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SDC-Gender Equality Network

SDC GENDER EQUALITY NETWORK NEWSLETTER

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Gender Equality, Justice, Peace- and Statebuilding

EDITORIAL

Dear readers,

This newsletter is entirely dedicated to the biannual Face-to-Face held from 30th May to 3rd June 2016 in Lausanne and Geneva. Some 120 participants from Swiss cooperation offices, implementing partners as well as experts attended the joint meeting of the Networks on Gender Equality and Conflict and Human Rights (CHRnet). The F2F provided a unique and timely opportunity to jointly reflect and discuss what the new Agenda 2030 means for SDC's policy and operational work, to capitalize the learnings from the field and to define new work streams and priorities for 2016-2018 in order to support the implementation of the SDGs. Find the key learnings of the meeting in our focus article by Flurina Derungs from the Interdisciplinary Centre for Gender Studies, University of Bern. To give you detailed insight in the diverse discussions, this newsletter also provides you with a brief summary and conclusion of each Gendernet workshop.



Previously to the F2F both networks conducted a joint e-discussion where 28 SDC entities and partners shared their experiences and good practices on how to integrate the gender dimension in peace- and statebuilding. This rich fundus can be accessed on the Gendernet Shareweb in form of a [compilation](#) as well as a [summary](#) of all contributions.

Last but not least, we are happy to announce that until the end of this year, the Gendernet Shareweb will be equipped with a new feature. Following the requests of many Gendernet members, a *Community Space* will be created to share country-specific information such as member profiles or Gender Action Plans. We look forward to a lively exchange.

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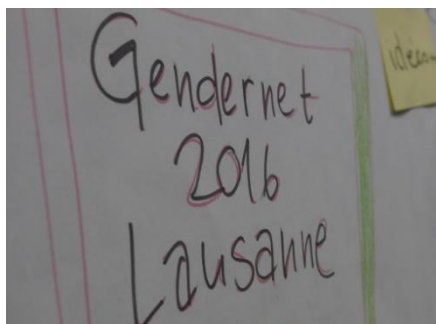


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FOCUS

Gender equality, justice, peace- and statebuilding

Key learnings of the F2F 2016

Flurina Derungs, Interdisciplinary Centre for Gender Studies, University of Bern

More than one third of the Swiss cooperation partner countries have not achieved the Millennium Development Goals due to conflict, fragility and disrespect for human rights which weaken the capacity and legitimacy of states to provide effective services, deliver peace and justice, and reduce people's insecurity. **Conflict and fragility have a strong gender dimension** and all these issues constitute a major obstacle to the achievement of sustainable development and peace. Women and men have different roles, experiences, vulnerabilities and security needs, the division of labour is highly gendered and conflicts usually exacerbate existing inequalities. Conflict and fragility though also impact and change gender roles and the division of labour fundamentally, and with this the power relations within the household and in the community. Men being away fighting, many women take over the role as breadwinners and as important actors in national or local governance. In post-conflict reconstruction and statebuilding, those power relations again change and gender roles and women's rights are renegotiated. There are many challenges and risks in statebuilding processes, but there is also a strong momentum to build a more gender just state and society. And there are complex interactions between statebuilding and development whereas gender equality matters for both.¹

A world free of poverty, fear and violence, a world of universal respect for human rights, justice and full gender equality – this the vision of the 2030 Agenda, with its goals on achieving gender equality and on peace, justice and strong institutions.^{2 3}

In this year's F2F some 120 participants from SDC, partners and other experts discussed issues of gender equality, justice, peace and statebuilding. What was the outcome of all these keynotes, workshops and discussions? What are the learnings we all take home and we want to continue working on? How does SDC manifest this in tools and instruments to use in daily work? This focus article reflects on **some of the key learnings of the F2F 2016** and contextualises them with actual debates and key issues in current research on gender equality, justice, peace- and statebuilding:

Women's participation is key to sustainable peace

Let us look at participation first – an issue with a lot of research about and widely discussed at the F2F. Sixteen years after the adoption of UN RES 1325, women still remain significantly underrepresented in peace and transitional processes. The number of female negotiators, mediators, signatories, witnesses or women in advisory bodies is rising, often though their roles are more symbolic than substantive and their influence may be resisted by cultural norms. And often women are also underrepresented in other crucial post-conflict decision-making arenas, such as constitutional commissions, land reform units, truth and reconciliation bodies and donor conferences. «Women's participation is key to sustainable peace»⁴, this is how the Global Study, the 15-year-review on the implementation of UN RES 1325, summarises research that comprehensively demonstrates that the participation of women at all levels is key to the

¹ This introduction on the gender dimension of conflict and fragility is mainly based on the KOFF Factsheet «Gender Dimensions of Conflict and Peacebuilding» (2012). As usual you find all references with links in the last section of the newsletter (Publication, Resources and References).

² United Nations: Transforming our world. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

³ In order to keep this article short, it intentionally omits references to policies and the legal framework. All references on the international level such as the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, the UN Women's Rights Convention CEDAW and its General Recommendation (GR) 30 on Women in Conflict or references to the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States with its five Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSGs) can be found in the last section of the newsletter. The same accounts for references on the Swiss national level such as the new SDC Dispatch for International Cooperation 2017-2020, the Swiss National Action Plan to implement UNSCR 1325, SDC's Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Strategy as well as SDC's Gender Strategy 2015-2018. Also the input paper elaborated for the preparatory e-discussion contains references to policies and the legal framework.

⁴ UN Women: Preventing conflict, transforming justice, securing the peace. A global study on the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325. New York, 2015, p. 15. For all references see the last section of the newsletter.

operational effectiveness, success and sustainability of peace processes and peacebuilding efforts. Nevertheless, it is not just the number of women, the inclusion of women *per se* that count, but the influence they actually have on a process. **Women's participation needs to be substantial and meaningful.** «(...) making women's participation count is more important than merely counting the number of women included in peace processes», this the key message of one of the keynotes at the F2F 2016 by Thania Paffenholz and the result of a recent multi-year research project very worth looking at under her leadership.⁵ The underrepresentation of women in peace processes is strongly linked to their participation in decision making in general – as community leaders, members of parliament or executive leaders, as managers in government positions or in private companies.

The issue of **women's participation in decision making** was discussed widely during the F2F. Participants highlighted the post-conflict situation as being a key moment to promote women's participation in decision making. And they contributed experiences how women's participation can be promoted through affirmative action such as quota, but also through training and coaching or awareness campaigns. There are some **critical questions** to ask and to continue working on in the light of actual debates and current research: How substantial and meaningful is the participation SDC promotes in programmes and projects? How does SDC monitor participation? What evidence is this monitoring based on to check if the impact of women's inclusion on peace processes – or in decision making in general – is substantial and meaningful?



Broadening the concept of security

Different scholars criticise the **concept of human security** promoted in UN RES 1325 as being too narrow. For example a recently appeared CSO alternative report to the Swiss National Action Plan 1325 advocates for broadening this narrow concept.⁶ A holistic, gender-just peace policy means changing the underlying causes of the conflict and its structural drivers – and with this **the underlying structural gender hierarchies** in a society. A narrow focus on conflict-related Sexual-and Gender-based Violence (SGBV), often promoted within the 1325 agenda, prevents a systemic understanding of the different forms of gender-based violence existing in fragile contexts. The SDC capitalization report that was launched at the f2f shows, that various forms of SGBV are occurring before, during and in particular also in the aftermath of conflicts. It mostly affects women, but also men. SGBV may be used as a deliberate act of warfare as much as a patriarchal sanction on women stepping out of the prescribed social norms. However, security in conflict and post-conflict situations is not only about direct violence against women. It is also strongly linked to questions of economy and social policy, asking about work and care, strong institutions and access to justice. The conditions under which women live their daily life and work in fragile, insecure situations not only put them at risk for violence in public and in their homes, they are also central for their economic security. And they also have an influence on their possible participation in the peace process and in decision making in general.

The expansion of the concept of human security and the need to include economic security and social protection – also this an issue discussed widely at the F2F. Participants highlighted how important it is

⁵ Inclusive Peace & Transition Initiative; UN Women: Making women count – not just counting women: Assessing women's inclusion and influence on peace negotiations. Geneva, 2016.

⁶ Working Group 1325: Women Peace Security – reloaded. Civil Society Alternative Report on the National Action Plan 1325 as seen from the Gender Perspective. Impulses and Inputs for Actors in Politics, Administration and Civil Society. Bern, 2016.

to consider **care and domestic work** respectively the gendered differences in the use of time and the provision of care as a highly critical domain and root cause of gender inequality. They discussed rigid traditional norms and **gender stereotypes and discrimination** as well as the existing social and cultural barriers that hinder women from participating in the economy and in having access to resources. How can women participate in a peace process if the main responsibility for caring for the children and sick, for cooking and fetching water lie on their shoulders? How can they make a living for the family if gender stereotypes still prevent them from getting education and vocational training? Participants also discussed many good practices **how the gender dimension can be integrated in building the economic foundation** for just, peaceful and inclusive societies, i. a. through promoting women's access to productive resources, education and vocational training or economic empowerment. Also here, there are some **critical questions** to ask and to further work on in the light of actual debates and current research: How does SDC consider the aspect of care and the gendered division of labour in in fragile contexts? How can the integration of a care perspective in SDC's programmes on education, vocational training and political and economic empowerment be strengthened? Does SDC actually address and challenge the underlying structures of power imbalances in the work to promote gender equality? And what opportunities are there within the 2030 Agenda?

Global policies - national implementation

The Agenda 2030 and other policies such as the New Deal with the five PSG's, or the UN Res 1325 state it very clearly: There is a strong nexus of peace- and statebuilding with gender equality; women's rights need to be protected also in times of conflict and women need to meaningfully participate in fora, how their country can be transformed and rebuilt after conflict. «Integrating a gender perspective into international support to statebuilding processes is key to improving the quality of international engagement in fragile and conflict-affected states» – this the key message of a OECD-DAC report.⁷ The reality looks different and participants of the f2f report the mere absence of the gender dimension in national development strategies and plans. The processes now undertaken for the national implementation of the SDG's with its strong reference to gender equality and peaceful societies are a unique chance. They provide **opportunities for promoting gender-responsive peace- and statebuilding** by integrating gender both as a transversal topic and gender-specific actions in newly elaborated action plans. To do so, it is important to link up with government entities responsible for the national implementation of the SDG's and also include **different stakeholders** such as civil society organisations (and especially women's organisations), multilateral entities, the media, academia and the private sector. Factors of **multiple and intersecting discrimination** (such as ethnic minorities, age or disability), need particular attention in these processes, especially in conflict-affected areas.



Accountability & evidence

These policies though are only as good as their accountability mechanisms. Monitoring and accountability are a Swiss priority in foreign affairs and the 2030 Agenda contains a call for a robust accountability mechanism. Different researches, such as the Global Study or OECD-DAC references, highlight the **importance of accountability and building an evidence base** for gender-sensitive peace- and

⁷ OECD-DAC: Conflict and Fragility. Gender and Statebuilding in Fragile and Conflict-affected States. Paris, 2013.

statebuilding.⁸ The topic was also discussed widely at the F2F. How can we hold our governments and other stakeholders accountable for their international and national commitments? Participants for instance discussed how they can use the **CEDAW reporting mechanism**, not only as a source of information for project proposals, but also for policy dialogue and advocacy. Or they highlighted the importance of integrating the gender dimension in the analysis and action plans as a way to increase accountability. For this, SDC knows different **tools and instruments** such as the toolbox on conflict-sensitive programme management and the gender toolkit. However, it is important to connect the gender and conflict tools: A gender lens needs to be applied to the analysis of the (conflict) context and key questions of a **gender analysis** asked together with questions of the overall **conflict analysis**.⁹

Achievements and remaining challenges though can only be tracked and monitored if we build **evidence through reliable statistics** – this again an issue widely shared at the F2F, e.g. through sex-disaggregated data collection; evidence-based analysis, planning and implementation; the importance of gender sensitive indicators for monitoring and evaluation and capacity-building. In the light of actual debates and current research on accountability, there again are **questions** to ask: How can SDC improve existing internal monitoring mechanisms to include the gender dimension in peace- and statebuilding? And more importantly, how can SDC support the partner countries in their monitoring capacities, i.e. by promoting the integration of gender in national action plans and strengthening capacities of national statistical offices to develop a data base? How does SDC tackle multiple, intersecting discrimination in fragile contexts together with its work on gender equality?

Accountability, national action plans to implement the SDG's, the increase of accountability, collaboration of different stakeholders, evidence-base – all these issues are linked to the need for **more technical and financial resources**, not least for women's civil society organisations. These resources though often lack in fragile and conflict-affected settings. It all comes down to **political will**. The implementation of the ambitious universal 2030 Agenda will only be possible with political will – to change, to share, to train, to finance in order to transform the world and build a more equal, fair and inclusive world society free of poverty, fear, and violence, a world of universal respect for human rights, justice and full gender equality.



AUTHOR

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CONCLUSIONS AND FINDINGS OF THE F2F WORKSHOPS

In the F2F on gender equality, justice, peace- and statebuilding, there were five different blocks of participative workshops. Network members and partners contributed lively to the workshops by presenting good practices and experiences from the field and discussing them. Instead of sharing news from members of the network, this section of the newsletter summarises the contributions from the field in the workshops and gives links to all presentations, video statements, reports and films that can be consulted on the Shareweb of the gender equality network.

⁸ For the OECD-DAC reference see footnote 7. For the Global Study see footnote 4.

⁹ Also references to the different SDC tools can be found in the last section of the newsletter.

Gender, fragility & violence

Addressing SGBV in fragile to more stable development contexts

The Gender Equality Network has recently undertaken an extensive **capitalisation** of SDC's experiences in addressing sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). The [new report](#), drawing on some 15-20 years of experience, was launched on Tuesday evening of the F2F. In two workshop sessions, Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation facilitated a discussion of some of the key findings, with inputs from a medica mondiale resource person. The first session focused on understanding and adapting to the local **context**, the importance of a long-term perspective, the **psychosocial approach**, and **working with men and boys**. Presentations were made by the COOFs of Benin and Cambodia as well as by two partners, HEKS/EPER (DR Congo) and IAMANEH (Western Balkans). In the second workshop session, discussions focused on the **role of the government**, the security and justice sector **as well as the role of civil society** in responding to SGBV. Presentations by the COOFs of Bolivia and the DR Congo as well as by the partner IAMANEH served as the basis for discussions. SDC is currently supporting programmes directly addressing SGBV in 12 different countries, with a total financial volume of over CHF 10 million per annum. Both workshop sessions provided an opportunity to discuss how SDC can make best use of its knowledge and experience on the topic, and how to make a more systematic link between addressing SGBV and working in fragile contexts, where the prevalence of SGBV can be particularly high.

→ [Workshop Gender, fragility & violence](#)

SGBV in humanitarian contexts

SGBV will be one of the four **new priority themes** of SDC Humanitarian Aid in the new Federal Dispatch on International Cooperation 2017-2020. In a **thematic introduction** the workshop familiarised participants with this new priority topic, with definition, causes, the legal framework and the widespread invisibility of SGBV in the humanitarian context and how humanitarian actors work on SGBV. Present resource persons from the [GBV Area of Responsibility \(GBV AoR\)](#) explained the work of the AoR and referred to the [Call to Action on protection from GBV in emergencies](#), an international initiative which seeks to strengthen GBV prevention and response from the onset of a crisis. Switzerland is also a partner to the Call to Action. The workshop also included a **contributions** from Jordan with experiences and challenges to address SGBV and the work of SDC at policy and programming level. Participants discussed the importance of being creative to combine development and humanitarian instruments of SDC and of looking well after staff working on SGBV.

→ [Workshop SGBV in humanitarian contexts](#)

Gender, fragility & politics

Gender, local governance, decentralisation and women's political participation

The two workshops concentrated on the integration of gender in PSG 1 (Legitimate politics). In the first workshop participants discussed **gender issues in local governance and decentralisation**. COOF Mozambique reported about their experiences in decentralising the competencies to tax, plan, budget and administer resources to local governments and in integrating gender issues in these programs. COOF Ukraine shared their experiences of the DESPRO program (Decentralisation of public services) with activities such as quota and capacity building. And COOF Cambodia highlighted the post-conflict situation as being a key moment to promote women's participation in decision-making, the need to promote legitimacy and trust into the government after a conflict and SDC's contribution to the Democratic Development Reform. In the second workshop participants discussed **women's representation and participation in local governance structures**. COOF Benin shared their experiences in promoting women's participation in municipal councils through capacity building of women, awareness-raising among men and women and advocacy in political parties as well as economic empowerment of women. And COOF Tunisia reported about SDC's programme to support the electoral process in Tunisia and how they increase women's participation through i. a. awareness campaigns, supporting women's candidates and capacity building. COOF Bangladesh shared their experiences of women's political empowerment from the Aparajita programme. This programme builds capacity and confidence among the elected women representatives and empowers them to compete for senior position and to take influence in the decision making processes in local government institutions. The need of affirmative actions such as quota and to include men in all projects was furthermore highlighted in the discussion.

→ [Workshop Gender, local governance, decentralisation and women's political participation](#)

Gender, fragility & economics

Gender, fragility and rural economic development

In this workshop participants reflected on the integration of gender in PSG 4 (Economic foundations) and its relevance for the SDG5 on gender equality. COOFs from Kyrgyzstan, Georgia, Mongolia and Lao presented findings of their **gender assessments**. They provided a deep insight into the crucial contribution of women to rural development and the gendered division of labour. The gender assessment though also revealed the restricted access of women to productive resources and decision making, the lack of capacities and sex-disaggregated data as well as the mere absence of the different needs of women and men in national development strategies and planning. As a way forward, participants discussed factors how gender can be integrated in **strategic planning** and how this can contribute to the **reduction of fragility**: Through capacity building, gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive budgeting, the collection of data, promoting meaningful participation of women, recognition of women's contribution, working with different partners and addressing gender stereotypes.

→ [Workshop Gender, fragility & rural economic development](#)



Financing for gender equality and supporting women's civil society

Participants of this workshop shared experiences how SDC can work with **women's civil society organisations** (CSO's) in order to promote women's empowerment and how this work can be financed. A short introduction by HO gave an overview on different ways of resource mobilization and **financing for gender equality**. The field of macro-economic, which offers a wide range of instruments such as gender-just tax systems or gender-responsive national resource-allocation, could not be treated in more detail in the workshop. Rather, the workshop aimed at discussing modalities of gender-responsive budgeting on local and community level, through participative approaches and inclusive local governance. COOF Burkina Faso presented the good practice of the 'Fond Commun Genre'. This is a fund where partners put their resources together and finance representative women's CSO's. COOF Western Balkan shared their experiences with gender-responsive programming and budgeting in Macedonia at the municipal and central level in collaboration with UN Women. In the discussion participants named the lack of capacities and political will as being the main problem in **funding women's CSO's** and they mentioned the importance of capacity building, monitoring, a long-term approach and cooperation with constituency-based CSO's as key recommendations. The workshop's discussion – as well as a consultation of all COOFs previous to the F2F - showed that direct financing of women's CSO's could be a strategy to be exploited more systematically by SDC. For promoting **gender-responsive budgeting** participants mentioned how important it is to bring government on board and raise awareness and they further highlighted the need for accountability, participation and capacity building.

→ [Workshop Financing for gender equality and supporting women's civil society](#)

Multilateral partners and international women's human rights

Working on gender equality with multilateral partners and development banks

Participants of this workshop discussed the **work of UN Women and the World Bank on Women's Economic Empowerment**, including in fragile contexts. The thematic introduction familiarised participants with the activities of those two multilateral institutions, with the UN system-wide action plan for gender equality and the flagship programme initiatives. One mechanism to support existing networks,

in particular women's association (see also workshop on women's CSO's) is the **UN Women's Fund for Gender Equality** which gives grants to CSO's. The head of the fund presented the activities of this fund for women's empowerment in fragile contexts. She shared experiences of women's economic empowerment, access to resources, participation and decision-making and women's safety from Guinea and Lebanon and stressed the significance of considering women's unpaid time burden.

The discussion revealed a large interest to understand the involvement of SDC in the multilateral system and the need of strengthening the **links between bilateral and multilateral cooperation**. Therefore participants discussed possibilities of increased cooperation with multilateral entities and the scaling up of initiatives at the field and national level. Participants also reported about their cooperation with multilateral entities in the field and shared their perception: UN Women is quite present in the different partner countries, however the World Bank does not seem to be as visible on gender related work in the field.

→ [Workshop Working on gender equality with multilateral partners and development banks](#)



Working with international women's human rights instruments

In this workshop, representatives from the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Secretariat of the UN Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW) familiarised participants with the **most important international legal frameworks and mechanisms relevant for gender equality and women's rights**. Participants got an introduction into CEDAW and its reporting system, as well as into the special procedures of the Human Rights Council (HRC) (e.g. the special rapporteur on violence against women) and its universal periodic review (UPR) system for accountability. Participants learnt **how they can make use of these international legal framework for their daily work** e.g. for policy dialogue or in project proposals, for example when providing funds or small grants for the development of a civil society's shadow report to one of the procedures, or by building capacities for government and national structures for the implementation of the international instruments. The presenters from OHCHR Gender-Unit as well as from CEDAW showed a number of concrete country examples, so participants were exposed to concrete examples from their partner countries. Participants finally received most important reference and links on where to find information on their countries, so they can use it for advocacy and holding their government accountable.

→ [Workshop Working with international women's human rights instruments](#)

Connecting Resolution 1325 with SDG 5 and 16. A review on national action plans 1325

Even when 2015 marked the 15th anniversary of UN RES 1325, **substantive participation of women** in peacebuilding and the protection of women's rights in conflicts remain a **major challenge**. Based on a thematic introduction by DCAF, participants in this workshop discussed current debates in the Women, Peace and Security agenda, shared their experiences with National Action Plans (NAP) in their countries and discussed them with staff from the FDFA and partners responsible for the implementation of the Swiss NAP. **Key messages of the workshop** included the need of expanding the concept of human security as really being security for all (e.g. including economic security and social protection), the possibility to use the different human rights instruments (like also CEDAW) in a flexible manner and linking them better and the need for meaningful and substantive participation and not just participation in numbers. Furthermore it is crucial to have a good analysis of the context, the existing experiences, strategies, stakeholders, the security system and its accessibility to figure out the good combination of instruments and to have a strong civil society network.

→ [Workshop Connecting Resolution 1325 with SDG 5 and 15. A review of national action plans 1325](#)

Women's involvement in conflict early warning and response systems

Involvement of women in conflict early warning and response systems (CEWR) is key to the efficiency of conflict prevention, but – despite UN RES 1325 – has been **largely overlooked**. In the workshop two examples from the field (Tanzania and Horn of Africa) were presented and participants got an insight into the concept and potential of CEWR for anticipating, preventing and resolving conflict, and the benefits a gender-sensitive CEWR could bear for sustaining peace. The workshop also included presentations by the two partners swisspeace and ETH Zurich on the experiences of FAST (International Early Warning Program) and on the EWER (Community Based Early Warning and Rapid Response Systems). The participants of the workshop agreed to launch a **new workstream on CEWR** within the network.

→ [Workshop Women's involvement in conflict early warning and response systems](#)

Tools and instruments

Gender & conflict analysis

A thorough **gender analysis** is the basis for any gender-responsive intervention as is a **conflict analysis** for working in fragile context. Based on experiences from Jordan, Afghanistan and the DRC participants of this workshop discussed the combination of those two kind of analysis and the **integration of the main tools and questions**. The discussion revealed that it is very important to apply questions of a gender analysis also in fragile contexts. Division of labour, gender roles, access to and control over resources, participation in decision-making – these are the questions asked in a gender analysis which also need to be asked within a conflict analysis. How do gender roles and the division of labour change in a conflict? How do women and men experience conflicts and the aftermath differently? How different does it impact on women and men and what coping mechanisms they have? How are existing gender-based inequalities reshaped as a result of conflict and war? What consequences do the absence of men, unemployment or the restricted access to basic services have on women and men? What support programmes exist and how gender-sensitive are they? And what about impunity of violence and access to justice? In the main tools for conflict analysis from the SDC toolbox on CSPM such key gender issues need to be integrated as part of the overall conflict analysis.

→ [Workshop Tools and instruments. Gender & conflict analysis](#)

MEMBER OF THE GENDER TEAM: ERDENESAIKHAN NYAMJAV



Dear readers and colleagues,

I am Erdenesaikhan (Erdene) Nyamjav. At the Swiss Cooperation Office in Mongolia, I work as a National Programme Officer responsible for education, combating gender-based violence, environment and artisanal mining projects. Since 2015, I've also been acting as a national gender focal point. SDC projects make great efforts to reach out to beneficiary women, men and children in Mongolia; gender equality mainstreaming is reflected in the project activities and the results we claim. We do not only mainstream gender equality throughout mandatory project cycle moments, we promote it through creative ways. In 2015, we called for a gender photo story competition as part of annual programme review among our projects; they found the competition an encouragement to portray how they made positive impacts on the lives of project beneficiaries. The selected stories were then featured to complement the quantitative results in the SDC Mongolia annual report. To continue promoting gender equality, I am looking forward to having the *Community Space* soon on our Shareweb, where we can share our gender analysis reports, information, data and stories from all different countries and learn from each other.

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KEY MESSAGES FROM THE FOCAL POINTS GENDER & CHR¹⁰

Peace and development, justice and human rights cannot be achieved without gender equality, as gender equality cannot be achieved without peace, development and respect for human rights. The SDGs 5 and 16 of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development provide a good framework – from the operational to the political sphere.

We have learned that addressing conflict and fragility starts with fostering the human rights of women and men. It is about empowering and strengthening legitimate political systems and processes that give women and men equal chances to participate; it is also about promoting economic livelihoods, social cohesion and justice for all members of a community; and it is about preventing and addressing violence in all its forms, including gender-based violence. The F2F showed that SDC has a variety of good practices. For example, **decentralization processes have proved to be a great opportunity to promote gender equality**, since power structures are newly negotiated on a local level and this provides opportunities to ‘reorganize’ political participation to include more women. SDC’s experience also shows that Rule of Law is key to work on fragility, reduce violence, and enhance gender equality.

The complex realities of conflict and fragility require a comprehensive response that must be reflected in the choice of our partnerships. Working with civil society, women’s and human rights organizations, as well as private sector actors as partners and allies is crucial, just as promoting dialogue with governments on local and national level, such as in SDC’s innovative collaboration with parliaments to build and sustain representative democracy. We also learned about good examples in using the multilateral system to pool resources and scale up impact. Managing partnerships and dialogue is thus a key aspect of working towards gender equality and reducing fragility and conflicts.

We have realized how important it is to include a gender analysis as an integral part of our overall conflict and context analysis. Often, existing inequalities exacerbate conflicts and this is particularly true for gender inequalities. Restrictions of mobility due to insecurity, social norms which hamper access to services and political participation, and the increase in different forms of gender-based violence are issues that have to be included in any analysis. Yet discussions also highlighted the opportunities that may come with the dynamic changes in gender roles often observed in fragile contexts. We have to recognize these opportunities and support positive changes in order to turn them into lasting transformations.

The joint F2F was of great benefit for the two networks, and it created a temporary community of practice of about 120 participants. The F2F showed that the operational and policy levels should go hand in hand, and that policy work has to be based on operational evidence. With a majority of participants from SDC’s field offices, especially National Programme Officers, the F2F proved important to bring together topics and people working on these topics.

Our joint learnings are underpinned by the findings of a SDC supported review of donor support to gender equality in fragile contexts¹¹. The review asked how effective programming for gender equality is, what focus is chosen and whether it also addresses key drivers of conflict and fragility. The countries that served as case studies were Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Bangladesh where a number of SDC programs were reviewed. Preliminary findings show that programs do target conflict-affected women as beneficiaries and also recognize the diverse impact conflicts have on women, but often fail to address these impacts consistently and support change that is transformative and sustainable. Once published, the final report will serve SDC and the donor community to develop our tools for gender-responsive programming in fragile situations.

¹⁰ This section outlines the key messages of the Focal Points Gender and CHR in the [F2F Pageflow documentation](#).

¹¹ The review was conducted jointly by the two DAC networks *Gendernet* and *INCAF*.

PUBLICATIONS, RESOURCES & REFERENCES



SDC resources on gender equality, justice, peace- and statebuilding

SDC (2016): [„Violence against an individual is violence against society, the family as a whole“ SDCs experience in addressing Sexual and Gender-based Violence.](#)

SDC (2015): [Peacebuilding and statebuilding strategy for SDC's work in fragile and conflict contexts](#)

SDC (2015): [Gender at the SDC – strategic lines and thematic priorities 2015-2018.](#)

SDC-Plattform: [Conflict-Sensitive Programme Management CSPM](#)

Documents for preparation of the F2F: [Concept note](#), [Programme of the F2F](#), [Input paper](#), [Summary e-discussion](#), [Compilation e-discussion](#)

SDC (2006): [Gender, conflict transformation & the psychosocial approach](#)

SDC (2016): [Dispatch on Switzerland's international cooperation 2017-2020. Key points in brief.](#)



Policies and legal framework on gender equality, peace- and statebuilding

United Nations (2015): [Transforming our world. The 2030 agenda for sustainable development](#)

United Nations (2013): [General recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations](#), [Guidebook on CEDAW general recommendation No. 30 and the UNSCR on women, peace and security](#)

FDFA (2013): [Women, peace and security. Swiss national action plan to implement UNSCR 1325.](#)

New Deal: [New deal for engagement in fragile states](#)

PSGs: [Peace- and Statebuilding Goals](#)

UNSCR 1325 (2000): [Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security](#)



Further resources and publications on the topic

UN Women (2016): [Making women count – not just counting women](#)

UN Women (2015): [Global study on the implementation of UNSCR 1325](#)

OECD-DAC (2013): [Gender and statebuilding in fragile and conflict-affected states, Short version](#)

KOFF (2012): [Gender dimensions of conflict and peacebuilding](#)

UN Women: [Global database on violence against women](#), [Virtual knowledge centre to end violence against women and girls](#), [New database on women and peace agreements](#)

Global development professionals network (2016): [A girl's view on the 17 SDG's – in pictures](#)

Swiss NGO Working Group 1325 (2016): [Working Group 1325: Women Peace Security – reloaded. Civil Society Alternative Report on the National Action Plan 1325 as seen from the Gender Perspective. Impulses and Inputs for Actors in Politics, Administration and Civil Society.](#)