



## MENA Gender Action Plan 2021-2022

Advancing gender equality and women's empowerment

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Palestinian graduates taking part in the first of its kind boot camp in the Gaza Strip under the name THINK BIG, START SMALL, February 2019.



## Objectives & Reference Framework

The Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) promotes gender equality because we believe if women and girls, in all their diversity, are empowered to reach their full potential, families, communities and countries will do better. The full participation of women in society will have a positive impact on health, security and economic growth. Hence, women and girls empowerment is an effective approach for poverty reduction, sustainable development and peace.

This Gender Action Plan (GAP) is intended as a resource for the Swiss Cooperation Offices (SCOs)/ Embassies of the MENA region to strengthen commitment and effectiveness on Gender equality. The GAP has not been developed jointly with all WOGA partners (this might come at a later stage) but a WOGA approach is encouraged for its application. It is an opportunity to reflect on the Swiss engagement for gender equality, their good practices and challenges. The GAP sets a specific focus on three areas which are considered crucial to accelerate gender equality: 1) Management, 2) Strategy & Operations and 3) Knowledge Management. For each focus area a set of objectives and sub objectives are defined. This GAP is the first of its kind for the MENA region. The idea behind it was to create a common framework, which allows synergies in pursuing the same goal. However, the GAP does not request the same approach in the different contexts. Therefore, in the last column of the framework individual milestones can be set by the SCOs. The motto is towards the same goal, on individual paths.

The GAP is in line with existing policies and standards on gender equality. The initiatives taken within the GAP should therefore contribute to the three objectives set in SDCs and FDFAs strategy on gender equality namely; women's protection against sexual and gender based violence, as well as women's economic and political participation.<sup>1</sup> The GAP is also in line with the new Message of International Cooperation 21-24 and the MENA strategy 21-24, which highlight the importance of promoting gender equality to build a more peaceful, inclusive and prosperous world. Gender equality is mentioned as a compulsory transversal theme in all interventions. Furthermore, Switzerland agreed to "achieve gender equality and empowering all women and girls" in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 of the UN 2030 Agenda. Switzerland is persuaded that supporting SDG 5 will be a catalyser to achieve other SDGs. Therefore, we engage to its achievement in Switzerland and in our partner countries abroad.

Finally, the MENA-D Division at HQ has set gender equality as being a strategic priority. Therefore, specific human resources are dedicated to this priority at MENA-D Division and will support field offices in the knowledge management.

## Implementation & Monitoring

The HoCs of the region are responsible for the oversight of the GAP, to encourage the contribution to the objectives/sub-objectives, to pinpoint deficiencies and adjust programming if necessary. The HoC ensure that the SCO staff is willing, tasked and equipped to promote gender mainstreaming across the programmes. The Gender Focal Points' main responsibility is the building and sharing of knowledge on gender equality with their colleagues within the SCOs and with their peers in the MENA region. Furthermore, they will support the HoCs during the evaluation of the GAP by collecting relevant data. This GAP will be monitored and evaluated in the framework of the annual reporting. The results of the individual milestones will be handed in as an annexe to the annual report.

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<sup>1</sup> Gender Strategic Lines of SDC 2015-2018, FDFAs Strategy on Gender equality and Women's rights (2017).



Objectives	Sub-objectives	Responsibility	Monitoring (Indicator)	Milestones
<b>1. MANAGEMENT</b>				
1.1 All SCO staff contribute to gender equality	Management ensures gender equality objectives in the MBOs of all employees (including HoC)	HoC	Nb of MbOs with gender objectives	<i>To be completed by the SCOs individually</i>
	The communication officer promotes gender equality and women's empowerment in publications	Communication Officer	Nb of publication on gender equality and women's empowerment / including content reflecting women success stories.	<i>Dito</i>
1.2 Integration of gender equality in <b>policy dialogues</b>	Management addresses gender perspectives and issues in key strategic events (ex. MERV, advocacy strategy)	HoC	Gender advocacy priorities defined and promoted and accordingly reflected in key documents	<i>Dito</i>
	Management addresses and promotes gender equality in its advocacy work (ex. policy dialogues, bilateral meetings).	HoC	Impact assessment on the level of partners and stakeholder	<i>Dito</i>
<b>2. STRATEGY &amp; OPERATIONS</b>				
2.1 The SCO has a <b>cooperation programme, which contributes to gender equality</b> and which is controlled by a monitoring system	Explicit inclusion of gender perspective in the annual report (AR) in major chapters	HoC	Yes/no	<i>Dito</i>
	Qualitative/ quantitative gender indicators disaggregated by sex in the reference framework (RFW)	NPO	Yes/no	<i>Dito</i>
	Reference to ARI/TRI in RFW country cooperation programs/ programs/ projects	NPO	Nb & type of indicators (ARI/TRI)	<i>Dito</i>
	Encouragement of quality gender analyses/ Regular analysis regarding the integration of gender in program portfolios / Identification of gender gaps in portfolio	NPO / HoC	Nb and quality of gender analyses conducted to inform programme planning	<i>Dito</i>



	Results are better captured, documented and reported	NPO	Quality of results documentation	<i>Dito</i>
2.2 The <b>programmes and projects</b> contribute to gender equality	Establishment of a system to monitor the budget allocated to gender equality	HoC	% of budget dedicated to gender mainstreaming/ gender principal projects	<i>Dito</i>
	Increasing number of gender principal projects	HoC	Nb of gender principal projects	<i>Dito</i>
	To have staff who is sensitised and specifically addresses gender issues	NPO	Nb of partner who have included a gender officer or defined in ToR specific % for gender focal point in the project	<i>Dito</i>
2.3 <b>Regional gender program</b> is developed	New regional program is developed	MENA-D Division in collaboration with HoCs	Regional program is defined	<i>Dito</i>
<b>3. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT</b>				
3.1 <b>Knowledge</b> of methods on how to increase gender equality and to empower women and girls <b>is built</b>	SCO staff improves knowledge on methods how to improve gender equality and to empower women and girls	Gender Focal Point	Nb of trainings /position and number of participants (f/m)	<i>Dito</i>
	Partner's gender mainstreaming capacity is supported (ex. gender trainings)	NPO	Visibility of gender in PCM documents / field visits Nb of training/position and number of participants (f/m)	<i>Dito</i>
3.2 <b>Knowledge</b> regarding gender equality <b>is shared</b> between the SCOs of the region	Gender Focal Points of the region MENA exchange on a regular basis (sharing of expertise and joint resolution of challenges). Animation of the exchange by the MENA-D Gender Focal Point.	Gender Focal Point	Nb of exchanges / events organized	<i>Dito</i>