network of local NGOs.
- In Burkina Faso, the field presence of UN Women is limited despite big ambition. The division of work and value addition of UN Women compared to other agencies is not always clear according to some participants.
- World Bank did not seem to be that present on gender themes in the field
- In Tunisia, UN Women is in a mode of resource mobilization and is not a partner yet. There is a small office within UNDP. Questions of efficiency and effectiveness were raised.
- In Tchad, there are many partners involved on gender issues and a mapping is under way to clarify the various engagements.

Several participants mentioned the competition between the UN agencies and the question of the division of labor.

The knowledge sharing on the links between bilateral cooperation and multilateral cooperation and on the use of a grant mechanism to support civil society's organizations was proven to be of great interest to the participants.