Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls

GUIDANCE FOR DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

OECD

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Foreword

More than 25 years since the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), and more than 20 years after the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) adopted its *Guidelines for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Co-operation* (1999), the time is ripe for new guidance to incorporate the lessons from these decades of action. Firstly, while "gender mainstreaming" has helped secure attention from policy makers, many recognise it can still be more effectively and holistically implemented and a twin-track approach is needed, with initiatives dedicated to gender equality complementing mainstreaming efforts. Secondly, in order to achieve transformative change, DAC members are increasingly aiming at the root causes of gender and power inequalities, including by working with men to understand masculinities, and taking into account the inequalities intersecting with gender faced by many individuals. Thirdly, in addition to civil society and multilateral organisations, DAC members are increasingly partnering with the private sector, philanthropy and other actors.

This Guidance is for both development co-operation institutions with a long-standing commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and those at the beginning of their journey. The primary audience is policy and programme staff, as well as managers of DAC member systems supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Nevertheless, it was designed to assist all types of development partners.

The Guidance sets out DAC members' current practices, highlights successful examples, and lays out checklists to deliver effectively on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. It addresses leadership, policy and strategy (Chapter 1), analysis and design (Chapter 2), programme implementation (Chapter 3), financial resources (Chapter 4), monitoring and evaluation (Chapter 5), and finally the institutional set-ups and approaches needed – in human resources, capacity, accountability and incentives for gender equality (Chapter 6).

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AICS	*Agenzia Italiana per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo* (Italian Agency for Development Co-operation)
AMDT	Agricultural Markets Development Trust (Tanzania)
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BMZ	*Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung* (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany)
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund (UN)
CFAT	Coffee Farmers Alliance of Tanzania
COSTECH/SIDO	Commission on Science and Technology/Small Industries Development Organisation
CSO	Civil society organisation
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CRS	Creditor Reporting System (OECD)
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DEG	Deutsche Investitions und Entwicklungsgesellschaft (Germany)
DFI	Development Finance Institution
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
DfID	Department for International Development (The United Kingdom)
DIB	Development impact bond

ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
EMIIF	Emerging Markets Impact Investing Fund
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (The United Kingdom)
FDFA	Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
FGM/C	Female genital mutilation/cutting
FIAP	Feminist International Assistance Policy (Canada)
FRIDA	Flexibility Resources Inclusivity Diversity Action (The Young Feminist Fund)
GAC	Global Affairs Canada
GADN	Gender and Development Network
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GBA Plus	Gender based Analysis Plus (Government of Canada)
GBV	Gender-based violence
GEM	Gender Equality and Empowerment Measurement tool (Global Affairs Canada)
GENDERNET	Network on Gender Equality (OECD-DAC)
GIZ	*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (Germany)
GLI	Gender-Lens Investing
GPI	Global Partnerships Initiative
HDP	Humanitarian-Development-Peace
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRNS	Hanns R. Neumann Stiftung (Hanns R. Neumann Stiftung foundation)
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IDA	International Development Association (World Bank Group)
ILO	International Labour Organization

IMR	Investment monitoring reports
INCAF	International Network on Conflict and Fragility (OECD-DAC)
IPR	Investment Performance Reporting
IPPF	International Planned Parenthood Federation
JAWEF	Japan ASEAN Women Empowerment Fund
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual, plus other self-identifying members of the community
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
MDB	Multilateral Development Bank
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MSC	Most significant change
NAP	National Action Plan
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NZDRP	New Zealand Disaster Response Partnership
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN)
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OH	Outcome Harvesting
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN)
OM	Outcome mapping
OOF	Other official flows
PACE	Partnering to Accelerate Entrepreneurship (USAID)
PASS	Private Agricultural Sector Support (Tanzania)
PIEMA	Pacific Islands Emergency Management Alliance
PSD	Private sector development
RBM	Results-based monitoring

SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEAH	Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
SHS	Solar home systems
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SME	Small and medium enterprise
SOGIESC	Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression and Sex Characteristics
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SRHiE	Sexual and Reproductive Health in Emergencies
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
SSC	South-South Co-operation
TAHA	Tanzania Horticultural Association
TOSSD	Total Official Support for Sustainable Development
TRC	Triangular Co-operation
UN	United Nations
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UNSCR	UN Security Council Resolution
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
WEE	Women's Economic Empowerment
WHO	World Health Organization
WIN	Women IN Business (Mozambique)
WPHF	Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

Executive Summary

Gender equality, and the empowerment and full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls are universal goals in their own right. They were set out in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. They are also essential for leaving no one behind, and for economic growth and sustainable development.

Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls: Guidance for development partners offers a practical handbook for members of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and other development partners as they strive to advance gender equality. This guidance is designed around the programme cycle and beyond: from policy framework through analysis, design and implementation, to learning and evaluation. It sets out opportunities for increasing financing for gender equality with and beyond official development assistance (ODA), and the challenges of how best to establish the internal organisational systems required to deliver on gender equality in all development and humanitarian assistance efforts.

Policy frameworks and leadership are vital for supporting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls

Leadership commitment and a sound policy framework recognising the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are cornerstones for effective development co-operation.

With the global commitment to leave no one behind, DAC members are focusing on inequalities that intersect with gender. Many also recognise that transformative change is needed. This Guidance sets out approaches for development partners to address unequal power relations and harmful structures and norms, including working more closely with local women's rights organisations, in order to achieve transformative change for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

Support for gender equality starts with the planning and design of development programmes

Well-designed programming based on analysis, and clear policies and strategies are at the heart of development co-operation aiming to promote gender equality. Analysis of context and gender equality is critical for achieving sustainable results. Tools such as theory of change and gender equality continuum frameworks are helpful in understanding the complexity of what is needed to make progress. They also help to show how consideration of gender norms and roles, or ignoring them, affect the results of a programme. Data and indicators are essential for understanding the different needs, priorities, opportunities and barriers that individuals face.

Accelerating progress towards gender equality requires inclusive partnerships, and combining gender-focused actions with mainstreaming

Putting programmes into practice implies tracking and adjusting to context and political shifts, with sufficient staff and information to assess and advise when efforts get off track. DAC members recognise that a twin-track approach is needed, of both implementing programmes dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and mainstreaming gender equality throughout policies and programming across sectors. Mainstreaming should include policy and political dialogue, and paying attention to internal institutional set-up and human resource policies.

Partnering is essential for implementation. It is good practice to consider each development partner's strengths and weaknesses in the given context. DAC members should seek opportunities to also support local women's rights organisations and movements in partner countries.

Financial resources should be drawn from both ODA and other flows

DAC member are increasing both the shares and amounts of bilateral ODA for gender equality. This can be attributed mainly to aid that integrates gender equality as one, although not the principal, policy objective. While this is positive, both dedicated and integrated aid are needed. ODA is measured using the DAC gender equality policy marker of the OECD's Creditor Reporting System (CRS). Sound application of the policy marker is essential to ensure the quality and usefulness of data.

Private investments with a gender lens, blended finance and other types of financial flows can complement ODA for gender equality. Opportunities for DAC members include partnering financially with private actors, providing guidance and financial incentives for financial actors to work on gender equality, and providing technical support for actors in partner countries.

Monitoring and evaluating results can help build momentum for gender equality

Building a body of evidence demonstrating the achievement of gender equality can help increase political will to focus on, and increase investments in this goal. DAC members should consider adapting performance measurement frameworks and other assessment tools for gender equality results to account for the timelines and the complex nature of change. This includes encouraging partners to report on unanticipated results, either positive or negative, without unduly judging programme quality. Ethical considerations must be front and centre in evaluations of gender equality efforts.

Development partners need to demonstrate commitment to gender equality in their own institutional set-up

Gender equality needs to be addressed holistically. Development partners need to set the tone for internal culture: "living" organisational values is essential if those values are to inspire development efforts. DAC members need to build institutions and staffing levels that help all professionals work towards gender equality through incentives and accountability systems. A sufficient number of gender equality advisers needs to be in place, as well as non-specialist employees with the knowledge and commitment to address gender inequality in their areas of responsibility.

1 Leadership and policy frameworks for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls

This chapter gives an overview of how OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members can address gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in their policies and strategic planning, as well as through their leadership. It looks at thematic priorities for gender equality. The chapter explores working towards transformative change and addressing inequalities that intersect with gender, to achieve sustainable development and gender equality.

Leadership commitment to gender equality and the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls and their empowerment, along with a sound policy framework recognising the importance of these issues, are cornerstones for an effective development co-operation programme that leaves no one behind.[1]

Gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls are universal goals in their own right, as explicitly set out in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 in the United Nations' (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. They are also an essential driver for sustainable development in all its dimensions and throughout the SDGs, and for leaving no one behind. Other key international frameworks in support of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls include the UN Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and Security. International processes such as the Commission on the Status of Women and the Generation Equality Forum help set the agenda on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. These processes and commitments provide a global framework for members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and other development partners to work towards gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

Policy frameworks are often broadly sketched out, and it is important to understand and identify context-specific, thematic areas that can support the greatest need and maximise results on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Policies, strategies and action plans intended to advance this agenda should identify and promote measures to eliminate systemic barriers, unequal power dynamics and social norms, and also support and advance safe, equitable and equal access to and control over resources and opportunities, and the full enjoyment of human rights, for all women and girls.

This Guidance aims to support DAC members[2] and other development partners in their efforts to accelerate gender equality, the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls, and their empowerment. However, for ease of reading, the text most often refers to "DAC members" only, and to "gender equality" or "gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls". In this document, the equality and empowerment of women and girls is largely discussed in relation to unbalanced power dynamics and the resulting inequalities between women and men. It recognises, however, that the concept of gender is a social construct. Not all individuals identify with the sex they were assigned at birth or with a binary concept of being a "woman" or a "man" (UNHCR, 2015[1]; WHO, n.d.[2]).

1.1. Political and policy priorities for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls

Political support amongst DAC members for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls amongst DAC members is strong. The COVID pandemic, with its wide-reaching socio-economic impact, has also demonstrated that all efforts to reinforce gender equality are critical to building back in a greener, gender equal and more sustainable manner (OECD, 2020[3]). DAC members' most current development co-operation policies demonstrate that of the 30 members, 29 identify gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as a policy priority.[3] While the majority of DAC members have worked on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls for decades, others have only recently started investing in this area and are in the process of developing their approach and support for gender equality.

DAC members are mainstreaming a gender equality perspective throughout their policies and strategies, in priority areas and sectors of development co-operation. Most DAC members have refined or rearticulated their policy approach to gender equality, moving towards a twin-track approach to both dedicated and mainstreamed support for gender equality (Chapter 3).[4]

> *It is good practice for DAC members to adopt a twin-track approach of both mainstreaming gender equality in policy, strategies and programming, and implementing targeted programmes dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.*

The DAC expects its members' policies to recognise "social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainable development; include a commitment to policy coherence for sustainable development; set out a clear approach to poverty reduction, reducing gender inequalities, and leaving no one behind (…)". DAC members are also expected to have specific guidance "to integrate cross-cutting issues such as poverty, gender equality and women's empowerment, human rights, environment and climate change, and conflict and fragility". The DAC uses peer reviews to review these requirements through. The expectation is that members apply the DAC gender equality policy marker in reporting on official development assistance (ODA) to the OECD (Chapter 4). Furthermore, the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Gender Equality in Public Life recommends that adherents mainstream gender equality in the design, development, implementation and evaluation of relevant public policies and budgets (OECD, 2016[4]; OECD, 2018[5]).

A few DAC members have considerations of gender equality as a legal requirement for their international development (Box 1.1). Enshrining gender equality in legal frameworks on development co-operation has proven a helpful incentive and accountability tool (see also Chapter 6). Gender equality should also be integrated as a cross-cutting theme throughout development co-operation policy and strategy, and addressed in dedicated gender equality policies, action plans and tools.

> *DAC members should continue to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as a policy priority, and to anchor the work in strategic policy frameworks on development co-operation. When possible, this can be included within legislation on development co-operation, to withstand global challenges and changing political climates. This approach encourages a long-term sustained focus on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, counteracting potential and temporary political shifts and push-back against gender equality.*

Box 1.1. Gender equality as a legal requirement in international development

Some DAC members have made the consideration of gender equality in development co-operation a legal requirement:

The **United Kingdom**'s International Development (Gender Equality) Act (2014) sets out the duty to consider the impact on gender equality in development co-operation and humanitarian assistance when a spending decision is made. Abiding by the Gender Equality Act is the minimum requirement of compliance for any intervention in humanitarian assistance or development co-operation and provides a framework for considering the impact on gender equality in a proportionate and mandatory way. Such legislation has been complemented by additional accountability initiatives to deliver DFID's[1] Strategic Vision for Gender Equality, including together high level personnel dedicated to advancing gender equality across the organisation, and developing a dashboard for reporting progress against objectives.

Austria's Federal Act on Development Cooperation (2003) commits the Federal Government to a set of principles for development co-operation. It stipulates that any measure adopted shall take into consideration the equality between women and men.

United States: The Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment (WEEE) Act of 2018 (S. 3247) was signed into law on 9 January 2019. The WEEE Act seeks to better target development assistance for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises to women. The Act also includes a section that addresses the gender policy of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), specifically outlining a series of objectives for the policy (e.g. reducing gender disparities in crucial sectors, striving to eliminate gender-based violence (GBV) and reduce its harmful effects, increasing the capability of women and girls to achieve their rights, etc.). The Law also requires the integration of gender equality and women's empowerment throughout USAID's programme cycle in every sector and requires that all strategies, projects, and activities be shaped by a gender analysis. The WEEE Act's definition of "gender analysis" is consistent with USAID's Automated Directives System Chapter 205, "Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID's Program Cycle." To comply with the gender analysis requirement, provide the agency with a repository of gender analyses, to enable reporting to the United States Congress, and to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices on gender integration, USAID has developed an internal online database to aggregate and compile the gender analyses carried out and used by all missions across the agency.

Spain's law on international development co-operation (23/1998) identified as priorities human rights, equality and non-discrimination. In addition, Spain's law for equality between men and women (3/2007) includes an article linked to development co-operation, mentioning the Gender Strategy as the normative instrument for applying the law in development co-operation. This has been fundamental to advancing progress on integrating gender equality in all processes, from planning, to management and evaluation.

Italy's "General law on international development cooperation" (Law 125/2014), explicitly includes gender equality among the fundamental objectives of development co-operation (Article 1). The "Three-year cooperation programming and policy orientation plan 2019/2021", envisaged by Article 12 also confirms gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls among priorities for Italy's development co-operation system.

1. On 2 September 2020, the Department for International Development (DFID) and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office became the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) of the UK Government.

Clear connections with other development priorities are critical to considering complex challenges, and gender equality and other development goals are both interlinked and mutually reinforcing. For example, climate change and environmental degradation are often felt disproportionately by women for socio-economic and discriminatory reasons (OECD, 2021[6]). Some DAC members consider SDG5 and SDG13 on climate action in particular as essential to the success of the 2030 Agenda. These DAC members incorporate gender equality and climate action as cross-cutting priorities throughout their policies and strategies[5] (for further discussion on mainstreaming gender equality, see Chapter 3).

Feminist foreign policy and feminist diplomacy

Diplomacy and other areas of foreign policy offer opportunities to promote gender equality beyond development co-operation. This can produce synergies with development co-operation. This approach also reflects the broader trend of integrating development agencies into ministries in charge of foreign policy, as is the case in the UK, Canada and Australia.[6]

DAC members' feminist foreign policies, differ in scope and approaches.[7] No definition of what "feminist" implies in the framework of these policies has been agreed upon, and the scope and coverage of the policies vary (Thompson and Clement, 2019[7]). It is clear, though, that in addition to development co-operation, further impact can be achieved by advocating for gender equality through different channels of foreign policy. This offers one way to address persistent systemic barriers and dismantle discriminatory norms in all areas of action. Joint action with other DAC members, including through the DAC Network on Gender Equality, can also help leverage impact.

> *DAC members should aim to convey gender equality advocacy through different channels of foreign policy and diplomacy, including by working across ministries in a whole-of-government approach. Adopting feminist foreign policies or promoting feminist diplomacy, with effective follow-up and accountability frameworks in place, can help anchor these approaches, broaden the reach of this advocacy and attract additional partners and investments.*

Box 1.2. Feminist foreign policies

Overall, the concept and the influence of "feminism" have evolved significantly, and high-level leaders are ready to claim a feminist mantle. While diplomatic efforts with partner countries have often focused on human rights issues in a broader sense, advocacy for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls has not always been a priority topic in diplomacy. Nevertheless, as a result of increased evidence of the benefits of furthering gender equality for economies and societies overall, diplomats increasingly promote gender equality as a core value. Sweden, Canada, France, Germany, Luxembourg and Spain have feminist foreign or development policies, aiming to establish a comprehensive and institutionalised approach to feminist diplomacy.

Sweden was the first country in the world to pursue a feminist foreign policy, in 2014, applying a systematic gender equality perspective in all areas of foreign policy. The point of departure was that gender equality is an objective in itself, but that it is also essential for achieving the government's other overall objectives, such as peace, security and sustainable development. An overarching method has been to focus on women's and girls' rights, representation and resources. Sweden has issued a Handbook that focuses on working methods for achieving change and includes a section on how to pursue gender equality in the face of resistance. The Handbook is complemented by an Action Plan with more detailed guidance on implementation of the policy. The action plan and accountability framework, along with high-level ministerial leadership and staff ownership, have been instrumental in driving change.

Acknowledging that gender equality is a market-access issue and that trade policy today benefits men more than women, Sweden initiated a Feminist Trade Policy in 2019. This includes six focus areas to step up efforts to ensure that trade policy and trade promotion activities benefit women and men equally, that priority is given in trade negotiations to sectors, products and services that have positive implications for women, and that measures and initiatives are taken to improve the gender balance in Sweden's promotion activities.

For more information, see the Handbook - Sweden's feminist foreign policy, The Swedish Foreign Service action plan for feminist foreign policy 2019–2022, including direction and measures for 2020; and Sweden's Feminist Trade Policy;

Canada's Feminist Foreign Policy is the international expression of ongoing, co-ordinated and whole-of-government efforts to advance human rights, including diversity and inclusion and gender equality domestically. It involves applying a feminist approach across all of its international policies and programming, including diplomacy, trade, security, development and consular services. This builds on a series of sectoral policies and initiatives, notably the:

- Feminist International Assistance Policy
- Trade Diversification Strategy, with its inclusive approach to trade
- The Second National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) (2017-2022), and a dedicated WPS Ambassador
- The Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations
- The Defence Policy "Strong, Secure, Engaged".

These policies focus on dismantling persistent systemic barriers, discriminatory norms and inequalities based on sex and gender – including sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) – as well as on the basis of other intersecting aspects of identity such as race, national or ethnic origin, religion, age, language or disability.

Canada's National Action Plan (NAP) on WPS guides Canada's development, humanitarian and peace and security efforts at home and abroad. Canada is currently initiating the work on its third NAP, in collaboration with its federal implementing partner departments with the ambition and increased domestic focus.

Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP) was launched in 2017. It seeks to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as the most effective way to reduce poverty and build a more inclusive, peaceful and prosperous world. FIAP includes six inter-linked action areas: gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; human dignity covering humanitarian action, health and nutrition (including sexual and reproductive health and rights), and education; growth that works for everyone; environment and climate action; inclusive governance; and peace and security. Its feminist approach orients Canada's efforts towards addressing the root causes of poverty and ensuring that they reach and involve women and girls in all their diversity, as well as all those who face discrimination or marginalisation. The Feminist Approach Guidance Note published in September 2019 details how Global Affairs Canada, the department that manages Canada's diplomatic and consular relations, international trade, and international development and humanitarian assistance, adapts its internal processes and ways of working to support gender equality and realising human rights coherently and meaningfully.

France has referred to a "feminist diplomacy" for its foreign policy action since 2018. It promotes this in its International Strategy for Gender Equality (2018-2022). The strategy highlights the need to include a gender equality perspective "in all French diplomatic priorities and all political, economic, soft diplomacy, cultural, educational and development co-operation actions". A 2020 analysis of France's feminist diplomacy shows that its efforts have focused mostly on diplomacy in the strict sense and on ODA, leaving out other areas of foreign policy, such as peace and security and trade policy.

For more information, see Report on feminist diplomacy by the High Council on Gender Equality.

Spain's Feminist Foreign Policy was adopted in 2021 and promotes a two-pronged approach, strengthening the work of the Foreign Service on gender equality as well as mainstreaming a gender perspective in all phases of foreign policy and actions. The policy lays out five principles to guide implementation: a transformative approach to bring about structural change in working methods and institutional culture; committed leadership; ownership; inclusive participation and partnerships; and intersectionality and diversity.

The policy also sets out the main channels to be used to promote gender equality: Mainstreaming the gender approach in foreign policy; bilateral and regional diplomacy; European Union (EU); multilateral diplomacy; international co-operation for sustainable development; consular protection and assistance; and public diplomacy.

Policy engagement and setting norms on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls

DAC members also contribute to agenda setting and policy making on gender equality at the international and regional level.

> *It is good practice that DAC members engage in the development of international standards and are actively involved in promoting the inclusion of a gender equality perspective in global and regional discussions.*

These international and regional norms and standards then guide DAC members' engagement on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, both domestically and in their foreign policy and development co-operation. CEDAW and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action are among the most prominent international legal and policy instruments that focus on gender equality, and they recognise the linkages between development and gender equality.

DAC members have been involved in setting standards on gender equality in development co-operation, such as the 2019 *DAC Recommendation on Ending Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH) in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance* [OECD/LEGAL/5020] (Chapter 6). A gender equality perspective is also mainstreamed throughout other DAC legal instruments. For example, the 2019 *DAC Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus* [OECD/LEGAL/5019] (Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus) includes several references to gender equality.

The DAC Network on Gender Equality offers a space for DAC members to exchange views and information on these international and regional processes and potentially to develop common positions.

1.2. Rationale and thematic focus for gender equality in development programmes

Many DAC members recognise multiple rationales for working on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. They note the intrinsic value of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as the right thing to do. Women around the world at present have fewer opportunities, earn less, face more barriers, and endure more violence and harassment than men. Gender equality is a fundamental human right. DAC members also recognise that addressing gender inequalities can both enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of economies in partner countries and increase the effectiveness and sustainability of development co-operation – taking a more instrumentalist approach to gender equality, which is helpful in convincing actors or individuals that place less importance on the human rights argument. Some DAC members also identify, as one of the reasons for working on gender equality in development, that gender equality must be addressed collectively as a global issue and that it is a core value of their own democracies as well.

> *It is good practice for DAC members to recognise multiple rationales for working on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, including the fact that it is both the right thing and the smart thing to do. For maximum human rights and sustainable development impact, it is important to recognise that achieving meaningful and transformative results for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls requires addressing root causes, including unequal power dynamics, harmful social norms and systemic barriers.*

A strong policy commitment to gender equality

DAC members' overarching policy focus on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in development has increased over the past 15 years, including among the more recent DAC members.[8] The majority of DAC members have adopted a dedicated strategy or policy on gender equality specific to development co-operation, most of which are overseen by members' ministries of foreign affairs or development co-operation. Some of these frameworks have taken the form of Gender Action Plans.[9] Other

DAC members have elevated their approach to gender equality as a priority area by implementing a feminist foreign policy (Box 1.2).

Several converging factors are identified as having contributed to the enhanced commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The 2030 Agenda and SDG5 in particular, have been crucial to such commitments. A few members attribute the increased focus to the results of an audit on gender equality as a part of the implementation of a new or updated development policy, strategy or action plan. Increased international and political interest and subsequent increases in funding are other reasons noted.

> *To maintain and increase commitment to gender equality, DAC members can use and draw on the 2030 Agenda, which offers a common implementation and accountability framework at the international level.*

The Action Coalitions set up and the commitments made in the context of the 2021 Generation Equality Forum – an initiative to strengthen implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action – can also be helpful to maintain momentum for gender equality.

Box 1.3. Recent DAC members' increased commitments to gender equality

Slovenia, the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic joined the DAC in 2013. These relatively recent DAC members have identified that their institutional commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls have increased. Among the development co-operation agendas of these newer members, incorporating gender equality as a cross-cutting issue is the most common approach to advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. However, in recent years, some have also included targeted actions and considerations needed to drive further progress.

Slovenia notes that gender equality has historically been a strong foreign policy focus. More recently, however, in the "Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Aid Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia until 2030", gender equality has shifted from being a cross-cutting issue and become an essential component of its development co-operation strategy and achievement of the SDGs. Under this policy, gender equality is not only identified as a cross-cutting theme, but thematic priorities that support gender equality as an end goal, such as "women's economic empowerment", "ensuring sexual and reproductive health" and "ending violence against women and girls", are also addressed.

Slovenia's second "National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2018-2020)" contains elevated and targeted actions to advance gender equality through awareness-raising, education and training, and further integration of a gender perspective in security-related policies. It also enforces additional accountability for ethical and gender-related perspectives for personnel on missions abroad.

Slovak Republic: While gender equality, with an emphasis on the empowerment of women, was also identified as a cross-cutting issue in the Slovak Republic's "Medium-Term Strategy for Development Cooperation of the Slovak Republic for 2014-2018", there has been a significant institutional shift in its prioritisation of gender equality in recent years. In the "Medium-Term Strategy for Development Co-operation of the Slovak Republic (2019-2023)", SDG5, achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls are cross-cutting themes in all SlovakAid's projects and activities. However, the Slovak Republic has additionally incorporated specific actions to enhance the institution's efforts to advance gender equality. For example, all development co-operation projects must indicate how they contribute to advancing gender equality and SDG5. This shift has led to an increase in efforts to support equality through methods of empowerment such as the creation of safe and equal opportunities in public life, education, health care and economic activities. As part of these intensified efforts, a handbook on gender equality in development co-operation was prepared in co-operation with the UNDP. Intended for both donors and applicants, it was issued in September 2021, followed by a webinar.

The **Czech Republic's** inclusion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in development co-operation policies and strategies has also increased. The "Czech Development Co-operation" (2012) report notes targeted efforts with a specific focus on the empowerment of women and girls. In the "Development Co-operation Strategy 2010-2017", "respect for the basic human, economic, social and labour rights" is one of three cross-cutting themes. While this cross-cutting theme identifies efforts to mainstream gender equality and empowerment-focused efforts in all programming, gender equality is not specifically highlighted as a cross-cutting theme. However, in the "Development Co-operation Strategy of the Czech Republic 2018-2030", "gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls" is a cross-cutting priority throughout the strategy.

Korea joined the DAC in 2010. Korea's Medium-Term Strategy for Gender Equality (2016-2020, and 2021-2025), aims to achieve SDG5 by a taking twin-track approach, pursuing gender equality as a stand-alone goal, as well as a cross-cutting issue mainstreamed in all development programmes. In addition, Korea's International Cooperation Agency is leading a multi-stakeholder partnership to accelerate achieving SDG5 by addressing the underlying drivers of gender inequality and enhancing impact ("SDG5 Fill the GAP"). Forums and knowledge-sharing events are also part of this initiative.

Examples of thematic priorities for gender equality

Thematic priorities for gender equality are usually established to address key barriers to women's and girls' empowerment in areas where progress has been slow or has been reversed. Some DAC members with a well-established, long-term focus on gender equality may be able to promote gender equality throughout a range of thematic priorities. However, for small and new DAC members, it may be more advantageous to identify their comparative strength and to single out a limited number of areas for more focused support for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

> *DAC members should consider comparative advantages and opportunities when defining the thematic priorities of the gender equality policy, and focus on thematic areas where progress is slow or reversing.*

A range of priority areas need to be addressed in working towards gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. This section addresses in more detail the thematic areas identified as a priority by the largest number of DAC members in the survey: women's economic empowerment; fragility, women, peace and security and humanitarian assistance; and gender-based violence.[10] This section is intended as an illustration of some thematic priorities and does not imply that other thematic areas are less important for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

Women's economic empowerment

DAC members' focus on women's economic empowerment in development co-operation is a key response to rising poverty levels and the feminisation of poverty. Enhancing women's economic empowerment is often a prerequisite for other gender equality goals, such as women's participation, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and ending gender-based violence. Economically empowering women has the potential to create more competitive and sustainable economies. It has been estimated that if women participated in the economy at the rate men do, USD 28 trillion, or 26%, would be added to annual global GDP in 2025, compared with a business-as-usual scenario (McKinsey Global Institute, 2015[8]).

Because there is no agreed definition of women's economic empowerment[11] and the scope of women's economic empowerment is so broad, most members also address multiple sub-themes of this thematic priority within their policies, the most common of which are "entrepreneurship", "decent work", "access to and control over, resources", "private sector and economic leadership", and "agriculture and rural development". Some DAC members have also adopted separate strategies, action plans or policies to specifically address women's economic empowerment (OECD, 2022[9]). Some DAC members see the decent work agenda, which includes employment creation, rights at work, social protection and social dialogue, as integral parts of the work on women's economic empowerment, linking up with International Labour Organization legal instruments that focus on gender equality.

Many DAC members also recognise the importance of addressing unpaid care work as a major barrier to women's economic empowerment, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic (OECD, 2019[10]).

To advance women's economic empowerment through thematic prioritisation, DAC members can align with the seven key "drivers for transformation" identified by the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment (UN Women, 2016[11]; UN Women, 2017[12]). These drivers are: Tackling adverse norms and promoting positive role models; Ensuring legal protection and reforming discriminatory laws and regulations; Recognising, reducing and redistributing unpaid work and care; Building assets – Digital, financial and property; Changing business culture and practice; Improving public sector practices in employment and procurement; Strengthening visibility, collective voice and representation.

DAC members' bilateral aid to the economic and productive sectors that integrate gender equality is steadily increasing (OECD, 2021[13]). However, a comparison between financing of sub-themes of economic empowerment and political commitments to these sub-themes shows mixed results. For

example, the development co-operation and gender equality policies of many DAC members mention banking and business as a thematic priority, but significant scope remains to increase their investments in gender equality in these sectors.

> *It is good practice for DAC members to align their policy commitments with financial allocations in support of women's economic empowerment.*

Ending gender-based violence

DAC members' focus on preventing and addressing gender based-violence (GBV)[12] is much needed, since there is a very high prevalence of GBV around the world – a serious human rights violation. The increased and pervasive prevalence of online GBV contributes to this, fuelled by a sense of impunity due to an absence of effective measures to address and impede these actions (Aziz, 2017[14]). There are many forms of violence that fall under the umbrella of GBV. GBV is considered to be any harmful act towards an individual based on their gender, a term that is also meant to be broad because of the diversity of perpetrated acts of violence that emerge from unequal power dynamics and gender norms. GBV includes but is not limited to sexual violence, trafficking for sexual purposes, intimate partner violence, dowry-related violence, femicide, forced impregnation, preference for male children, child marriage, and female genital mutilation and cutting (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2013[15]). The deprivation of access to resources, education, or services can also be regarded as acts of violence in and of themselves, in addition to the fact that they reinforce the subjugation of victims. Efforts to address and end GBV are intrinsically linked with other thematic priorities for gender equality, such as sexual and reproductive health and rights.

On average, over one-third of all women globally have experienced a form of violence in their lifetime, with differences between regions and countries (WHO, 2021[16]). There is no single cause of GBV, but global research shows that entrenched social norms that result in power imbalances and gender inequality are among the most persistent drivers (OECD, 2020[17]). Additionally, GBV transpires in all societies as a means of subjugation, manipulation and control that propagates and fortifies gender inequality. To achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, GBV must be addressed.

Women and girls make up the vast majority of survivors of GBV, but men and boys also experience such violence, which remains a taboo subject in many societies. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual, plus other self-identifying members of the community (LGBTQIA+[13]) persons in particular are at high risk.

DAC members' programmes often focus on changing negative masculine behaviour through outreach and dialogue activities, ensuring high-quality services to victims of GBV; and strengthening institutional capacity to implement laws and policies on ending gender-based violence. DAC members should seek to employ both prevention and response measures within their policies and programmes dedicated to GBV, in order to address this issue effectively. Members' policies should take care to adopt a "Do no harm" approach and utilise survivor-centred and evidence-based strategies in responding to violence and supporting survivors. DAC members can also employ a variety of approaches that challenge societal gender roles and norms, shift power imbalances and interrupt patterns of behaviour that enable GBV. To effectively address gender-based violence, DAC members should also consider the distinct experiences of those whose converging identities disproportionately increase their likelihood of being targeted with violence that seeks to enforce discriminatory gender norms.

DAC members' commitments to addressing, and ending, GBV is mirrored in the inclusion of a dedicated statistical code in the OECD's Creditor Reporting System to monitor aid aimed to end violence against women and girls (VAWG) (Chapter 4).

DAC members have also demonstrated their increased commitment to addressing GBV through the adoption of the *DAC Recommendation on Ending Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance* (OECD, 2019[18]).

> *Since SEAH is a form of gender-based violence, implementing the six pillars of the DAC Recommendation is instrumental in the efficacy of a multilateral response to this global issue (Chapter 6).*

Box 1.4. DAC members addressing gender-based violence: The 'What Works' programme and the Spotlight Initiative

It is essential that gender-based violence, like gender equality in general, not be addressed as solely a "women's issue". A comprehensive understanding of what drives men to violence is pivotal to the ability to address the root causes and driving forces of GBV. It is also important to understand what structures and norms are in place that allow for the justification of this behaviour by all members of society, and not just men. Acceptance of men exercising gender-based violence is, to varying degrees, demonstrated by both women and men all over the world (OECD, 2019[19]).

The **United Kingdom's** Department for International Development (DfID) launched the "What Works to Prevent Violence" programme in 2014. This programme sought to mobilise GBP 25 million over five years for preventing of gender-based violence, through programming in 15 countries across Africa, Asia and the Middle East. With a strong focus on research and innovation, a comprehensive understanding of the root causes of this form of violence was developed, as a means to create and implement effective preventative measures. This included an extensive examination of specific issues areas, such as the drivers behind men's perpetration of violence, and women's lived experiences following violence. The results from the What Works Programme led to the creation and testing of preventative measures that can be adapted to fit various contexts, scaled up to reach a broader audience, and replicated for use all over the world. Results from the global programme also demonstrate that that GBV is preventable. What Works has also released new programmes to address issues such as GBV in conflict and fragile settings, female genital mutilation and child marriage, has used new data to scale up past efforts, and has disseminated this knowledge in order to affect a collaborative, global response. (United Kingdom Government, 2014[20])

The **Spotlight Initiative** is a global, multi-year partnership between the EU and the United Nations to eliminate all forms of gender-based violence by 2030. Launched in 2017 with seed funding from the EU, the Initiative includes six mutually reinforcing programming pillars: laws and policies; institutions; prevention; services; data; and women's movements. As a demonstration fund for the Sustainable Development Goals, the initiative provides evidence for the need to address gender equality as a precondition for achieving the SDGs. Civil society organisations are an important partner of the initiative, which promotes leadership and deep engagement of civil society for transformative and sustainable change in the elimination of gender-based violence (EU and United Nations, n.d.[21]).

Fragility, women, peace and security, and humanitarian assistance

DAC members' attention to gender equality in fragile contexts[14], humanitarian assistance, and women, peace and security is in line with the fact that gender inequalities are one of the root causes of conflict and fragility. Addressing these inequalities and putting women at the centre of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding is crucial for building more stable and peaceful societies (Goemans, Koester and Loudon, 2021[22]). The 20th anniversary of UN Resolution 1325 generated important momentum for DAC members to renew/make commitments on this agenda.

However, the share of humanitarian assistance contributing to gender equality remains low, and calls have been made to increase the funding that goes directly to women's rights organisations (WROs) in fragile contexts.

The 2019 DAC Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus Recommendation actively supports the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda, and a gender equality perspective is mainstreamed throughout the Recommendation. It calls on adherents to engage in gender-sensitive design and implementation of humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actions with an informed understanding of SEAH risks. As adherents continue to implement the Recommendation, attention to the gender-specific aspects can be further reflected in members' implementation strategies.[15] In addition, there is also opportunity to link the implementation of the Nexus Recommendation with the implementation of the SEAH Recommendation, which is particularly relevant in fragile contexts that face additional constraints in preventing and responding to SEAH. The SEAH Recommendation applies to both development co-operation and humanitarian assistance, which brings into play the need to address SEAH across the three HDP nexus pillars.

There are opportunities for DAC members to clarify their position and discourse around the WPS agenda, the HDP Nexus and gender equality in fragile contexts, so that it is clear that these agendas are linked. To help address and co-ordinate efforts surrounding these issues across the HDP Nexus, 98 UN member states have adopted at least one NAP on Women, Peace and Security (UN Women, 2021[23]). As the responsibility for these agendas is often held by different institutions in member countries (e.g. the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Development Agency, Ministry of Defence[16]), this would require increased collaboration between institutions at country and headquarters level. There is also a need to better connect discussions on humanitarian assistance, development co-operation, peacebuilding/keeping and gender equality at the international level, bringing together different communities of experts.

> *DAC members can strengthen collaboration between gender equality and conflict and fragility/humanitarian experts within their institutions, to ensure gender equality objectives are being met within humanitarian/fragility strategies and programming.*[17]

Box 1.5. The United States' Global Fragility Strategy

The United States Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability (US Global Fragility Strategy) draws on promising practices and lessons learned in development co-operation for engagement in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. It highlights the need to collaborate and draw upon expertise of all government agencies as part of a whole-of-government approach. Its clear strategic priority is the implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security Act, for the meaningful participation of women in peace and security processes in areas affected by conflict and disaster. The extension of the nominal three- to five-year programming cycle to a 10-year cycle creates possibilities for more sustained and flexible financing. This could mobilise efforts to address linkages between gender inequality and fragility in the following ways which are aligned with the core objectives of the U.S. Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security:

1. Women are more prepared and increasingly able to participate in efforts that promote stable and lasting peace.
2. Women and girls are safer, better protected, and have equal access to government and private-assistance programmes.
3. The United States and partner governments have improved institutionalisation and capacity to ensure that WPS and global fragility efforts are sustainable and long-lasting.

Source: United States (2020[24]), *United States Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability*, https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/2020-US-Strategy-to-Prevent-Conflict-and-Promote-Stabilit-508c-508.pdf.

In addition to the three thematic areas addressed above, "women's participation, leadership and political empowerment" and "sexual and reproductive health and rights" were other priorities frequently mentioned by members. Both locally and globally, women's leadership and political participation are restricted and underrepresented. Due to discriminatory laws, practices, stereotypes and lack of access to opportunities, women face obstacles to running for political office and obtaining leadership positions, marginalising them and further reinforcing gender inequality (UN Women, n.d.[25]). The participation, or lack of participation, of women in decision making directly affects the scope of policy issues addressed and the approaches to resolving them (Pepera, 2018[26]). Meaningful and equal participation of women in political life and in leadership in all sectors, including leadership of women's rights organisations, is a prerequisite for achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. The Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in 1994 recognised that reproductive rights embrace existing human rights and that sexual and reproductive health and rights are central to health, well-being and development. This issue is also essential in humanitarian and other types of emergencies. However, opposition to SRHR in global forums has increased (Gilby, Koivusalo and Atkins, 2021[27]), inviting an increased policy focus on these issues by many DAC members. The Nairobi Statement on ICPD25 (ICPD25, 2019[28]) provides a global framework for the formulation of government and partner commitments essential for supporting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

A number of other thematic areas are equally as important in achieving gender equality as the ones addressed in this section, which highlights some examples based on DAC members' policies.

1.3. The evolving conceptual framing of gender equality

Aiming for transformative change for gender equality

DAC members are explicitly identifying "transformative" change in their policies as the route to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. This suggests that there is engagement amongst DAC members on challenging gender power relations and social norms, as is needed to achieve true and sustainable gender equality (Rao and Sandler, 2021[29]; ATVET for Women project, 2019[30]). This is particularly true for those members that have had a well-established, long-term policy focus on gender equality.[18]

There are multiple definitions and contextual differences that determine how transformative change can help achieve gender equality, but a basic premise is that sustained change requires transforming unequal power relations and the harmful structures and norms – both visible and invisible – that uphold them, and addressing the root causes of inequalities (Hillenbrand et al., 2015[31]). The most successful and transformative results for gender equality will involve shifting patriarchal practices, norms and values deeply held by women and men alike.

It can be harmful to work within existing social and cultural systems and thus perpetuate existing gender stereotypes of women, girls, men and boys. Conversely, it is important to recognise and strengthen positive norms that support equality and an enabling environment – with the end goal of achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

A useful framework for examining gender-transformative change looks at change across three key dimensions:

- *Agency*: individual and collective capacities (knowledge and skills), attitudes, critical reflection, assets, actions and access to services
- *Relations*: the expectations and co-operative or negotiation dynamics embedded in relationships between people in the home, market, community, and groups and organisations
- *Structures*: the informal and formal institutional rules that govern collective, individual and institutional practices, such as context, social norms, recognition and status[19] (see Chapter 2 for a list of suggested monitoring indicators mapped against these three dimensions).

Changing gender norms and power relations is challenging and needs to involve societal structures and mechanisms, as well as communities, specific groups in a population, and individuals (Finland, 2018[32]). It is important to engage with those whose realities should inform change. A variety of mechanisms can be used to achieve this, including participatory approaches, theories of change, gender analysis and localisation efforts, to gain a contextual understanding of local circumstances (OECD, 2018[33]) (See Chapter 2).

> *DAC members should consider approaches to supporting transformative change for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, including encouraging an environment where power imbalances between stakeholders are recognised and levelled. This also includes working with local civil society organisations based in partner countries, and in particular women's rights organisations, and engaging with men and boys and with youth.*

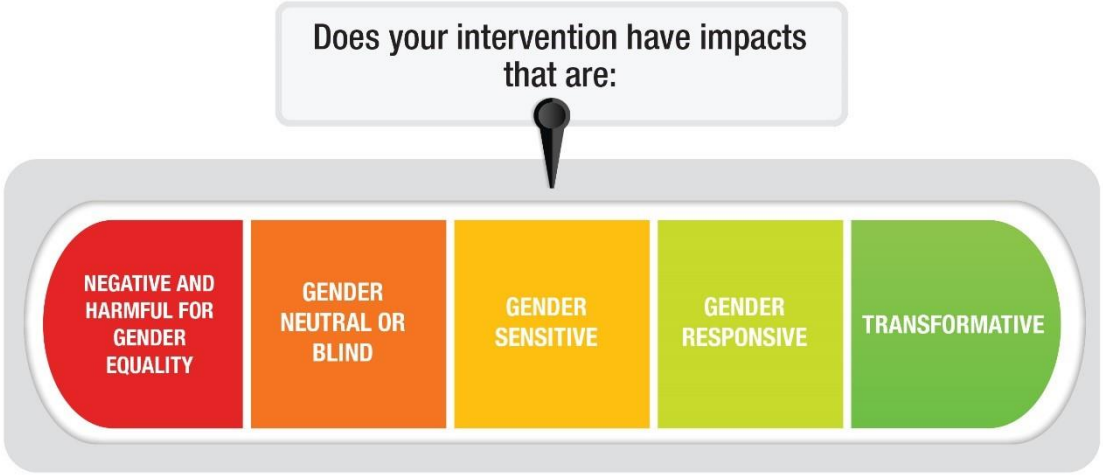
This is addressed in more detail in Chapter 3. The link between the institutional learning agenda and organisational buy-in is also crucial to the success of any transformative approach to supporting gender equality (Chapter 6).

The gender equality continuum

A helpful tool for thinking about transformative change, and for identifying what type of impact a development intervention may have, is the gender equality continuum. The continuum categorises gender equality objectives and impacts on a scale:

- Gender "negative" or "exploitative": causes harm, implies a risk
- Gender "blind", "neutral" or "accommodating": ignores and works around existing gender inequalities, but in the process, possibly perpetuates them
- Gender "sensitive" or "aware": considers gender inequalities
- Gender "responsive" or "positive": strengthens gender equality
- Gender "transformative": changes gender norms and power relations.20

Infographic 1.1. Gender equality continuum



See Annex 1.A for more resources around the gender equality continuum. An alternative framework differentiate between 1) do no harm, 2) empowerment – strengthen women and girls' knowledge, access and opportunities, and 3) transformation – changing power relations (DfID & FCO, 2019[34]). The empowerment of women and girls is a critical aspect and a means of achieving gender equality. It is not sufficient, however, for transformative change for gender equality. Gender equality is not the sole responsibility of women and girls.

Box 1.6. DAC members' practices in encouraging transformative change to achieve gender equality

The EU's Gender Action Plan (GAP) III: An Ambitious Agenda for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in EU External Action provides the EU with a policy framework for accelerating progress towards meeting international commitments.[1] The GAP III highlights that, in addition to human rights-based and intersectional approaches, a gender-transformative approach is required to advance the effectiveness of the EU's engagement on gender equality. To leave no one behind, the plan seeks to tackle all intersecting dimensions of discrimination, paying specific attention, for example, to women with disabilities, migrant women, and discrimination based on age or sexual orientation. The interrogation of oppressive gender norms and power imbalances is highlighted as one of the key elements involved in addressing the root causes of gender inequality.

The GAP also commits the EU to leading by example, and includes objectives around gender-balanced management, and that gender advisers or focal points are in place and trained.

The USAID Partnering to Accelerate Entrepreneurship (PACE) Initiative uses a "Gender Integration Continuum". This identifies four critical steps to incorporate in policies and efforts where gender-transformative change, and subsequently gender equality, are the intended outcomes: 1) "fostering critical examination of inequalities and gender roles, norms and dynamics; 2) recognising and strengthening positive norms that support equality and an enabling environment, 3) promoting the relative position of women, girls and marginalised groups, and 4) transforming the underlying social structures, policies and broadly held social norms that perpetuate gender inequalities" (USAID, 2017, p. 12[35]). An example of this, in the design phase of an intervention, is to identify specific actions that will alter the pre-existing power dynamics between women and men in that area, and simultaneously create mechanisms and opportunities to amplify the voices of women.

USAID discovered that it was difficult to receive full institutional support when many actors, partners and non-gender specific practitioners did not understand why working within existing systems and engaging policies that, even unconsciously, take advantage of stereotypes of gender, can be harmful practices. This first step to understanding is often difficult for many people. The Gender Integration Continuum was created to offer introductory options for gender-transformative change, such as gender analysis. Resources such as courses or training on implementation strategies have been introduced subsequently to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the goals and processes at hand and provide support for transformative processes.

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) 2020 "Status Report on Gender Equality 2019: Striving for Transformative Change" demonstrates the achievements in narrowing gender gaps that have been jointly achieved by the SDC and its partners. Much of the SDC's programmatic work rendered positive results, but the report reveals substantial room for growth to achieve the 2030 Agenda. The Status Report outlines the SDC's intention to further gender equality and the conditions of women by transforming unequal gender relations, entrenched power imbalances and structural barriers. To achieve gender-transformative change, the SDC notes the importance of policy dialogue, innovative efforts and efforts to encourage men, youth and community leaders to play a role in advancing women's rights and gender equality.

1. The EU Gender Action Plan III (GAP III) is a Joint Communication of the European Commission and the European External Action Service. It is thus the new EU gender equality policy framework externally, to be implemented by the Commission and the Action Service in all EU external action, in a Team Europe approach with relevant EU Member States.

At the intersection of gender and other inequalities

The theory of "intersectionality" suggests that social identifiers such as race, ethnicity, faith, socio-economic status, class, caste, geographic location, age, ability, sexual orientation, religion, migration status and gender come together – or intersect – to result in an individual's lived experience (Bowleg, 2012[36]). Intersectional strategies encourage approaches that respond to the compounding dimensions of vulnerability and discrimination that must be considered to increase gender equality. In addition, the interests and priorities of individuals will vary widely.

> *It is good practice for DAC members to take intersectional inequalities into account. DAC members can ensure that resources and opportunities are provided and barriers are removed, so as to enable the equality, empowerment and human rights of all individuals.*

There are three prominently recurring priorities for DAC members working on inequalities that intersect with gender[21]: the equality and rights of LGBTQIA+ individuals, women and girls who live with disabilities, and women and girls of ethnic or racial minorities.[22] These three priorities are addressed in more detail below.

It is important to recognise the challenges in implementing an intersectional approach while also ensuring a focus on women's rights and gender equality. In the context of the "leave no one behind" agenda, misinterpretations of intersectionality that incite problematic practices, such as tokenisation, single-issue interventions and identity politics, risk undermining solidarity and fueling an individualistic approach to injustice and discrimination and also ignore the structural nature of inequalities. The necessary focus on interlinked entrenched systems of oppression and marginalisation may be lost in lists of intersecting "categories" to address (GAD Network, 2017[37]).

> *DAC members should recognise that women and girls, and men and boys, are not homogenous groups. Policies and approaches should be developed or adjusted to equitably advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls – and thus leave no one behind.*

LGBTQIA+ individuals and gender identity

Not all individuals identify with a binary concept of sex or gender categories of male and female. Gender identity and expression refer to a person's deeply felt, internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond to the person's physiology or designated sex at birth (WHO, n.d.[2]). Additional cultural expressions of gender exist in some regions (Pacific Women, 2021[38]).

Gender norms contribute to the discrimination, marginalisation and violence faced by LGBTQIA+ persons. The protection of individuals on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics implies extending the same rights to LGBTQIA+ persons as those enjoyed by everyone else, by virtue of international human rights standards (OECD, 2020[39]) The human rights of LGBTQIA+ individuals as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are often not protected or realised, and many LGBTQIA+ and women's rights organisations work across movements to combat threats to their rights, creating opportunities to build solidarity (Madrigal-Borloz, 2021[40]; Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, 2019[41]). LGBTQIA+ inclusion can be conducive to the emergence of less restrictive gender norms and can help accelerate gender equality (OECD, 2020[39]).

The fact that LGBTQIA+ persons are one of the most exposed and persecuted groups also incurs a host of political and ethical challenges for DAC members as development partners. In some contexts, gender equality advocates have made the strategic choice of delinking women's rights from issues around gender identity and the inclusion of LGBTQIA+ communities. DAC members, however, need to consider carefully the possibilities for supporting all individuals' human rights, as well as the harm that may be caused if neglected.

As society progresses and grows, definitions and language also evolve. Similarly, an understanding of the impact that words and language can have has changed.[23]

> *DAC members should aim to use language in their policies that encapsulates and represents the entirety of the population for whom the policies are designed.*

Box 1.7. DAC members' approaches to LGBTQIA+ inclusion

Canada expanded its definition of "gender" to include a spectrum of sexual orientations and gender identities in 2018, based on the belief that gender equality means that all people, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or sex characteristics, are able to participate fully in all spheres of life. This is accompanied by investments to further expand and adapt policy and create new initiatives that promote the rights of LGBTQIA+ communities.

Canada's approach to international assistance employs an analytical process known as GBA Plus (Gender-based Analysis Plus) to assess how individuals might experience a programme, policy or initiative by virtues of multiple intersecting factors. This method extends the analysis to assess for identifying factors beyond biological sex and socially constructed gender identities and considers other identifying factors. It also addresses the importance of diversity and inclusion in achieving transformative change and thus, equitable and sustainable development.

Spain identifies sexual orientation as one of the worst forms of discrimination and addresses it as a cross-cutting issue in its development co-operation, from planning to implementation. Effective measures for addressing LGTBI+ rights are being identified in the development of Master Plan IV for Spanish Cooperation.

Ethnic, indigenous or racial minorities

The population of nearly every nation includes people who constitute ethnic or racial minorities (OHCHR, n.d.[42]). Guided by the nearly universally ratified International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, countries have increasingly dismantled or abolished racist social and legal practices. While a number of international agreements address the need to understand and address the discrimination against, and the realities of, minority women, there is still much work to be done to link these mechanisms to advance the empowerment of this population (United Nations, n.d.[43]). For example, for many indigenous communities, the sustainable use of natural resources, along with clarification of property rights over land and water, is not just a question of human rights, but also of survival (OECD, 2021[6]).

Disability inclusion

It is estimated that 15% of the global population has at least one form of disability, a percentage that is even higher in many developing countries (WHO, 2011[44]). The number of girls and women with disabilities is substantial, and the vulnerability to violence of women and girls with disabilities is compounded, due to their "social exclusion, limited mobility, lack of support structures, communication barriers and negative social perceptions" (Plan International, 2013[45]). Due to the complex interface between pervasive gendered oppression and disability status, persons with disabilities face numerous additional barriers to accessing basic needs such as housing, employment, social safety nets and education (World Bank, 2021[46]). The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), adopted in 2006, recognises that women and girls with disabilities are, at times of instability as well as peace, at a heightened

risk of experiencing violence, abuse, “negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation” (UN DESA, 2006[47]).

Full realisation of gender equality requires that women and girls with disabilities be able to equitably and fully participate in all social, economic and political structures of society. It is thus good practice for DAC members to use participatory methods that facilitate and strengthen the inclusion of voices from concerned communities at all stages of policy and programme cycles. This can help ensure that the barriers they face, and their experiences and needs, are considered and addressed.

Box 1.8. DAC members' approaches to disability inclusion

Spain employs a number of instruments to address different intersecting inequalities in Spanish development cooperation and humanitarian assistance, such as the "Guide for the Inclusion of Disability in Development Cooperation" (2018). Within the development co-operation priority area of "Gender intersectionality and diversity", special focus is given to sexual diversity and LGTBIAQ+ rights, indigenous women, women and girls with disabilities, femicide prevention, and protection from gendered sexual exploitation and abuse. The Guide clearly lays out that persons with disabilities are not a homogenous group and that multiple, and intersecting, forms of discrimination are often experienced by members of this population. The intended purpose of this document is to examine the realities of those who live with disabilities, to address existing issues and improve the effectiveness of Spanish development cooperation for this historically marginalised population. It also seeks to raise awareness, with the aim of encouraging ongoing engagement on disability inclusion, thereby ensuring the longevity of this initiative. Ultimately, the Guide seeks to use a human rights-based approach to Spain's work with stakeholders and partners, to ensure the effective and equitable implementation of programmes and actions intended to support and empower persons with disabilities. Thus, additional measures to promote the empowerment of women and girls with disabilities are expanded upon and encouraged, and a number of frameworks and tools for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of relevant programmes are provided.

The **United Kingdom**'s former Department for International Development (DfID) released a "*Strategic Vision for Gender Equality: Her Potential, Our Future*". This call to action recognised that, due to the convergence of other intersecting inequalities with gender, a disproportionate number of women and girls live in poverty and experience further discrimination. The DfID outlines focus areas through supplementary strategies such as the "DfID Disability Inclusion Strategy" and the "DfID's Approach on LGBT Rights". The vision of the "DfID Disability Inclusion Strategy" is to "[leave] no one behind" and to engage in actions that promote the engagement, empowerment and ability of all people to realise and enjoy their fundamental human rights. Within the strategy, it is discussed that advancing the equality of all women, including those with disabilities, also acts as a means of poverty reduction, as well as stability. Additionally, the representation and participation of people with disabilities at all levels within political and economic structures, equitable access to opportunities, and that increased research and data on the realities of people with disabilities is called for. The DfID seeks to achieve this vision by mainstreaming disability inclusion throughout all of the DfID's development co-operation strategies and policies and by implementing the cross-cutting theme "empowering girls and women with disabilities" as one of three cross-cutting themes that will be systematically incorporated throughout this work.

Italy's "Guidelines on the gender equality and the empowerment of women, girls and children in international co-operation (2020/2024)", approved in December 2020, include specific reference to women with disabilities, underlining that they experience multiple discrimination and – especially in humanitarian crisis contexts – they are disproportionately vulnerable and exposed to violence, exploitation and abuse, including sexual and gender-based violence. The guidelines also include commitments to the need to collect gender and disability disaggregated data, to consider the sexual and reproductive needs and rights of women with disabilities, to ensure them equal access to education. At the same time, the "Guidelines for mainstreaming disability and social inclusion in aid projects", approved in 2018, include specific reference to the need to: consider that women experience multiple discrimination; prevent, protect and sustain women with disabilities from all forms of violence, including gender-based violence; collect gender and disability disaggregated data; prevent all forms of isolation and segregation, especially for women with disabilities; and sustain initiatives that favour the employment of resources through training activities based on new IT technologies, in particular for women with disabilities.

Checklist on leadership and policy

DAC members can ask the following questions:

On political and policy priority for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls:

- Is gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls a policy priority in strategic frameworks on development co-operation, and/or anchored in legislation?
- Is there alignment between international norms and standards on gender equality and policies, and are efforts made to influence these norms and standards to address gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls?
- Is gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls institutionalised in foreign policy and diplomacy, to enable the long-term and holistic approaches and responses in development co-operation that are needed to address root causes and shift norms?
- Are clear and strategic connections made between gender equality and other development policy priorities?

On the rationale and thematic focus for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in the development programme:

- Have different justifications for working on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls – including that it is both the right and the smart thing to do, and essential for leaving no one behind – been adequately recognised?
- Are the connections between gender equality and other development priorities, including climate change, clear and well-established within the institution?
- Is gender equality addressed in international partnerships, networks, negotiations, dialogues and other processes?
- Do overall and sector-specific development policies/strategies incorporate any thematic priorities in support of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls? Are these selected based on evidence and the ability to commit for the longer term? Have the institutions' comparative advantages (in terms of capacity, resources, contacts, etc.) been considered when defining these thematic priorities?

On the evolving conceptual framing of gender equality:

- Does the policy and/or strategy lay the foundations for sustainable and long-term transformative change to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls?
- Does the policy and/or strategy address different types of discrimination and inequalities that intersect with gender equality?
- Have adaptations been made to policies/strategies and approaches in order to leave no one behind?

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Annex 1.A. Additional resources on leadership and policy frameworks

Rationale and thematic focus for gender equality in the development programme

For information about contextually feasible policy and programme options that support the economic empowerment of women, "A Roadmap for Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment" offers a guide for potential public-private sector collaboration: http://www.womeneconroadmap.org/sites/default/files/WEE_Roadmap_Report_Final.pdf

Although gender-based violence occurs in every corner of the globe, it is rooted in power, control and gender inequality, and is upheld by discriminatory norms and patriarchal institutions. However, some forms of gender-based violence vary depending on geographic location, as well as cultural and situational contexts. For more information on gender-based violence, see: https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/faqs/types-of-violence.

As a part of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, which puts human rights and dignity first and addresses the root causes of conflict at the forefront of approaches to security, the UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 highlights the need to recognise the impact of conflict on women, and women's participation in conflict resolution. National Action Plans (NAP) provide governments with a tool to effectively articulate priorities and implement UNSCR 1325. For more information on NAPs and to see which OECD and non-OECD member countries have adopted a NAP, visit the Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network's "Global Map of Adopted National Action Plans" website: https://wpsfocalpointsnetwork.org/resources/.

The evolving conceptual framing of gender equality

For more information on using a gender equality continuum as a tool to facilitate the integration of gender into policies, strategies and programmes, see USAID's "Gender Integration Continuum Training Session User's Guide": https://www.thecompassforsbc.org/sbcc-tools/gender-integration-continuum-training-session-users-guide.

For more information on, and examples of, participatory approaches, see the Institute of Development Studies' "Participatory Methods" website: https://www.participatorymethods.org/.

The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer & Intersex Youth and Student Organisation (IGLYO) offers a practical guide for learning more about the principles of intersectionality and activities to inform inclusive actions. For more information on the process of adopting an intersectional approach, see the IGLYO "Intersectionality Toolkit": https://www.iglyo.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Inter-Toolkit.pdf.

For more information on policy advice for helping institutions achieve more equitable and inclusive systems, the OECD Directorate for Education and Skills offers a presentation on "Strength Through Diversity: Framework and Approach to Intersectionality": https://www.oecd.org/education/strength-through-diversity/Presentation_Lucie_Cerna_intersectionality_7th_Policy_Forum.pdf.

Notes

[1] In 2020, the OECD conducted a survey (hereafter "the survey") of the members of the OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality (GENDERNET), to which 24 of the 30 members responded. The survey questions addressed the issues raised in this Guidance and provide the foundation for its content (see Annex B).

[2] The term "DAC member" in this document includes bilateral development agencies.

[3] DAC has 30 members at the time of writing. In 2020, 24 members responded to a survey administered by the OECD Development Co-operation Directorate of DAC members' approaches to gender equality and development. In addition, the development policies of all 30 members were analysed. The one member that did not identify gender equality and/or the empowerment of women and girls in its policy was Hungary.

[4] In the survey, 21 DAC members reported having a dedicated policy, strategy or action plan for gender equality. Of the three members that reported not having a dedicated policy, strategy or action plan, one indicated its intention to create one.

[5] DAC members noted that they link gender equality and women's empowerment with other cross-cutting issues, such as climate change and the environment (12 members), human rights (5), corruption/good governance (4), intersectionality/the farthest behind (3), poverty (2), conflict (2), innovation (1), disability (1), job creation (1), indigenous peoples (1), access to food (1), and private sector development (1).

[6] In the UK, the development agency has been incorporated into the department responsible for foreign policy and in Australia and Canada into the department of trade.

[7] Sweden, Canada, France, Germany, Luxembourg and Spain.

[8] Most DAC members indicated in the survey that their institutional focus on gender equality has changed, and increased, since 2014. Four members noted that their institutional focus on gender equality has not changed, the common reasoning (with the exception of one member) given that gender equality and women's empowerment was already an institutional priority. Many DAC members reported having refined and scaled up their approach to the issue over the last decade. The methods used were: combining gender equality and women's empowerment with other cross-cutting priorities (5), increasing participation in international fora for gender equality and women's empowerment (3), and implementing a twin-track (mainstreaming as well as dedicated programmes) or three-pronged (adding policy dialogue to mainstreaming and dedicated programmes) approach (3). Five members indicated increased support for targeted sectors or in specific regions, 3 members noted plans to transform institutional culture, social norms and power dynamics.

[9] For example, the EU's "EU Gender Action Plan III: An Ambitious Agenda for Gender Equality".

[10] The survey asked DAC members to indicate their thematic priorities amongst: ending violence against women and girls (24 DAC members noted this as a priority), women, peace and security (21 DAC members), women's economic empowerment (21 DAC members), the political participation and leadership of women (including women's rights organisations and movements) (19 DAC members), sexual and reproductive health and rights (18 DAC members), gender-responsive humanitarian assistance (14 DAC members), girls' education (11 DAC members), climate change (9 DAC members), and gender data (8 DAC members).

[11] Although there is no universal definition of women's economic empowerment (WEE), a shared perspective exists in the international community that centers on women's equal access to, and control over, resources such as financial services, assets and capital, technology, property and land, natural resources and food production. These definitions also include women's access to skill and business development, financial literacy, and representation and leadership. Some DAC members and international organisations build on this definition of WEE to encompass women's enjoyment of autonomy and capacity to make decisions that shape their life. While resources and autonomy are essential to the empowerment of women and girls, a discussion of this thematic priority is incomplete without recognising the entrenched systems, such as restrictive social norms and laws that act as barriers to the achievement of this form of empowerment. Women's safe, equal and empowered participation in economic life is often understood as being central to realising women's rights and gender equality more broadly (OECD, 2022[9]).

[12] Gender-based violence is a more inclusive term than violence against women. GBV could include violence against men, provided the violence stems from a man's gender identity or presentation. Gender-based violence could also apply to violence experienced by gender non-conforming people. Violence against women is more specific than gender-based violence in that it only applies to people who identify or present as women https://www.friendsofunfpa.org/what-is-gender-based-violence-gbv/.

[13] The acronym that is used to discuss the rights of individuals who are not heterosexual or cisgender (a person whose gender identity corresponds with the sex the person has or was identified as having at birth (Merriam-Webster, 2021[48]) varies between institutions. While many members still use "LGBT", in a move towards inclusivity, some institutions have expanded upon this acronym, adding variations such as LGBTQIA or LGBTQ+ (the "+" is utilised in an effort to indicate the inclusion of a spectrum of sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions).

[14] See OECD Fragility Framework for more information on the definition of fragility and the different fragility indicators. http://www3.compareyourcountry.org/states-of-fragility/overview/0/.

[15] This includes strengthening messaging on the importance of gender within the Nexus; the integration of gender-sensitive, contextual analyses; developing and maximising the interlinkages between the WPS Agenda and the Nexus – especially within the peace pillar; and continued emphasis on the principle of "Do no harm", in addition to an increased focus on the role of masculinities (OECD, 2021[50]).

[16] Germany is the only DAC member with a dedicated Ministry of Development Co-operation – BMZ. For all others, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and European Affairs/State Department (names vary) have responsibility for this agenda, sometimes together with the Ministry of Defence and, where they have one, the development agency.

[17] The ongoing joint work and meetings between the International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF) and GENDERNET have proven useful in connecting these communities and as a way to enhance policy dialogue and expand the space for peer-to-peer networking and learning.

[18] The following DAC members explicitly identify transformative change as a means for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls: Australia, Canada, EU, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the United States.

[19] This is an adaptation of a framework developed by Hillenbrand et al. (2015[31]), "Measuring gender-transformative change: A review of literature and promising practices"

[20] This builds on the different versions of a gender equality continuum proposed in: (Government of Canada, 2017[49]; Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), 2018[52]; USAID, 2017[35]; Hillenbrand et al., 2015[31]).

[21] Nineteen DAC members report that intersectional considerations to gender are currently addressed in their policy frameworks.

[22] Twelve DAC members linked their work on gender equality with equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual, plus other self-identifying members of the community (LGBTQIA+) persons. Five DAC members explicitly mentioned including interventions to address the intersecting inequalities that are experienced by varying ethnic and racial minorities in their development co-operation policies. Eleven DAC members identified disability inclusion as an area of focus in their development co-operation policies.

[23] A common example is the increased use of “gender-based” violence within the international community rather than “violence against women and girls”. This is an intentionally broad term to include violence committed against people on the basis of their assigned or identified gender, not limited to cisgender women and girls (OHCHR, 2014[51]).

2 Planning: Analysis and design of development programmes

This chapter covers the planning stage of development programmes, including key issues to address by DAC members regarding gender equality analysis, programme design and the identification of indicators and results targeted.

Well-designed and effective programming based on analysis and clear policies and strategies is at the core of development co-operation for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.[1]

The design process of any development programme needs to respond to the context and circumstances of the planned activity. All development interventions will have some type of impact on gender equality – whether intended or not. Programme design informed by analysis, based on factors such as the economic and social situation, power and politics, can identify opportunities and risks for gender equality. Thorough analysis, along with indicators and identification of results, is the backbone of effective programmes. A positive correlation has been proven between integrating gender equality into a project's context analysis and achieving gender equality results (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), 2018[1]).

> *The application of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) gender equality policy marker criteria is an important step in the planning phase of any development or humanitarian initiative.*

The DAC gender marker monitors the policy intention of development activities. These are scored as addressing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls if gender equality is either one important and deliberate objective amongst others, or if it is the main objective of the activity (OECD, 2020[2]) (Chapter 4). The *Handbook on the gender Equality Policy Marker* recommends that DAC members ensure, for any activity scored as addressing gender equality, that:

- a gender analysis has been conducted,
- the analysis has informed the design,
- there are gender equality objectives and indictors, with a commitment to monitor and report on gender equality results (OECD, 2016[3]).

2.1. Conducting gender equality analysis

Gender analysis is a systematic, analytical process to help explain power dynamics, gender norms and intersecting inequalities, and where, how and why women may be treated differently and are often disproportionately affected in certain situations (Enabel, 2018[4]). Used as a tool to demonstrate the gender equality dimensions of any sector or issue, gender analysis reveal the ways in which policies and programmes impact all individuals, and how they are not inherently gender neutral (UNDP, 2016[5]).[2]

The analysis and questions worth asking in this process will depend on the objectives of the programme, the extent to which achieving gender equality is a focus, and the context. Questions to ask in the planning phase and during the implementation of any programme include, but are not limited to:[3]

- What are the opportunities for the programme to promote gender equality and/or the empowerment of women and girls, even if it is not its main purpose?
- How can gender equality components contribute to better development outcomes?
- What risks exist in the context of this programme/sector and how might they be mitigated, including by greater attention to gender equality?
- How will interventions affect girls and women, boys and men, or their participation, differently and how will the programme address this?
- What are the gender differences in roles and responsibilities; in power relations, voice and decision-making; and attitudes and behaviour around being a man or a woman, and how do these impact programme design, including the identification of gender equality outcomes?
- What are the factors that advance or impede gender equality and sustainable development, such as politics, norms, belief systems and so on?
- Which women, girls, men and boys are most at risk of marginalisation and why – which laws, policies and organisations limit opportunities of different groups?

- Who might be negatively impacted by the programme?
- Who is being consulted? Are local women and women's rights organisations involved in planning, design and decision making on the programme?
- Will the programme address women's practical needs; improve opportunities, choices and decision making for empowerment; and/or support transformational change towards gender equality?
- Which other actors are active in the given context and country?

Responding to these questions will include working across areas and teams within the institution to ensure a well-informed approach. This requires adequate capacity and expertise on gender equality analysis. Neglecting the broader and contextual gender norms and power dynamics at play can result in missed opportunities and perpetuation of existing inequality and power imbalances (DfID & FCO, 2019[6]).

In emergencies, gender analysis can helpfully compare the state of gender equality prior to the crisis with changes since the initiation of the crisis. It is helpful to have existing gender equality analysis ready, which needs to be continuously updated. Questions to ask might include but are not limited to:

- Are the capacities and needs of different individuals the same as before the crisis or have they changed?
- Is there a fair (paid and unpaid) workload distribution between individuals? How does the distribution impact their respective rights and opportunities? Who makes decisions about the use of resources? Are needs met equitably?
- How do women and men help or hinder each other in meeting their needs and fulfilling their rights? Who perpetrates violence against whom? What roles do institutions and the community play in meeting needs and rights, as well as in addressing and preventing violence (Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2018[7])?

Box 2.1. Sweden's method for systematic gender analysis

Sweden has developed a method for gender analysis ins its public policies when planning an initiative/proposal (JämKAS Bas[1]). The method involves a number of steps, involving questions such as:

Step 1: Is gender equality relevant to the proposal?

Step 2: In what way is gender equality relevant to the proposal?

Step 3 What conclusions can be drawn in connection with women's and men's, girls' and boys' conditions and circumstances in the proposal?

Step 4: Which gender patterns emerge, and what significance does the proposal have for gender equality?

Step 5: Which alternative proposals could further promote gender equality?

Note: 1. For more information on the definition see: https://www.jamstall.nu/verktygslada/jamkas-bas/

Recognition that development work is inherently political has increased, and efforts are being made to set up politically informed approaches to strategic analysis and development work to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (Laws and Marquette, 2018[8]). Strategic political analysis can provide a thorough understanding of a local context, which can inform a comprehensive response and encourage ongoing adaptation during both the design and the implementation of programmes (Oxfam International, 2014[9]). Relying on a single method of analysis to inform the design of a programme runs the risk of providing an incomplete picture of what is needed to address gender equality.

Political economy analysis is a tool some DAC members use for a politically informed agenda and for exploring the role that economic and social forces and the distribution of power play in managing resources in development partner countries and thus, development outcomes (Oxfam International, 2014[9]; USAID, 2018[10]). Analysis of this kind is used by some DAC members to study the intricacies of institutional and human relationships that affect the outcomes of a development programme, and to inform strategic programme design that responds to these realities by re-evaluating and course correcting (USAID, 2018[10]). Inclusive growth diagnostics is a similar form of analysis that encourages consideration of political contexts and corruption as a barrier to development. It can also be applied to gender equality.

Box 2.2. How gender analysis led to an increased focus on gender equality: The EU in Malawi

The **European Union (EU)** Delegation conducted gender analyses in a range of sectors in Malawi, in education and technical and vocational training, agriculture and nutrition, governance and infrastructure. These analyses were conducted to inform programming and guide the policy dialogue on gender equality, and included dialogue sessions to understand household and community dynamics, while enabling vulnerable or marginalised communities to participate in policy development, planning and implementation.

In the education sector, dialogue focused on measures to increase access for girls and young women to secondary education and technical training, thus tackling socio-economic barriers. The gender analysis also helped highlight the prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence in technical and vocational colleges, and the fact that there were no policies, reporting or response mechanisms to address this challenge. In response, the EU programme supported the development of a Code of Conduct for instructors and students on gender-based violence, alongside supporting training for both target groups in technical colleges. A reporting and response system was set up in each institution, including a hotline for reporting cases of violence.

In the transport sector, the gender analysis undertaken led to measures to address the gender imbalance by recruiting female engineering students on internships. Furthermore, young female engineering graduates will be offered opportunities to work as part of the engineering consulting team on the EU/European Investment Bank (EIB) blending operation for the M1 Road Rehabilitation project. This is with a few to strengthening their experience and subsequent employability by participating in an international team on a sizeable infrastructure project, the largest EIB operation in Malawi. An increased focus on gender equality is being taken in the design of the new energy programme, currently being developed.

Source: European Commission (2017[11]),Collection of Good Practices in Mainstreaming Gender into European External Action From the 2017 Annual Implementation Report of the EU Gender Action Plan II, https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/2017_good_practices_gap_ii.pdf.

Using a theory of change to articulate how to achieve gender equality results

Theories of change have become important tools for mapping and testing assumptions about how gender equality change happens and for building strategic linkages between expected results and activities that are supported. A theory-of-change approach involves asking a series of questions, including:

- What do we want to change?
- What do we know about how change happens in relation to the change we want to see – is there evidence to back this up, or are there assumptions to be tested?
- How can that change be supported?
- How will we know change has happened?

Building a shared understanding, or at least some hypotheses, about how change is expected to happen is an essential part of developing a theory of change. This is an opportunity to understand stakeholders' underlying beliefs about the activities and the processes of change. In such endeavours, it is advisable to involve women's organisations and key stakeholders who are well-acquainted with the context. A theory of change can be used alongside the standard theory of action (logical framework), which outlines how inputs or activities are expected to contribute to changes, and what types of indicators (quantitative and quantitative) can help track the change that is happening.

A key tool for any theory of change from a gender perspective is a strong intersectional and context analysis. For gender-mainstreamed interventions, developing a theory of change can help illuminate when and how gender norms and power relations may subvert or support assumptions underpinning programme logic, and what other contextual or environmental factors will influence programme or policy outcomes. It is useful to engage different teams in the institutions, as well as external stakeholders. It can also help illuminate additional efforts that may be needed to ensure that all women benefit or participate equitably and meaningfully – including those who are also members of a minority or a vulnerable group. It is also important that risks for women or for gender equality are addressed effectively.

One of the advantages of a theory-of-change approach for gender equality interventions is the flexibility to depict the complexity of gender equality change, which is multifactorial and often nonlinear. It also provides an important tool to accompany and guide programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and to check assumptions against results. It can be revised to reflect emergent outcomes and new indicators of change as they are described by programme stakeholders. A theory of change can help programme stakeholders regularly assess and refine their "navigational map" of how to achieve change together (Effective Institutions Platform, 2020[12]).

> *DAC members can integrate a theory-of-change approach for each new programme, strategy or policy, and use the theory of change to guide design and develop outcomes and indicators on gender equality, as well as monitoring, evaluation and learning.*

2.2. Programme design informed by gender equality analysis

Development programmes will have gender-differentiated outcomes and impacts regardless of whether they are intended or not. It can be helpful to apply the gender equality continuum framework, identifying what type of gender equality results are expected from "gender blind" to "gender transformative", and how decisions can influence this (Chapter 1).

The application of such a framework helps to explain how the consideration, or lack thereof, of gender and gendered norms and roles in the design of a programme may shape its outcomes. When strategically applied, a gender equality continuum framework can help to move programmes along the different phases of the gender equality continuum. The DAC gender equality policy marker score should also be defined at

this stage. This applies for official development assistance (ODA)-funded programmes but is equally valid for engagement with the private sector, including as a part of blended finance vehicles (see Chapter 4).

> *To design the most appropriate and effective programmes, DAC members should use a gender analysis to identify what has achieved success, and where there is the greatest need, in a local context.*

Participatory approaches, for example community consultations and meeting with women's rights organisations, can help to understand their needs (DfID & FCO, 2019[6]). DAC members may need to find alternative ways to include women, and targeted efforts may be needed to include feedback from relevant groups. Gender analysis can also help build understanding of appropriate accountability mechanisms with and for affected populations.

DAC institutions can also consider the mandate and potential strengths of other ministries and institutions in the same DAC country, and opportunities for collaborating through a whole-of-government approach.

Managing risks

Identifying, acknowledging and managing risks allows development co-operation actors to achieve their objectives, and should be an integral part of decision making. Key steps include: identifying risks and opportunities for reaching set objectives; assessing the impact and likelihood of risks; deciding on measures to address and mitigate risks; and implementing measures to monitor the evolution of new and existing risks (OECD, 2021[13]).

Failing to analyse and address gender inequalities can put development programmes at risk (Austrian Development Agency, 2019[14]). Gender-based violence, for example, may remain invisible, taboo and under-reported, or an unintended increase in women's unpaid care work burden may result (Council of Europe, 2018[15]). Risk may also include a backlash against gender equality. Some evidence has emerged, for example, that the economic empowerment of women can be linked to an increased prevalence of domestic violence (Désilets et al., 2019[16]).

In addition, the risk of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment during the implementation of programmes also needs to be scrutinised. Finally, DAC members need to be conscious of the potential risks faced by local organisations working for women's rights and take steps to reduce them.

Managing risks in fragile contexts

Entrenched systems of gender inequality are often intensified in humanitarian emergencies, many of which expose how increased vulnerability and unequal access to resources systematically disadvantage women. Immediate action to address the impact of natural disasters, armed conflicts, and other complex crises, require the same level of attention to gender inequalities, often in different ways from long-term development programmes (Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2018[7]). Short-term humanitarian goals need to be in line with – and should not undermine – long-term development priorities, including for gender equality. This should be framed within the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus, and aligned with the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

Both during emergencies and long-term development programming, an inclusive, bottom-up, approach can ensure that gaps in knowledge are filled, programmes are adapted to local needs/contexts, and that international actors are not inadvertently imposing neo-colonial agendas. This should include engaging women-led civil society actors in the process of designing programmes. As members of crisis-affected communities, women as well as men play a central role in the survival and resilience of their families and communities (Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2018[7]). Expanding beyond the geographic centre of countries requires programmes to be adapted to those communities and their needs. In any humanitarian emergency, it is often local actors, including women's organisations and movements, who are the first to

respond. Care should be taken to ensure that local authorities, movements and responders are supported by international actors (OECD, 2017[17]).

Humanitarian emergencies can compound discrimination and exacerbate risks, but crises may also provide opportunities for addressing inequalities and promoting transformative change for gender equality (Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2018[7]).

Adaptive and flexible management

All development programmes need to have flexibility to shift resources or change priorities to some degree. While this is important, it cannot be used as an excuse to minimise the gender equality focus of the programme.

An adaptive approach – beyond flexibility – is necessary for programmes focused on complex challenges and in uncertain contexts. In these situations, teams need to deliberately test and experiment to find out what works. It may require fundamental shifts in mind-sets, behaviour and power imbalances. Adaptive programming involves learning through honest reflection, not only on achievements and progress but also on setbacks and challenges, and empowering delivery teams to take risks and experiment (Laws et al., 2021[18]). It may also require adjustments to outcomes and related indicators in performance management systems.

While the DAC gender marker score should be identified and applied at the design stage, it is possible to revise the marker score during programme implementation if needed, should the context and programme objectives change.

Box 2.3. Ireland's Use of Gender Theories of Change in Ethiopia

Ireland's Embassy in Ethiopia adopts a gender-transformative approach to its Mission Strategy and programming. The Mission developed a whole-of-mission analysis using a gender equality theory of change to guide its gender mainstreaming and dedicated gender equality programming. An expert technical consultant was engaged to assist the Mission with identifying what is done, whom it partners and works with, and how it uses information to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. The final version will guide implementation of the Mission Strategy's gender equality commitments, and it established the high-level priorities of women, peace and security, women in leadership, and prevention of gender-based violence and protection of sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Staff completed training and analysis at the outset of this initiative, and established a narrative baseline and drivers of change on the basis of this analysis. Based on these, the theory of change identified three pathways of change.

- Internal positioning of policy, people, and systems: *If,* The Embassy of Ireland's commitment to GE is fully and explicitly embedded in its politics, policies, capabilities, attitudes and practices, *Then*, its domains of influence are strategically positioned and Ireland is viewed as credible actor at relevant levels.
- Leading from behind, strengthening capacities: *If*, the furthest-behind women and girls, men and boys, duty bearers, actors and agents access effective institutional support and skills on social norm change, *Then*, ideological, cultural and social norms and power dynamics will incrementally shift, causing change to occur.
- Translating research and evidence into action: *If* the political economy and context analysis and investments in research are well informed and the implementation approach is responsive to the context, *Then*, measurable results and evidence/lessons on gender equality are of utility to local/external actors and inform Ireland's policy and programmes.

Assumptions used to establish these pathways were interrogated, and incremental change and realism were identified as core pillars of the approach to transformative change. Using the underlined pathways, the theory of change included a strategic action plan where specific milestones, expected outputs, key partnership opportunities and assumptions are clearly defined, making it a working document for all outcomes across the mission.

In line with the transformative approach to gender, the embassy has been funding a Save the Children programme to support women and girls in Somali and Afar regions to realise their rights and live healthy and productive lives free from violence and abuse. This intervention was also guided by a gender-transformative theory of change. It has multiple flexible pathways for change that recognise the complexity of transformative approaches and that transformational change can be non-linear. There are multiple intersecting links between the individual level (education and economic empowerment), social (at family and community level), and governance/ systems level interventions, and empowerment appears as both a prerequisite for violence prevention and an outcome of the process. The theory of change also recognises that efforts are needed to challenge risks of backlash and negative responses within the household and communities. The project is structured to integrate regular review and learning and to incorporate unintended consequences or opportunities for learning and comparison across project contexts.

The theory of change is accompanied by a research and learning focus. An integrated multi-year evaluation by the Overseas Development Institute, a think-tank based in Ireland, aims to feed in learning and assessment of the theory of change at work, providing entry points for ongoing adaptation of the pathways. The evaluation aims to assess the application of programme evidence and recommendations

resulting from the research; to establish benchmarks for key outcome indicators and tracking changes over time, to provide evidence for the key line ministries and other non-government actors, to strengthen the roll-out and application on the Government of Ethiopia's Road Map to End Child Marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting and to provide valuable learning on these issues in the region. The evaluation uses a mixed-methods design to generate a baseline from surveys, accompanied by a gender-focused political economy analysis of the politics of social norm change, to identify potential entry points for programming to shift gender norms (see Annex B).

2.3. Data and indicators to monitor gender equality results

A Shift is under way from activity reporting on gender equality (for example, the number of women receiving leadership training) to capturing the results or outcomes of a gender equality intervention (for example, the increased ability of women to influence decision-making processes in their organisation or community). Outcomes are defined as a measurable change in knowledge, awareness, skills or abilities (sometimes described as immediate outcomes) and/or changes in behaviour, practice or performance (sometimes described as intermediate outcomes). Each development partner may use slightly different results terminology.

Sex and age-disaggregated information and data are essential for understanding the different needs, priorities, opportunities and barriers that individuals and different groups of people face. The availability of such data is a core part of a programme with gender equality as a significant (integrated) objective or as the principal (dedicated) objective, as set out in the Handbook on the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker (OECD, 2016[3]), but should ideally be adopted in all programmes. Disaggregation by multiple and intersecting identity factors helps to understand how these interact with being a "woman", a "man" and "gender diverse", and serves to expose hidden trends by rendering all groups of women and girls visible (DfID & FCO, 2019[6]). This also includes disaggregating data by non-binary gender identities when possible. Baseline studies can also be conducted to collect gender data in the geographical location or sector where the project will be carried out.[4]

Identifying results in the design phase

Development results are "the outputs, outcomes or impacts of development interventions, with each element contributing to the next", as set out in a results chain of inputs > outputs > outcomes > impact. The links between each element are as important as the results themselves, reflecting the theory of change and the roles of providers and other stakeholders" (OECD, n.d.[19]).

When gender equality results are explicitly identified in results frameworks in the design phase, there tends to be greater attention, action and accountability for gender equality.[5] The specific gender equality results sought will depend on the programme. Dedicated gender equality programmes are by design expected to generate gender equality results.

> *Where gender equality is mainstreamed into sectoral programs and policies, steps need to be taken to ensure that gender results are explicitly formulated where possible, based on gender analysis and indicators.*

Identifying gender equality indicators in the design phase

Appropriate gender indicators need to be developed at the design phase of a programme and monitored throughout the programme to determine the extent to which the intended policy intention is being realised during implementation. The indicators may need to be reviewed.

An indicator is a "quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development actor" (OECD, 2002[20]).

> *It is good practice to use both quantitative (numeric data: "how much") and qualitative ("how well/effective") indicators on gender equality, since they complement and cross-validate each other.*

There is, however, often a preference for quantitative indicators over qualitative indicators in results monitoring and evaluation. Qualitative indicators are based on descriptive information. Qualitative changes can be more difficult to measure, because responses are not standardised. However, qualitative data provides a richness and a depth of information, even if data are more labour-intensive to collect. Qualitative indicators can also be transformed to quantitative with descriptive scales. For example, perceptions of women activists on their "knowledge and skills to engage in effective advocacy initiatives on violence" could be ranked on a numerical scale. Analysis of data collected through qualitative indicators also helps to establish new sets of quantitative measures for future programming.

The identification of gender indicators needs to be based on gender analysis. There are multiple global results and related indicators that DAC members use to track their gender equality results, and a variety of composite indices drawing on available data to track global trends on gender equality.[6] The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including but not limited to SDG5 – "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls" – are increasingly guiding the higher-level gender equality indicators for many development projects and interventions.[7] The data for SDG gender equality indicators largely originate in national statistical institutes. Efforts are under way to support these institutes to improve the production, accessibility and use of gender statistics, but DAC members can increase this support.[8]

Box 2.4. Illustrative indicators to monitor gender equality results

This table provides a few illustrative indicators that could help monitor gender "sensitive"/"aware" results, and gender "responsive"/"positive" results. See Chapter 1 for more information about the continuum of gender equality results and Box 2.6 for Illustrative indicators to monitor transformative change for gender equality.

Table 2.1. Sample indicators to monitor gender sensitive/aware and responsive/positive results

Outcomes	Indicators
Reduced gender disparities in educational outcomes and employment, thanks to gender-responsive, and better quality education systems (Country or Sectoral Level)	***Gender "sensitive" or "aware" results:***
	• Number and percentage of women and men completing a technical, vocational, or other tertiary qualification, by subject area • Proportion of children and young people (a) in Grade 2 or 3; (b) at the end of primary education; and (c) at the end of lower secondary education achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex (SGD Indicator 4.1.1)
	Gender "responsive" or "positive" results (strengthening gender equality):
	• Number of educational institutions with policies and procedures for dealing with sexual harassment and gender-based violence, and discrimination. • Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment (SGD Indicator 4.7.1)
Reduced gender disparities in employment, livelihoods, and incomes (Country or sectoral level)	***Gender "sensitive" or "aware" results:***
	• Proportion of informal employment in non-agriculture employment, by sex (SDG Indicator 8.3.1) • Average hourly earnings of female and male employees, disaggregated by occupation, age and persons with disabilities. (SDG Indicator 8.5.1)
	Gender "responsive" or "positive" results (strengthening gender equality):
	• Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex (SDG Indicator 5.1.1) • Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control. (SDG Indicator 5.A.2)

It is important to involve stakeholders in the definition of gender indicators for specific efforts to help ensure relevance and partner ownership (Box 2.5). This also helps to identify levels of commitment and capacity to collect data on gender indicators.

The list of tested gender indicators to draw from is growing, but gender indicators need to be tailored and appropriate to the policy and programme objectives. The selection of gender indicators also depends on the scale of the intervention, the availability of gender statistics and the capacity of the actors involved in the data collection.

When defining outcomes and selecting relevant indicators, it is important to consider the timeframe for expected outcomes of policies, programmes or projects, which may take place over a short-term, medium-term or long-term period.

When possible, DAC members should engage programme stakeholders in participatory processes to set gender equality indicators that are relevant to their own results monitoring, evaluation and learning needs and to invest in their monitoring and evaluation capacity where necessary.

Linking indicators to the types of outcomes expected

It is helpful to consider using different types of indicators in relation to different types of outcomes and at different stages over the course of an intervention:[9]

- *Process/progress indicators* (output indicators) are useful for measuring the delivery of activities and demonstrating that the programme or project is on course and performing the activities that it set out to do, for example: “number of training sessions on women’s rights held in a target community”;
- *(Immediate) Outcome indicators* measure the direct results of activities and show that they are having the intended effect, for example: “number of women who show increased awareness of their rights after attending a training session”;
- *(Intermediate) Outcome indicators* measure the longer-term results of interventions and provide evidence that they will have a lasting effect on the lives of women living in poverty, for example: “a decrease in the incidence of gender-based violence, as more men and women come to understand that the use of violence violates women’s rights”.

Basket indicators

Basket or standard indicators for gender equality can helpfully be used by DAC members for programmes that include multiple and diverse stakeholders (Box 2.5 and Annex B). The value of this approach is that it allows partners to formulate indicators in a language that is consistent with their programme narrative, while also ensuring alignment with a set of standard or basket indicators. This facilitates the aggregation of data at the programme level, while giving greater flexibility to programme partners to determine indicators that work for them (see Annex B for a matrix of sample basket indicators).

Box 2.5. Innovative approaches to monitoring: The Netherlands' basket indicators

The **Netherlands** uses a collaborative indicator system[1] for results reporting in its development co-operation for gender equality and agenda for the empowerment of women and girls. To support and elevate the Strengthening Civil Society policy framework, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) created a system for results reporting called "basket indicators" (see Annex C).

Basket indicators were designed to deliberately capture broad categories of results, so that partners can develop and use systems for results reporting that are tailored to their own programmes and efforts, but still contribute to the MFA's larger evaluation and monitoring framework. Additionally, to strengthen the Women's Rights and Gender Equality policy, the MFA created a Result Framework[2] and set of Women's Rights and Gender Equality indicators, which complement and align with the Civil Society policy framework. This system creates an environment of adaptability and autonomy for partners and their data, while simultaneously gathering the information needed to develop a comprehensive understanding of the progress and challenges associated with both policy frameworks.

A combination of quantitative and qualitative information is used to determine baseline values. While it is dependent upon predetermined agreements, it is not mandatory for partners to be able to link their results reporting to all basket indicators, a contribution to a minimum of three basket indicators is expected. Similarly, while there are no strict requirements for partners' reporting on intersecting inequalities, it is requested that individual-level indicators provide disaggregated data and that the "Do no harm" principle is applied throughout this work.

1. Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), "Strengthening Civil Society IATI (International Aid Transparency Initiative) Indicator Guidelines" (internal document).
2. Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Guidance for SPs on the Use of the Women's Rights and Gender Equality Result Framework" (internal document).

Indicators to monitor transformative change for gender equality

What transformative change looks like will be context-specific and different for different groups of women and girls. A useful framework for examining gender-transformative change is to look at change across three key dimensions: agency, relations and structures.

Box 2.6. Illustrative indicators to monitor transformative change

This box sets outs some illustrative indicators to monitor transformative change for gender equality (see Chapter 1 for more information about the continuum of gender equality results and transformative change).

Table 2.2. Sample indicators to monitor transformative results

Transformative outcomes	Indicators[1]	Dimension of change
Positive shifts in gender norms related to family planning	• Number of women and men who believe a man should attend the birth of his children	Relations
	• Women's and men's perceptions of supportive marital relations	
Improved laws and policies on sanitation and hygiene	• % of governments with fiscal policies that encourage menstrual hygiene management (e.g. removal of tax on menstrual hygiene products)	Structures
Increased participation of women in governance related to sanitation programmes and initiatives	• Number of women, in senior (director and above) positions in the relevant decision-making body (municipal government, utility) directly involved in the design and implementation of sanitation programmes and initiatives	Structures
	• Women in senior positions' self-perceived sense of self-efficacy and capacity to contribute to change	Agency
Positive shifts in gender norms at the community level in support of women's decision-making power on land use	• % of men and women who believe that gender division of labor are natural and cannot be changed	All dimensions
	• % of men and women who believe that most people in their community think that women should have decision-making power over agricultural production	All dimensions
More equitable distribution of unpaid domestic work between women and men	• Average number of hours women and men spent on unpaid domestic work in the last week	Relations
	• Women's and men's sense of appreciation in the household	Relations
Improved access and control by women over income	• % of women who have control over use of family income	Agency
	• % of women who work for income and have control over how their income is spent	Agency
	• Women's perceptions of self-esteem, self-worth and psychological well-being	Agency
Positive shifts in gender norms on control by women over income	• % of community members who believe that women should have the right to spend their own money as they want.	Structures
Increased mobility of women in a target community	• % of women who have control over their ability to go out alone, within and outside their residential locality, for whatever purpose	Agency
	• Women's perceptions of self-esteem, autonomy, expanded aspirations	Agency

Positive shifts in gender norms on mobility	• Number of women and men who believe that men should inform their wives of their movements • % of men and women who believe that most people in their community think that women should have the ability to go out alone to visit friends, family and associates	Structures Structures
Increased mobilisation of women to voice and address (an issue of concern to them)	• % of women and men in target community who participate in collective action to address (an issue of concern to them) • Women's perceptions that their collective interests are represented	Relations Relations
Increased influence of women's rights organisations in national political debates	• Number of times that policy positions or policy research from women's rights organisations are reflected in mainstream national political debates • Policy makers' perceptions of women's rights organisations and their influence in public debates	Structures Structures

1. These examples are drawn from: https://www.gatesgenderequalitytoolbox.org/wp-content/uploads/BMGF_Methods-Note-Measuring-Empowerment-1.pdf; https://gehweb.ucsd.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/resources_for_measuring_social_norms_guide_final.pdf; https://www.care.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/working_paper_aas_gt_change_measurement_fa_lowres.pdf.

Planning data and indicators to address intersectional inequalities

The use of an intersectional gender analysis is good practice to ensure that gender indicators are as inclusive as possible, exploring the interaction of multiple aspects of identity (Canada Treasury Board Secretariat, 2019[21]).[10] An intersectional analysis provides a framework for understanding the complex impacts of overlapping inequalities on people's lives (see Chapter 1). An increasing number of tools are available to support intersectional analysis, although much has yet to be learned about their practical application (see Annex 2). At a minimum, integrating an intersectional lens requires asking additional questions about which groups of people will be affected directly or indirectly by the proposed initiative, and creating opportunities for consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Taking these steps will help to identify what, if any, additional disaggregated data will be required and what appropriate methods for data collection will be needed. For example, depending on the focus, indicator development and monitoring might consider:

- changes in different groups' assets/income and/or access to services
- changes in different groups' voice and ability to influence
- experiences of gender-based violence by different groups.

These changes should be measured using both quantitative and qualitative data. Changes in systems, including both informal behaviour and formal policies and structures, should also be documented (International Development Partners Group, Nepal, 2017[22]).

Collecting such data should avoid seeking to fit programme participants into simple social identity boxes that may have the unintended consequence of entrenching or even enforcing inequitable definitions and perspectives (We All Count, 2021[23]). Identity components are complex, fluid and highly private and personal. This requires working closely with stakeholders, allowing them space to self-identify, decide the appropriate social variables to measure and to identify additional safety and security concerns that may arise from collecting intersectional data from them.

Box 2.7. Taking steps towards monitoring intersectional inequalities: Switzerland

In the **Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation** (SDC), a unit has been created focused on Gender and social equality. This has led to joint efforts to identify the interlinkages between gender equality and "Leave No One Behind" (LNOB), and an emphasis on intersectionality. SDC introduced a new set of reference indicators for monitoring the implementation of the new strategy for international co-operation (2021-2025). It is mandatory to include gender equality and at least one "LNOB group" as units of disaggregation for all reference indicators, with exceptions only where justifiable. For each indicator, a fact sheet is available that provides a definition and description for the target, the rationale behind the indicator and a theory of change.

In the annual gender status report for 2020, results were disaggregated for priority areas by numbers of women and men and numbers of women and men from disadvantaged groups. For illustrative examples in the report, information was included on women and men from disadvantaged groups.

Source: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (2020[24]), Status Report on Gender Equality 2020: Stepping Up our Efforts. Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, https://www.shareweb.ch/site/Gender/Documents/Gender%20Policies/SDC%20Gender%20Policy/Annual%20Status%20Report/Gender_Status_Report_2020.pdf.

Checklist on planning

DAC members can ask the following questions:

On gender equality analysis:

- Do the selected methods of analysis adequately and clearly capture considerations of gender equality, in the context of the political and socio-economic reality of the partner country and the relevant sector? Does the analysis identify the root causes of gender inequalities?
- Are there appropriate data sources in place that can capture sex-disaggregated data?
- Have the relevant stakeholders been consulted in equitable, meaningful and safe ways, and with full and prior consent?
- Has a theory of change been developed at the design stage of the intervention to help define what gender equality results look like and for whom? Is gender equality adequately covered in the theory of change for programmes that are not dedicated to gender equality?
- Have the gender equality objectives, outcomes and indicators in the theory of change and logic framework been defined, taking into account the gender equality continuum, and is proper consideration given to opportunities for focusing on transformative change to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls?

On design:

- Has a DAC gender equality policy marker score been applied?
- Is gender equality included in the results framework of the programme?
- Is gender equality identified as an area of risk, and is there a commitment to monitoring unintended consequences for women and girls?
- Have sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH) indicators been included?
- Has the programme been designed to allow for flexibility in changing circumstances, while maintaining the longer-term gender equality objective?

On data and indicators:

- Are both quantitative and qualitative indicators identified to measure gender equality results?
- Have indicators been developed in a participatory way and validated with relevant stakeholders?

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Annex 2.A. Additional resources on planning

Conducting gender equality analysis

For more information on gender analysis in development co-operation, see Global Affairs Canada's "Gender Analysis": https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/funding-financement/gender_analysis-analyse_comparative.aspx?lang=eng. The complementary "Gender Analysis Guidelines" page provides insight into how to carry out gender analysis: https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/funding-financement/policy-politique.aspx?lang=eng#a5.

Theories of change can be used more broadly to create change and achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and to address specific issues, such as violence against women and girls. See the Department for International Development's (UK) "How to note on using a theory of change to tackle violence against women and girls": https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67336/how-to-note-vawg-1.pdf.

For more information on ending violence against women and girls theory of change, including its guiding principles and detailed implementation strategy, see Oxfam Canada's "Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Theory of Change: Creating space for women and girls to end violence and child marriage" resource: https://42kgab3z3i7s3rm1xf48rq44-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Oxfam-Canada-EVAWG-Theory-of-Change-2021.pdf.

For information on using theory of change to strengthen civil society, see the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands' "Executive summary Strengthening Civil Society Theory of Change": https://www.government.nl/binaries/government/documents/policy-notes/2019/11/28/policy-framework-strengthening-civil-society/Annex+5+%28Engels%29+-+Strengthening+Civil+Society+-+Theory+of+Change.pdf.

For information on the difference between a theory of change versus a logical framework, in the context of exploring practical tools for international development, visit the website: https://tools4dev.org/resources/theory-of-change-vs-logical-framework-whats-the-difference-in-practice/.

UN Women's "A Theory of Change for Training for Gender Equality" working paper includes guidelines for developing principles for theories of change in training for gender equality: https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/RESOURCES_LIBRARY/Resources_Centre/01%20Theory%20of%20Change.pdf.

For further reading and resources on theories of change, see INTRAC's "Theory of Change" resource: https://www.intrac.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Monitoring-and-Evaluation-Planning-Series.-Theory-of-Change.-16.pdf.

Programme design informed by gender equality analysis

Some DAC members use tools such as CARE International's Rapid Gender Analysis when both time and resources are scarce, to understand contextual gender norms and relations and how they might be exacerbated by an emergency. For more information, see: https://insights.careinternational.org.uk/in-practice/rapid-gender-analysis.

Data and indicators to monitor and report on gender equality results

For more information regarding quantitative vs. qualitative data and indicators:

Quantitative data are data expressing a certain quantity, amount or range. Usually, there are measurement units associated with the data, e.g. metres, in the case of the height of a person. It makes sense to set boundary limits to such data, and it is also meaningful to apply arithmetic operations to the data.

Quantitative methods of data collection produce quantifiable results. In other words, they focus on issues that can be counted, such as percentages of women and men in the labour market, male and female wage rates, or school enrolment rates for girls and boys. Quantitative data can show the magnitude of changes in gender equality over time – for example, the percentage of women married before the age of 15 or the gender pay gap over time.

Qualitative data are "data describing the attributes or properties that an object possesses. The properties are categorised into classes that may be assigned numeric values. However, there is no significance to the data values themselves, they simply represent attributes of the object concerned".

Qualitative methods and data can often help understand patterns that may be identified through quantitative methods by determining whether the analysis resonates with participants. Typically, qualitative methods capture people's experiences, opinions, attitudes and feelings - for example, women's experiences of the constraints or advantages of working in the informal sector, or men's and women's views on the causes and consequences of underrepresentation of women in senior positions in the economy or in politics. Often, participatory methods such as focus group discussions and social mapping tools are used to collect data for qualitative indicators. Qualitative data can also be collected through in-depth surveys measuring perceptions and opinions (OECD, n.d.[25]).

The use of mixed methods approaches in evaluation is considered good practice in the development sector. This applies equally to evaluation of gender equality programmes and policies. Mixed methods designs can: strengthen the reliability of data; increase the validity of the findings and recommendations; broaden and deepen understanding of the processes through which programme outcomes and impacts are achieved and how these are affected by the context within which the programme is implemented; capture a wider range of perspectives; and reveal unanticipated results. Qualitative methods are not by default less rigorous than quantitative methods. There is more guidance now available for evaluators and researchers to increase the quality of qualitative data and to hold up high standards of confidence, meet international best practice standards and strengthen sampling and triangulation. Similarly, there is increased understanding of the inherent gender and other biases built into quantitative methods of data collection.

For more resources on indicators:

For information on gender-sensitive indicators, see Oxfam's Quick Guide to Gender-Sensitive Indicators: https://www.fsnnetwork.org/sites/default/files/ml-quick-guide-to-gender-indicators-300114-en.pdf.

For a selection of potential indicators from which practitioners can choose to aid in the monitoring of results for gender equality, see the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency's "Indicators for Measuring Results on Gender Equality": https://www.sida.se/en/publications/indicators-for-measuring-results-on-gender-equality.

For a practical resource designed to assist development practitioners to incorporate gender perspectives into development initiatives, see the "Tool Kit on Gender Equality Results and Indicators" developed by the Asian Development Bank and the Government of Australia: https://www.oecd.org/derec/adb/tool-kit-gender-equality-results-indicators.pdf.

For information on gender-responsive indicators, including what information is required to make indicators gender-responsive, how to ensure indicators are gender-responsive for project implementation, and how

gender-responsive indicators can be divided for different sectors, see the UNDP's resource "Gender Responsive Indicators: Gender and NDC [nationally determined contributions] planning for implementation": https://www.undp.org/content/dam/LECB/docs/pubs-reports/undp-ndcsp-gender-indicators-2020.pdf.

For information on how violence monitoring efforts and early warning systems can better integrate gender-sensitive indicators, see the International Foundation for Electoral Systems' "Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Early Warning of Violence and Conflict: A global framework" resource: https://www.ifes.org/publications/gender-sensitive-indicators-early-warning-violence-and-conflict-global-framework.

For information on gender statistics and indicators, and how a gender perspective can be integrated into the collection, analysis and presentation of data, as well as tools for data collection, see the European Institute for Gender Equality's "Gender statistics and indicators": https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/methods-tools/gender-statistics-indicators.

Global Affairs Canada's "Results-Based Management Tip Sheet 4.1 – Gender Equality" provides information on gender equality outcomes, gender-sensitive indicators in the performance measurement framework, and sex-disaggregated baseline data and targets. See the website for more information: https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/funding-financement/rbm-gar/tip_sheet_4_1-fiche_conseil_4_1.aspx?lang=eng.

CARE USA "Measuring gender-transformative change: A review of literature and promising practices" explores gender-transformative measurement, evaluation and learning systems as well as indicators of gender-transformative change: https://www.care.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/working_paper_aas_gt_change_measurement_fa_lowres.pdf.

For an accessible guide to intersectionality, see the Institute for Intersectionality Research and Policy's "Intersectionality 101": http://vawforum-cwr.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/intersectionallity_101.pdf.

For information on intersectionality as a tool for analysis, advocacy and policy development, see the Association for Women's Rights in Development's "Intersectionality: A Tool for Gender and Economic Justice": https://www.awid.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/intersectionality_a_tool_for_gender_and_economic_justice.pdf.

The World Bank has developed a set of indicators for sexual orientation and gender identity across key development sectors, which provide insights on integrating indicators that reflect an intersectional lens. For more information, see "A Set of Proposed Indicators for the LGBTI Inclusion Index": https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/608921536847788293/a-set-of-proposed-indicators-for-the-lgbti-inclusion-index.

For more information on quantitative research applications of intersectionality, the integration of theoretical frameworks and innovative methods, see "Intersectionality in quantitative research: A systematic review of its emergence and applications of theory and methods", published in Social Science and Medicine Population Health: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8095182/.

The Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women's "Gender Equality and Intersectional Analysis Toolkit" provides a practical instrument for the application of gender equality and intersectional analysis in the systematic assessment of policies, campaigns or initiatives: https://www.criaw-icref.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Gender equality -and-Intersectional-Analysis.pdf.

Notes

[1] In this document, the term “programme” should be understood as referring to all types of development interventions, including projects.

[2] Seventeen DAC members indicated that they require a gender-based analysis to be carried out before the design phase of a programme. Ten DAC members indicated that their appraisal and analysis processes included a guide or template on gender equality, and six members required that a budget be incorporated into the design phase of a programme, indicating financial resources that will be required to support the advancement of gender equality.

[3] Adapted from: Canada (2019[26]) Gender Analysis; (DfID & FCO, 2019[6]); (Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2018[7]).

[4] See https://www.oecd.org/gender/governance/toolkit/government/assessment-of-gender-impact/disaggregated-data/

[5] Eight DAC members reported using a “results framework” as a system for monitoring and evaluation, although the level at which these frameworks operate, and the extent to which they measure gender equality, vary. DAC members take a variety of approaches to include gender equality in their results reporting. Eleven members noted that they have made the inclusion of gender equality mandatory or compulsory. Four other members provided structures and the encouragement to include gender equality in results reporting, but did not describe it as mandatory, and three others noted that there were no specific or mandatory requirements concerning gender equality in the institution’s results reporting structures.

[6] Composite indices include the OECD Development Centre’s Social Institutions and Gender Index, the World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Index, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report’s Gender Inequality Index and the Equal Measures 2030 Gender Advocates Data Hub.

[7] See https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/

[8] For example the Making Every Woman and Girl Count initiative: https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/flagship-programmes/making-every-woman-and-girl-count.

[9] This list is adapted from: “Quick Guide to Gender-Sensitive Indicators” (fsnnetwork.org)

[10] Three DAC members included requirements for addressing intersecting inequalities within their results reporting, two of which also incorporated reporting for transformative results. However, three members also noted that they were working to incorporate transformative results within their reporting structures going forward.

3 Programme implementation

This chapter addresses how DAC members' gender equality policies and priorities are, and can more effectively be, implemented in development programming. It covers partnering for effective implementation and the twin-track approach of gender mainstreaming and dedicated programmes.

Implementing programmes requires ensuring that what is planned at the design stage is actually put into practice. It implies tracking and adjusting during implementation when initiatives get off track or when circumstances change, in order to ensure that expected outcomes are achieved, with sufficient staff to assess, appraise and advise.

The four principles of effective development co-operation – country ownership, focus on results, inclusive partnerships, and transparency and mutual accountability – provide a framework for more equal and empowered partnerships and more sustainable development outcomes (Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation, 2021[1]).

Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members – including ministries and agencies – partner with a range of actors to implement their gender equality policies and strategies.[1] DAC members need to consider how different types of partners can respond to, and are suited to, their priorities and the contexts in which they want to deliver results. Most DAC members aim to mainstream considerations for gender equality throughout their programming and, in addition, many have programmes dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

3.1. Partnering for implementation

Partnering is an essential means of implementation. Implementing programmes means selecting and supporting the right partner. In terms of funding, most DAC members channel the majority of their aid for gender equality through multilateral organisations and/or established civil society organisations based in DAC member countries. Support for local civil society organisations (CSOs) and women's rights organisations based in partner countries is limited. Support for gender equality through the private sector, while limited, is increasing (OECD, 2020[2]). A couple of DAC members provide large amounts of aid to partner governments' programmes integrating gender equality, including through budget support, but financial support for gender equality directly to partner governments, including women's ministries, is limited.

Selecting and supporting partners for accelerating gender equality

In selecting an implementing partner, it is important to consider each actor's strengths and weaknesses in the given country and context, depending on the overall gender equality policy and programme objectives. Some overarching questions to consider include, but are not limited to, whether:

- the implementing partner has a commitment to gender equality and has teams with dedicated expertise (both at headquarters and in country offices, if relevant)
- gender equality objectives are integrated into procurement documents, processes, scoring and bid assessment
- the partner is engaging in policy dialogue and advocacy on gender equality with other partners (e.g. the government and the private sector)
- gender equality is addressed throughout progress reports and the annual review.[2]

In addition, safeguards need to be applied to all programmes, including prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (Chapter 6).

DAC members can also support and incentivise partners to strengthen their focus on gender equality, including by setting aside a portion of the budget for gender equality expertise, requiring gender equality to be made visible in regular project reporting, or rewarding diversity in the contracted organisation and its downstream partners. DAC members can encourage pooled funds, including humanitarian funds, to engage with and support local women's movements. This might include identifying criteria in joint funds, to facilitate access for women's rights organisations and movements.

> *It is good practice for DAC members to consider each actor's strengths and weaknesses in the given country and context depending on the overall gender equality policy and programme objectives, and to make adjustments where necessary.*

Engaging with partner country governments

Country ownership of the development process is a core principle for effective development co-operation. While broad-based country ownership requires inclusive and equitable participation from all sectors of society, governments have a unique responsibility to lead development efforts (GPEDC, 2019[3]).

Development co-operation is inherently political and interlinked with diplomacy. DAC members engage in dialogue on gender equality with partner country governments, at the central level, with sector ministries and/or at the local level.[3] This indicates an opportunity to increase engagement with planning and finance ministries on gender equality. It is also important to include actors such as women's rights organisations in sectoral discussions with other ministries. Many countries have also set up development partner co-ordination groups on gender equality, which include government representatives and other development partners.

Financial support directly to partner governments (budget support) for gender equality, however, is rare. It is mainly limited to a few DAC members for which budget support is the overall business model, to provide relatively large amounts of aid integrating gender equality in programmes implemented by partner countries.

> *It is good practice for DAC members to consider when and how to strengthen their engagement with and financial support for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through partner government actors.*

It is possible that working on gender equality may cause a cultural, societal or religious backlash. It is important to keep in mind that gender equality is an integral part of Agenda 2030 and its Goals, and that equal rights for women are enshrined in United Nations (UN) and regional conventions that most countries have signed on to. It is also important, though, to consider the risk of backlash and to pre-emptively identify strategies to mitigate this. DAC members can listen to the local women's rights organisations that are often already fighting for these rights to learn how external support can help mitigate such risks, and/or it may be helpful to engage with high-profile and/or male leaders (DfID & FCO, 2019[4]).

Box 3.1. Working on gender equality with a partner government: The EU in Morocco

The **European Union (EU)** has a longstanding commitment to gender equality in Morocco, aligned with the Moroccan government's National Plan for Equality (PGE) since 2012 and conducted through a mix of modalities, including budget support and accompanying measures such as technical assistance and grants to non-state actors.

The use of budget support dedicated to gender equality, which entails a strong policy and political dimension, helped provide EU staff unique insights into the opportunities and obstacles to gender mainstreaming in policies and policy processes (e.g. budget formulation and execution). This led to an enhanced understanding of the opportunities to integrate a gender perspective throughout the EU's sectors of co-operation, and substantially contributed to enhancing EU's overall engagement on gender equality in Morocco.

While progress has been achieved via this support to the implementation of government priorities, further commitment at a political level as well as a focus on translating instruments and processes into concrete results, will be essential to ensure a lasting impact on the lives of citizens, and women in particular.

The complementarity between budget support and other modalities proved helpful in order to have a targeted and tailor made approach to support that is dependent upon the areas and/or actors. In addition, direct support to civil society needed to be strengthened in order to guarantee its involvement in the policy process (European Commission, 2020[5]).

Engaging with governments in fragile contexts

In fragile contexts, power dynamics between DAC members and partner country governments are stark. Addressing the root causes of fragility, including gender inequalities, is often politically sensitive. One way around this is to mainstream politically sensitive topics throughout programming, ensuring that such topics are not overlooked or disregarded. Another is to cluster these topics into thematic focus areas for dialogue, allowing development partners to target specific "controversial" topics delinked from their programming (Schreiber and Loudon, 2020[6]). Some DAC members also use decentralised co-operation to address sensitive issues at the local level. Regardless of modality, it is critical to build linkages between development and diplomacy actors throughout the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus, in co-operation with partner governments.

Security actors, including the police,[4] are potential agents of change and important in helping shift discriminatory norms and eradicate harmful behaviour (Equality and Justice Alliance, 2020[7]). Such engagement is necessary even when certain actors are a source of intimidation for some marginalised communities, and can include providing training and capacity development on gender equality (International Civil Society Action Network, 2017[8]).

Working with multilaterals: Influencing and funding

There is broad consensus that the multilateral development system has a crucial role to play and to offer economies of scale in addressing global public challenges. DAC members are the major shareholders and funders of the multilateral development system (OECD, 2020[9]). They are able to absorb high volumes of funding and are one of the most common channels for funding gender equality programmes.

In addition to DAC members' financial engagement with multilateral organisations, interactions are also focused on multilaterals such as the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the UN General Assembly, which uphold global norms and standards on gender equality and women's and girls' rights.

Multilateral organisations often have credibility in partner countries with political legitimacy and neutrality. They also frequently have good working relations with the government, which is their direct counterpart, and which can help to bring gender equality issues to the political level. At the same time, they act at grassroots level through their partnerships with local organisations. They also generally have the reporting and accountability systems in place that are requested and agreed to by DAC members sitting on governing bodies. In addition, multilateral organisations and banks are important partners in leveraging development finance beyond aid (see Chapter 4). The multilateral system may, however, suffer in some cases from lack of co-ordination between institutions, leading to duplication of efforts and fragmentation of resources, and may in some cases lack capacity and expertise on gender equality in country offices.

Several multidonor initiatives focused on gender equality are managed or housed by multilateral organisations or banks. They provide important opportunities for supporting gender equality, although multidonor funds may also involve some risks and unintended consequences. Studies show that these can lead to a limitation of alternative funding opportunities and limiting civil society's access to interaction with DAC members. There is a possibility that such funds may generate competition rather than collaboration among CSOs (OECD, 2020[10]).

Core versus earmarked funding for multilateral organisations

Amongst multilateral organisations, UN entities are the most commonly used channel of delivery for aid for gender equality. The overall trend is towards earmarked project funding and a declining ratio of core contributions provided to the multilateral development system (OECD, 2020[9]). This can partly be explained by the fact that the more detailed reporting desired by some DAC members is often easier to obtain in case of project funding. Core funding is critical, however, for organisations with a mandate to uphold norms.

> *It is important to consider whether core or earmarked contributions, or joint initiatives (with multidonor funds or inter-agency collaboration), are the best option in a given situation, and to ensure that DAC members' financial contributions provide multilateral organisations with the independence and flexibility to carry out their activities, while maintaining longer-term gender equality objectives (OECD, 2020[9]).*

Box 3.2. New Zealand's partnering approach to gender equality in humanitarian contexts

Nā tō rourou, nā taku rourou ka ora ai te iwi.

With your food basket, and my food basket, the people will thrive, Māori Whakatauki Proverb.

Recognition that women and girls are disproportionately affected by conflict and disaster, gender equality is a core value of New Zealand's Humanitarian Action Policy. Its humanitarian response takes a holistic, integrated approach that addresses the critical linkages between humanitarian action, inclusive development, peace and stability.

New Zealand advocates for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls across a range of international humanitarian fora, including the Grand Bargain, the United Nations Economic and Social Council's (ECOSOC) Humanitarian Affairs Segment, and in the UN Office for Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) development partner support group. Through regular contributions to the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), and as a member of its advisory group, New Zealand supports resource prioritisation for gender-focused programming in humanitarian responses.

New Zealand focuses on being a trusted partner that works through locally led and inclusive approaches. It integrates gender equality into crisis-response and planning, by supporting resilient and inclusive pre-positioned supplies, rapid monitoring and evaluation assessments, and close engagement and co-ordination with partners. A key partner alliance to enhance co-ordination in the Pacific is through the Pacific Islands Emergency Management Alliance (PIEMA). New Zealand's support for the Alliance includes a focus on the role of women as first responders during and after disasters, and their employment in disaster management positions, a priority regional response objective.

The New Zealand Disaster Response Partnership (NZDRP) targets civil society partners that specialise in strategies to address the barriers to inclusion and localisation, in order to deliver gender-targeted or mainstreamed responses. In preparation for a potential COVID-19 outbreak in Papua New Guinea, New Zealand partnered with Oxfam Aotearoa and Oxfam PNG to prevent and slow the spread of the virus among women and girls, vulnerable groups and rural communities in the Eastern Highlands Simbu Province. Recognising the systemic issues of sexual and gender-based violence, the activity was structured to increase knowledge of the gendered effects of COVID-19 on women and girls, and targeted support to safe houses for women who had been identified as victims of sexual and gender-based violence.

In the response to natural disasters in the Pacific, conflict and fragility, sexual and reproductive health and rights are often under-prioritised and under-resourced. New Zealand has contributed to the inclusion of Sexual and Reproductive Health in Emergencies (SRHiE) in national and local government disaster risk management, preparedness and climate change response, through collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and other development partners. New Zealand also works with the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) to reduce Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)-related mortality and morbidity, sexual and gender-based violence, HIV and the transmission of sexually transmitted infections, and unintended pregnancies. The services are delivered in partnership with locally owned and led IPPF Member Associations in Kiribati, Cook Islands and Tuvalu. New Zealand has also supported the IPPF to implement the Niu Vaka Pacific Strategy in nine Pacific countries. Member associations from Vanuatu, Fiji and Tonga were able to reach 51 572 people with SRHiE delivery after Cyclone Harold in 2020.

New Zealand responds to complex humanitarian situations that continue to affect women and children disproportionately. Recent support includes contributions to UNFPA to provide maternal health and

gender-based violence services through family protection centres, women-friendly health spaces and psychosocial support in the crisis in Afghanistan. Responding to the critical needs of Rohingya refugees and host populations in Bangladesh, New Zealand has also partnered with UNFPA to provide life-saving services for sexual and reproductive health and prevention of gender-based violence in Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh.

Partnering with civil society

Civil society organisations, including women's rights organisations, are essential partners in championing the promotion of gender equality and in upholding accountability for progress.[5] CSOs based in DAC member countries often have a role to play as informal drivers of DAC members' diplomacy, and can rally political pressure domestically (OECD, 2020[10]).

DAC members tend to support CSOs they are most familiar with – that is, well-established international organisations. Two-thirds of aid for gender equality is channelled through CSOs based in DAC member countries rather than locally based (OECD, 2020[10]). There are several related reasons for this. One relates to DAC members' legal, regulatory and administrative requirements and to their capacity to administer and monitor CSO support. Supporting fewer but larger and often more experienced DAC member country or international CSOs is a way for DAC members to manage the administrative burden and potential financial risk, which comes with direct support for a greater number of smaller partner country CSOs. A second rationale for members to favour member country and international CSOs is the experience and expertise that these CSOs have acquired over decades of development co-operation, aided by DAC members' financial support. A third rationale for members' preference for working with their member country CSOs stems from the value they place on public awareness-raising and citizen engagement and the important role they consider that member country CSOs play. For many members, support for CSOs is the main vehicle for increasing public awareness, support and engagement in development co-operation and global issues (OECD, 2020[10]). Keeping these reasons in mind, it is important that DAC members also aim to support local civil society based on partner countries. This could, for example, be done by requiring partnering with such local organisations (OECD, 2020[10]).

Supporting grassroots organisations and feminist movements

Local women's rights organisations and movements are critical actors in addressing the structural drivers of gender inequality. Groups and movements that are rooted in their local communities, have contextual expertise and speak local languages, and act on the basis of lived experience, are best positioned to deliver change that is transformative and lasting (AWID and MamaCash, 2020[11]). Investing in community facilitators at the local level has been shown to influence the successful outcome of violence prevention projects (UN Women, 2020[12]). Women's rights organisations and movements have the intention and the orientation to deliver transformative change for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (Rao and Sandler, 2021[13]). They are also likely to deliver change for additional sustainable development issues. It is important to recognise organisational development as a tangible outcome to support the establishment of solid and sustainable feminist organisations (The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, 2021[14]). While such organisations play an essential role in the promotion and protection of human rights and gender equality, there is a trend towards introducing and using laws to interfere with the right to freedom of association and to hamper the work of these organisations. This can include the imposition of strict registration requirements, along with other complicated and onerous requirements at all stages of the life of an association (Amnesty International, 2019[15]).

> *DAC members should identify ways of supporting grassroots women's rights organisations, including through women's funds. They should aim to reshape their engagement with these organisations and movements and to consult with and listen to them when setting the agenda.*

Beyond issues such as lack of awareness and political priority for local women's rights organisations, managing small grants to a number of organisations with limited capacity can be labour intensive (AWID and MamaCash, 2020[11]). DAC members can better structure their reporting and accountability requirements to meet the needs of local organisations and movements and minimise administrative burdens. The pressure on such organisations not only to demonstrate impact but also report their results against requirements determined by the development partner is difficult to adhere to for some organisations, particularly those that are small and community-based.

Using pooled funds to reach local organisations

Women's funds whose primary purpose is to mobilise resources to distribute to women's rights organisations and movements are essential actors in this context. Women's funds have increased in number in recent years and exist at the international, regional and national level.[6] These funds are able to reach and provide structural support to local women's organisations and movements through small grants, and they are often familiar with the local context (OECD, 2020[16]). Other types of multidonor pooled funding can help members increase their direct support for partner country organisations and potentially broaden their reach to a greater diversity of civil society actors[7] (OECD, 2020[16]).

The Global Alliance for Sustainable Feminist Movements is an emerging multi-stakeholder initiative focused on increasing, sustaining and improving financial and political support for women's rights and feminist organisations and movements.[8]

Managing risks for women's movements and human rights defenders

As a result of their work, women human rights defenders regularly face threats and attacks on their well-being and safety. These acts of repression are often gender-specific and take the form of verbal abuse, sexual harassment and sexual violence, discrimination, criminalisation, intimidation and assassination, all of which can extend to the families and networks of the persecuted (OHCHR, 2020[17]). Furthermore, women human rights defenders who work on certain areas, such as sexual and reproductive health and rights, often suffer additional and more severe threats (OHCHR, 2020[17]).

> *Specific measures must be taken to consider risks and ensure the safety and dignity of women human rights defenders. DAC members need to avoid passing on the potential risks of working for women's rights to these organisations.*

Feminist and social justice activism cannot thrive without an open Internet. Technology allows grassroots organisers to build communities, amplify their voices and reach their audiences. However, the same methodologies and tools that open up new possibilities for social change also reproduce inequalities in access, increase the digital gender gap and expose activists to surveillance, abuse and harm (Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, 2019[18]). DAC members need to be conscious of this and work with feminist tech companies and local grassroots women's rights organisations to develop evidence-based measures and identify both short- and long-term solutions to address online violence (UN Women, 2020[19]).

Working with civil society in fragile contexts

Fragile contexts offer a unique challenge for civil society engagement, as nearly two-thirds of the contexts categorised as fragile are also categorised as authoritarian as of 2020 (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2020[20]). In these contexts, DAC member engagement with civil society actors – and women's rights organisations in particular – is a political act in and of itself, or highly likely to be seen as one. Multidonor funds can demonstrate greater solidarity for civil society groups compared to individually funded programmes. If such funds take on an identity separate from the funding sources, this independent image can also help strengthen the fund's legitimacy.

Box 3.3. DAC members' practice partnering with local women's rights organisations and feminist movements

The **Netherlands'** Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 fund includes several financing mechanisms for gender equality, with a budget of EUR 510 million over five years (2021-2025):

The ***Leading from the South*** programme is led by four women-centred funds. The programme supports women's rights organisations in the global South directly, including small grassroots organisations. These organisations are rooted in local women's rights movements, and are best placed to influence and hold to account local, regional and national governments, local leaders, communities and businesses. The Leading from the South programme was set up in 2016 and has been recently renewed for another five years (2021-2025), with a total budget of EUR 80 million.

Power of Women is a grant instrument that aims to strengthen the capacity of local women's rights organisations focused on advocacy and lobbying for economic and political transformation for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The programme's budget of EUR 75 million over a five-year period is managed in-house by the Dutch government, a funding modality that enables the direct management of funds transferred to feminist movements in the global South (AWID and MamaCash, 2020[11]). The programme's three primary objectives are to prevent and eliminate sexual and gender-based violence, elevate women's participation in decision making through political and economic leadership, and strengthen the economic empowerment of women. Thus, funding is allocated to constituency-led organisations that aim to achieve a minimum of two of these objectives (Government of the Netherlands, 2019[21]).

Canada has, as part of its Feminist International Assistance Policy, identified a focus on partnering with women's rights organisations:

The ***Women's Voice and Leadership Program*** was set up to improve the management and sustainability of local and regional women's rights organisations, strengthen the capacity of these organisations, and increase their effectiveness to affect policy, legal and social change. Canada is making grants to local actors through partners such as international CSOs. It runs for five years (2018-2023) and supports organisations in 31 countries and regions

The programme also seeks to implement a feminist approach to monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL), which has challenged Canada to consider additional ways – beyond monitoring and reporting on quantitative indicators – to ensure that women's voices and experiences of the programme are captured through annual results reporting. This has included, for example, encouraging implementing partners, and Canada's programme officers, to watch for and document unintended outcomes in programme reports, as well as reversals over previous periods. Implementing partners are also invited to be creative in their annual reports – with compelling results: embedded videos of self-documented change stories by project participants; case studies produced using creative arts and music; and colourful graphics visualising the (baseline) ratings of participatory organisational assessment exercises with women's rights organisations (WROs). Building on feminist principles, the MEL system seeks to balance the use of quantitative and qualitative information to ensure that women's voices and perspectives are valued as critical data sources, alongside quantitative data, in presenting rich and nuanced gender equality results. Reporting in this way takes more time, so it is important that it does not become an additional demand placed on implementing partners; however, many WROs and LGBTQIA+ organisations are already collecting and sharing qualitative information in innovative ways as part of their MEL systems and for their advocacy work. Face-to-face and virtual events were also key platforms for collaboration, and in particular a time for WROs, LGBTQIA+ groups and national

implementing staff to learn from one another about how to fully integrate a feminist approach to programming and address sensitive topics in very conservative cultures and closing civic spaces.

The ***Equality Fund*** is a new, innovative partnership that brings together investors, the philanthropic community, governments, the private sector and civil society to mobilise unprecedented levels of resources to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in developing countries. With a CAD $300 million contribution from the Government of Canada, the Equality Fund aims to create a long-term, self-sustaining source of funding for women's organisations and movements in developing countries; to leverage philanthropic support; to shift how investment decisions are made by mainstreaming gender equality; and to achieve gender equality outcomes through gender-lens impact investing and by reflowing investment revenues to grants to support women's organisations. The Equality Fund began providing multi-year, flexible funding to women's organisations in developing countries, including to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and will support feminist movements and funds, consortia and networks, as well as emergency relief for disaster and conflict settings.

Spain's *Proceso Diálogos Consonantes* were created as a space for dialogue between Spain's co-operation and feminist organisations and networks in the different regions of Latin America. These long-standing dialogues aim to establish a common feminist agenda to support better results for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and to put into practice the development effectiveness principles including on accountability, transparency and ownership. The dialogues also offer a space for exchanging about the COVID-19 pandemic and the complexity of refugee, economic and climate crises.

Other actors

Research institutes, academia and think tanks

Academic and research-based institutions as well as consultancy firms are important sources of emerging ideas and new knowledge.[9] Research institutions also play an important role in providing statistics and gender analyses in various policy areas that can form the basis for policy making. In some countries, they are key allies of the women's rights movement. The structure of these institutions permits them to use their knowledge of contextual settings to determine which gender-related research and analytical priorities they will undertake, to strengthen capacity and expand current approaches and ways of thinking (IDRC, 2019[22]). Engaging nonpartisan, objective, evidence-based institutions and expert-led analysis and research can support effective policy dialogue, help formulate productive networks, and generate new ideas.

> *DAC members should consider working with research institutes, academic institutions and think thanks to champion and support relevant evidence-based research and seek the input of gender equality experts in policy development and at the outset of programme design.*

Support in the form of core funding allows these institutions to set priorities that are independent of the political climates. DAC members can also encourage, and facilitate, peer learning and collaboration between like-minded academic and research-based actors and women's organisations, to unify existing and emerging information and co-create mechanisms to achieve gender equality (IDRC, 2019[22]).

Religious leaders/faith community

Many familial structures and entire communities are shaped by religious teachings. Some entrenched factors that reinforce gender inequality are upheld by religious institutions. In some countries, the centrality of religion has a profound effect on the perpetuation of gender norms and belief systems. Faith-based

organisations and traditional and religious leaders are often well-established and trusted in communities and thus possess extensive reach, channels for engagement and influence (CARE Norway, 2017[23]). Working with faith-based organisations offers DAC members an avenue to establish an environment that can facilitate long-term and transformative change for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and a small number of GENDERNET members already engaged with such leaders and organisations, as an approach to creating change and advancing gender equality (OECD, 2022[24]).

> *DAC members can aim to partner with religious leaders and faith-based communities. They can engage in participatory methodologies with religious leaders and locally led, faith-based communities to promote dialogue, awareness-raising interventions and change-oriented actions that seek to eliminate discriminatory and harmful gender norms and behaviour.*

These initiatives, however, need to employ approaches that are context-specific (Finland, 2018[25]). In some circumstances, members of religious and faith-based communities and their related belief systems are responsible for the harm experienced by women and girls. In others, these communities and their members provide a place of refuge from harm, but they may not know how to respond appropriately towards women and girls who have experienced violence (Spotlight Initiative, n.d.[26]). The purpose and method of engagement in both circumstances will therefore differ. To minimise the potential for backlash, DAC members may purposefully engage leaders and organisations that have previously undertaken advocacy for social change (regardless of their views on gender). These actors are often not at the very top of religious and faith-based hierarchies, but as an entry point, they offer a strong foundation for efforts to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (Voices 4 Change, 2017[27]). While most religious leaders are men, DAC members can consider specific approaches to engage key women leaders.

Private sector actors

Many DAC members are engaging in partnerships with private sector actors to leverage both private capital and influence, accelerate funding and mobilise resources in the pursuit of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (OECD, 2020[16]). The benefits of engaging in partnerships with private sector actors extend beyond their potential for financial contributions, as their capacity for establishing efforts that support women-owned businesses and the empowerment of women is significant (OECD, 2020[16]). The private sector can also play an important role in modelling good gender equality practices in the workplace.

Private philanthropy is a large and growing source of funding for many efforts to address global issues. Although it is free from the constraints of political cycles, it is often driven by the visions and intentions of a relatively small group of individuals (Chiu, 2020[28]). This flexibility makes it uniquely positioned to fill gaps in funding by harnessing innovative opportunities and directing money towards areas that are most in need. Private philanthropy can also demonstrate impact and gather information, with fewer strings attached to the funding. Overall, financial support from private philanthropy to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, however, is relatively limited. (OECD, 2021[29]) (Chapter 4).

> *DAC members can encourage the involvement of different types of private sector actors, starting in the early stages of programme design and implementation, to help identify innovative approaches and additional support, throughout funding and implementation, as well as in results monitoring and follow-up.*

South-South and Triangular Co-operation

South-South Co-operation (SSC) and Triangular Co-operation (TRC) have been instrumental in exchanging knowledge and know-how between partner countries and in designing solutions that are tailored to the local context. SSC and TRC can make important contributions to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (Wang, 2021[61]). This was highlighted in the Beijing Declaration

and Platform for Action and was also taken up in the outcome document of the second high-level United Nations Conference on South-South Co-operation (BAPA+40) (UN General Assembly, 2019[61]).

DAC members support SSC and TRC through direct assistance for projects and to partner countries, funds for triangular co-operation, or providing funding to multilateral agencies that manage these forms of co-operation. Such forms of co-operation will become increasingly important with calls for the localisation of aid and the rise of diverse development partners. COVID-19 has also provided an impetus for partner countries to exchange innovative solutions for development, including on addressing gender inequality.

> *In line with the Voluntary Guidelines put out by the Global Partnership Initiative (GPI) on Effective Triangular Co-operation (OECD, 2021[30]), DAC members can make sure that the SSC and TRC projects that they support mainstream gender equality and/or have a specific focus on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. DAC members could also envisage increasing their support for gender-sensitive SSC and TRC projects, as well as enhancing their relations with the institutions in partner countries that manage and implement such projects.*

Box 3.4. Triangular co-operation for gender equality

EUROsociAL + is an EU flagship programme that aims to improve social cohesion in Latin America, by supporting public policies to address inequalities. Addressing gender inequalities is one of the focus areas of EUROsociAL + Programmes across Latin America. EUROsociAL+ has built a gender equality mainstreaming methodology for the design and analysis of its interventions, based on the OECD DAC gender equality policy marker.

EUROsociAL+ is providing technical assistance to Panama to develop its legal framework around adolescent pregnancies (EUROsociAL, 2018[31]). Panama has high rates of adolescent pregnancies, which are both a cause and a consequence of inequality and poverty. In 2017, Panama reformulated its legislation on adolescent pregnancies and put into place Law 60 on pregnant minors. It also set up the National Council of Pregnant Minors of Panama (CONAMA), which brings together different government actors to oversee the implementation of Law 60. An important element of the EUROsociAL + Programme in Panama is exchange of good practices and peer learning through exchange visits. Visits to Uruguay and the UK allowed actors from Panama to learn more about the adolescent pregnancy prevention strategies of both countries. The exchanges highlighted the need to bring in academia and civil society into the discussions around the implementation of Law 60, as well as to reflect upon the involvement of local government. Following these exchanges, Panama developed regulations and a more detailed strategy for implementing Law 60. Both the regulations and the strategy were heavily influenced by the peer-learning process.

3.2. Implementation: A twin-track approach and beyond

Most DAC members have adopted a twin-track approach of mainstreaming gender equality throughout policies, strategies and programmes, while also implementing dedicated projects or programmes targeted specifically at achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Both of these approaches are needed and complementary – a fact reflected in the 2030 Agenda and its Goals, with Goal 5 dedicated to gender equality and gender mainstreamed throughout other goals.

Policy and/or political dialogue on gender equality is identified as a third track by some DAC members. Others – including this Guidance – consider such dialogue an integral part of gender mainstreaming. Either way, policy dialogue and advocacy is strengthened by programming, and vice versa.

It is important not to assume that activities that do not take gender into account will lead to gender-neutral results. A failure to consider gender equality can exacerbate existing gender inequalities and limit the success of the programme or initiative.

Taking a holistic approach to mainstreaming gender equality

Gender mainstreaming was the approach agreed on at the Fourth World Conference for Women in Beijing in 1995, aimed at changing processes at their core and placing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in "the mainstream".[10] This was described at the time as "nothing short of a revolution" (McDougall et al., 2020[32]).

Mainstreaming has allowed gender equality to be institutionalised in development policy and programming, and has increased attention to gender equality in a range of development areas.[11] It allows for gender equality to be included as an objective in a range of programmes (San Miguel Abad, 2018[33]). Well-designed programmes that mainstream gender have been shown to produce positive structural changes for gender equality. Such transformative results can be achieved when programmes consider and mainstream gender dimensions throughout the programme cycle, starting with the design phase (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), 2018[34]).[12] Such programmes may include strengthening political and legal frameworks, or training individuals in leadership and decision-making positions (BMZ, n.d.[35]; Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, n.d.[36]).

However, the approach has also come in for criticism. It has been argued that there was a lack of real clarity or directive as to what gender mainstreaming meant in practice (Moser, 2005[37]). Some note that gender mainstreaming was separated from its roots in feminist analysis and its intended focus on an unequal distribution of power. Others highlight the low status and lack of funding and leadership that development agencies give gender equality initiatives and staff. Some argue that attention to the process of gender mainstreaming internally led to organisations losing sight of results and of the change achieved on the ground (Milward, 2015[38]).

Many DAC members recognise that mainstreaming in their institution could improve. Some report on challenges in specific sectors – infrastructure, production, environment, climate change – and in some regions and/or challenging environments, often due to a lack of capacity and/or understanding of gender equality. In some smaller DAC agencies, gender mainstreaming and connections between policy areas are facilitated by the fact that the same person or team is responsible for gender equality and, for example, climate change.

Some members take a joined-up approach and provide internal guidance for different cross-cutting policy issues, such as gender equality, climate, rights, poverty and governance. This can help avoid the impression of competition between gender equality and cross-cutting policy areas.

Mainstreaming in the development partner's own institution

Recognition is increasing that a holistic approach to mainstreaming is needed, implying that mainstreaming gender equality needs to take a development partner's entire system into account (Finland, 2018[25]; Rao and Sandler, 2021[13]; Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), 2017[39]). Mainstreaming can be understood as an organisational change process helping to create a functioning bureaucracy. It should be led by management, supported by gender equality advisers, and implemented by everyone. There is scope to establish or improve connections across sectors and levels of implementation: from programmes to strategic policies to internal structures (Enabel, 2018[40]). This is addressed in more detail in Chapter 6.

> *DAC members should take a holistic approach to gender mainstreaming, addressing it in their policy and political dialogue and development co-operation policies and programmes, as well as within their institutions and human resources.*

Box 3.5. Taking a holistic approach to mainstreaming gender: Belgium's 2019-2023 Gender Strategy Paper

The 2019-2023 Gender Strategy Paper produced by the **Belgian development agency**, Enabel, provides a review of the DAC member's 2010-2014 Gender Strategy, and guidelines for improving its implementation of gender mainstreaming. Although the review found that gender mainstreaming had diluted Belgium's efforts to advance gender equality, the 2019-2023 Gender Strategy advises that this approach should not be abandoned.

The Strategy maintains that in the pursuit of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, a holistic, multilevel and multisectoral approach to gender mainstreaming brings representation, experience and gender equality to the heart of all institutional processes and structures, policy-making and programming cycles, as well as fiscal planning. This can help achieve these goals. Gender mainstreaming is positioned to operate at two levels: one that facilitates the mainstreaming of gender throughout all relevant institutional operations and policy and programme cycles, and one that ensures the mainstreaming of gender through all development co-operation-related work with partner countries, This "two-sided approach" to gender mainstreaming is designed to facilitate synergy and mutual reinforcement of these efforts.

Outlined objectives and identified actions to carry out the 2019-2023 Strategy require a shift of responsibility from a sole gender expert to all staff. With the support of management and human resource departments, this shift will occur in a variety of efforts designed to institutionally strengthen gender competencies, awareness-raising initiatives and scaled-up efforts to recruit and elevate women throughout Enabel's operations (Enabel, 2018[41]).

Policy and political dialogue

Development partners are making a political choice when they choose whether or not to address gender equality in their policy and political dialogue with partner countries and other development stakeholders. A holistic approach to gender mainstreaming includes political and policy dialogue on gender equality with different types of partners (see Chapter 3.1) at the programming and policy/strategic levels, as well as in international partnerships or negotiations around global or regional commitments.

In partner countries, policy and political dialogue helps create a shared understanding of perspectives and approaches to the effective promotion of gender equality. The importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls can be more readily established if there is a clear linkage to policies and commitments the partner country has already made on gender equality. A majority of countries have signed on to global and regional commitments on gender equality, including the Sustainable Development Goals. Other tools to draw on include invoking the experience of countries in the same sub-region, relying on statistical evidence, using clear language and making the issues concrete.

Policy and political dialogue on gender equality can take place in both formal and informal settings. Ensuring that policies and programmes address gender equality will require the identification or creation of opportunities for discussion. Key entry points for dialogue include:

- the preparation of the country strategy/joint assistance strategy
- new funding opportunities
- sector reviews and mid-term reviews
- just before and after elections
- new and revised legislation

- the launch of key statistics and reports (either specifically on gender equality or with relevant data)
- informal opportunities (e.g. dinners, receptions, gatherings)
- high-level visits
- discussions ahead of and at key international and regional fora such as the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)
- the country reporting cycle and follow-up to the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (OECD DAC GENDERNET, 2013[42]).

Box 3.6. Policy dialogue on gender equality: Italy and the Palestinian Authority

Human rights and gender equality represents a strategic sector for the Italian co-operation with the Palestinian Authority, and the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) advances issues on gender equality supporting both the Palestinian Authority and civil society.

Based on its longstanding engagement, Italy's approach is to hold constant consultations and open dialogue, and to provide constructive criticism, with ministries and gender units within different ministries. The general objective is to support the Palestinian Authority to strengthen gender equality according to international agreements and the SDGs, building on CEDAW which has been ratified without reservations. AICS co-chairs the "Gender Sector Working Group", led by the Ministry of Women Affairs, aiming to support local government to transform policies into action, and addressing specific stalled topics and reasons for not moving forward by identifying obstacles and solutions. In particular, Italy has made efforts to push the local government to approve the Family Protection Law, in the face of persistent attempts by religious conservatives to stall the Law.

In addition, Italy works closely with civil society, UN agencies and EU member states, facilitating team work with all partners, and sharing information and suggestions to ensure communication and transparency.

Opportunities to increase support for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls

Programmes by DAC members dedicated to gender equality are mainly focused on governance and civil society, including ending gender-based violence, as well as on maternal and reproductive health (OECD, 2020[2]). Overall, scope remains to increase dedicated funding for gender equality from DAC members (Chapter 4).[13]

Programmes dedicated to gender equality are suited to action that leads to long-term transformative change, and those with lived experiences to challenge the structures that have resulted in gender inequalities (Rao and Sandler, 2021[13]). Some studies have shown that structural changes have been more successful when managed by programmes dedicated to gender equality than by mainstreamed programmes (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), 2018[34]).

Box 3.7. Australia's dedicated support for gender equality: The Indo-Pacific Gender Equality Fund

Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Indo-Pacific Gender Equality Fund supports several investments with global and regional partners, including UN agencies, civil society, private sector contractors and multilateral development banks. These investments contribute to DFAT's three priority gender equality pillars, and to the global evidence base for improving gender equality programming. The Fund also provides core contributions to multilateral partners, and funding to leverage gender equality outcomes in bilateral programmes (e.g. Australia's country aid programmes to Indonesia or Papua New Guinea). It also influences global partnerships to focus on the Indo-Pacific and encourages investment in technical support to identify and implement the most effective strategies to tackle urgent gender inequality issues. In 2020-21, the annual budget was USD 65 million.

Dedicated programmes can provide unique insight into the opportunities and obstacles to gender mainstreaming and have a positive effect on gender mainstreaming, including facilitating integration of gender equality in policy dialogue in other sectors or thematic areas (European Commission, 2020[43]).

> *DAC members should aim to increase programmes dedicated to gender equality and, in designing these programmes, consider their comparative advantage on the topic in the given country and context.*

The thematic focus of support dedicated to gender equality will vary, depending on the local context (e.g. new opportunities or heightened risks or gaps) and on the existing efforts of other development actors. In general, to maximise utility and achieve transformative change for gender equality, dedicated programmes can target the following areas and approaches:

Encouraging an enabling environment where all stakeholders work together is an essential component for achieving gender equality. Change must be made at an individual level (working on beliefs and behaviour) and at the structural level (on laws and policies, and their implementation), since neither is capable without the other of creating an environment where transformation can occur (Kagesten and Chandra-Mouli, 2019[44]). Successful actions require the participation of governments and local stakeholders (Chapter 2).

Supporting local women's rights organisations and movements. Local and grassroots women's rights organisations play a critical role in advocacy and social awareness, in addition to the groundwork that goes into changing legislation, stigmas, norms and practices (Htun and Weldon, 2012[45]). Feminist activism can help women and girls demand societal and policy changes that respond to the needs and realities of their lives (Weldon et al., 2020[46]).

Because shifting and redistributing power dynamics is central to gender equality, *engaging men and boys* is a pivotal part of achieving this goal (Munive, 2019[47]). Men's relationships with women may significantly improve, or hinder, movement towards women's safety and gender equality. Research shows that engaging boys and men in the discussion and promoting gender equality is exponentially more effective (UNFPA, 2013[48]). DAC members' current policies show that this approach has gained momentum.[14]

Also crucial in achieving of gender equality is *engaging young people* – adolescent girls and other young people – as drivers of change. Although young people engage less in institutionalised forms of participation, such as voting and party membership, they are using digital technologies to discuss social and political issues and to mobilise others. For example, concerns about intergenerational fairness have mobilised thousands of young people around the globe to call for bold government action against climate change (OECD, 2021[49]). DAC members can pursue methods of engagement and support specific to young people that address their unique realities. They can also tackle entrenched and harmful behaviour; reinforce behaviour that increases gender equality; and help empower them to facilitate change.

Checklist on implementation

DAC members can ask the following questions:

On partnering:

- Is gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls consistently included as a priority in policy and political dialogue:
  - with partner governments, including institutions and actors not directly responsible for gender equality (e.g. ministries of planning or finance)?
  - with implementing partners, including in board meetings of multilateral organisations?
  - in multilateral and global fora?
- Have the comparative strengths and expertise on gender equality of the selected partner institutions, organisations or funds been carefully considered and, as needed, has the partner been encouraged, incentivised and supported (e.g. through capacity development) to reinforce its expertise and mandate?
- Does the way programmes are implemented allow for two-way engagement with the identified target population, and for accountability to affected populations?
- Are locally based organisations, including women's rights organisations and movements, considered potential partners, including by supporting women's funds or pooled multilateral funds dedicated to this purpose?
- Have opportunities for collaboration on gender equality with other institutions in the same DAC country, as well as with other DAC members, been identified?

On a twin-track approach and beyond:

- Do the commitments and strategic directions of the institution support both gender-mainstreamed programmes and programmes dedicated to gender equality? Are efforts made to increase attention and funding for both, and are there sufficient links and opportunities for learning between the two approaches?
- Is gender being mainstreamed consistently throughout programming, policies, dialogue, and also within the institution, through gender-responsive internal systems?
- Is gender equality addressed in policy dialogue with international partnerships, networks, negotiations, dialogues and other processes?
- Are there dedicated programme budgets for gender equality? Has the most effective use of dedicated resources for gender equality been explored, taking into account the specific local and country context, and its strengths and advantages compared to other development partners'?

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Annex 3.A. Additional resources on programme implementation

Partnering

See more about effective development co-operation and the implementation of the principles: https://www.oecd.org/development/effectiveness/.

See the OECD's analysis on multilateral development finance: https://www.oecd.org/dac/multilateral-development-finance-2020-e61fdf00-en.htm.

For guidance on good partnership practices that promote strong relationships between civil society organisations and government representatives on engaging men and boys in gender equality, see "Strengthening Civil Society Organizations and Government Partnerships to Scale Up Approaches: Engaging Men and Boys for Gender Equality and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights", a tool developed by the UNFPA, MenEngage Alliance and Promundo: https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/50694_-_Scaling_up_Men_and_Boys_-_revised.pdf.

For more information on innovative support to women's civil society organisations, see the UN Women Fund for Gender Equality report, "Women's Civil Society Organizations of the Future: A Design-Led Exploration With Women's CSOs of Possible Responses to Current and Future Challenges": https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Trust%20Funds/FundGenderEquality/FGE%20Brochure%20Womens%20CSOs%20of%20the%20Future_2020_web.pdf.

The UNDP and Civil Society Organizations' "A Toolkit for Strengthening Partnerships" aims to provide practitioners and partners with practical guidance and information for engaging in partnerships with CSOs: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=400&nr=2141&menu=1515.

A twin-track approach

For more on the theory of gender mainstreaming, see "Gender and Development" Vol. 20/3, November 2012: https://www.genderanddevelopment.org/issues/20-3-beyond-gender-mainstreaming.

For examples of practical mainstreaming tools see:

- UNDP's training manual for mainstreaming gender in environment and energy: https://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Environment%20and%20Energy/Sustainable%20Energy/Gender_Mainstreaming_Training_Manual_2007.pdf.
- The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)'s Guide to mainstreaming gender in FAO's project cycle https://www.fao.org/publications/card/fr/c/3ff71f41-8828-483a-b9fd-b9cec12a82b4.
- AfDB's guide to mainstreaming gender in climate action: https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/mainstreaming-gender-our-climate-action-sustainable-impact.

Notes

[1] Twenty-two DAC members noted that they have an explicit approach to working on gender equality with multilateral organisations, ranging from earmarked project funding, contributions to existing multilateral trust funds and funding of gender equality positions, to advocacy and strategic steering, including through policy and board meeting discussions.

[2] List adapted from (DfID & FCO, 2019[4]).

[3] Ten DAC members noted that they engaged with partner country governments on gender equality. At the sector level, DAC members state that they engage mainly with the ministries of health, education and gender equality.

[4] For an overview of security actors in the context of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus, see Forsberg, E. (2020[50]). "Security actors in fragile contexts", *OECD Development Co-operation Working Papers*, No. 75, OECD Publishing, Paris, p. 13.

[5] Twelve DAC members identified CSOs as the main or one of the main modalities for funding gender equality programming. Only two DAC members mentioned local women's rights organisations as a main modality for funding gender equality programmes. Some DAC members indicated having worked with CSOs on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, through framework and flagship programmes, strategic partnerships, dialogues and consultations, as well as dedicated funding mechanisms.

[6] For example, the Global Fund for Women, AmplifyChange, Flexibility Resources Inclusivity Diversity Action (FRIDA): the Young Feminist Fund, Mama Cash, Equality Fund, Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights, Fondo Semillas, the African Women's Development Fund and the Fiji Women's Fund.

[7] Such as the UN Fund for Gender Equality (FGE), the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) and the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women.

[8] The Alliance is being co-developed by Canada, the Netherlands, the Ford Foundation, the Open Society Foundations, Philanthropy Advancing Women's Human Rights, the Association for Women's Rights in Development and the Count Me In! Consortium, the Global Fund for Women, the Equality Fund and Prospera.

[9] Thirteen DAC members noted that they engaged with academia and other external technical experts.

[10] The 1997 agreed conclusions of ECOSOC defined gender mainstreaming as: "The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetrated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality." https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/GMS.PDF.

[11] Of 24 DAC members, 21 note in the survey that they have an explicit intention to "mainstream" or "integrate" gender equality and women's empowerment in their development co-operation.

[12] For example, a project promoting the participation in economic co-operatives, by training and awareness-raising for men and women, led both to women taking on leadership positions in the co-operative and to increased overall production.

[13] In the survey, 22 out of 24 DAC members reported that they have programmes specifically dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Only seven, however, say the gender equality team has a discretionary programme budget for gender equality at headquarters level. Some DAC members have set up dedicated funds and others have gender equality budget lines for partnerships, or thematically earmarked budgets relating to specific gender topics. Only two members indicate that they have discretionary programme budgets for gender equality at the country level.

[14] Fourteen members in the survey identified “working with men and boys” as an approach for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls more broadly.

4 Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls

This chapter explores opportunities for DAC members to increase the quantity and quality of financial resources for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. This will be necessary to deliver change, including both official development assistance (ODA) and financing flows beyond ODA. It addresses how the DAC gender equality policy marker works as an accountability tool.

There is a need to increase the quantity and quality of financial resources available for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in partner countries. Financial resources, while not an end goal, are a necessary foundation. Sufficient financing is a prerequisite for ensuring capacity to develop relevant policies and strategies for gender equality, to undertake gender analysis, to set up partnerships and implement development programmes with the necessary technical expertise, and to undertake monitoring, evaluations, learning and ensure accountability.

Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members' official development assistance (ODA) is an essential external financing resource for especially for low-income and fragile countries. DAC members can also leverage their ODA to mobilise other types of development and commercial finance for gender equality. In addition, they can increase funding by targeting their "other" official flows towards gender equality – including financing that does not qualify as ODA and that is typically provided through development finance institutions.

4.1. Bilateral aid for gender equality is on the rise but could be increased

The shares and amounts of bilateral ODA for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls by DAC members have been increasing consistently. The rise can be attributed mainly to bilateral aid integrating gender equality as one explicit, although not the principal, objective of development projects or programmes. This is a positive trend, because integrating gender equality objectives in programming across sectors is an essential component of achieving gender equality and sustainable development.

However, both dedicated aid (scoring 2 on the gender marker) and integrated aid (scoring 1 on the gender marker) are needed for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. This broadly mirrors the twin-track programming approach of mainstreamed and dedicated support for gender equality set out in Chapter 2. Aid dedicated to gender equality as the principal (dedicated) objective has remained consistently at around 4% to 5% of bilateral allocable aid.

> *DAC members should pursue financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through the twin-track approach, by aiming to increase the shares of ODA that integrate and is dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.*

Because dedicated funding for gender equality is limited, such funding can focus on programming that helps to address the root causes of gender equality and achieve transformative change for gender equality, in regions and countries that are familiar to the DAC member and where the member has an added value.

The DAC gender equality policy marker: Measuring ODA for gender equality for two decades

When reporting development finance to the OECD, DAC members assess the extent to which their bilateral ODA addresses gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls by applying the DAC gender equality policy marker at the planning phase of development activities. A project or programme should be classified as contributing to gender equality if it is "intended to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls or reduce discrimination and inequalities based on sex" (OECD, 2020[1]) (Box 4.1). As contexts evolve and programmes may need to be adapted, the marker score can be adjusted as relevant in the coming reporting to the OECD.

The OECD collects such data and makes it publicly available on the OECD.Stat website. (OECD, 2022[2]) The gender marker is an integral part of the OECD Creditor Reporting System (CRS), along with other policy markers. DAC members also report each project/programme's sector/thematic area, channel of delivery, country focus, type of financial flow, etc., and are expected to provide descriptions of each project or programme.[1] The gender marker is the only common monitoring and accountability tool for DAC

members to track aid in support of their commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.[2] It is designed to monitor inputs rather than outputs.

The data collected through the marker allow for comparison and not only help identify gaps between policy commitments and financial allocations, but incentivise efforts to close those gaps. The marker has also provided an opportunity for awareness-raising and policy discussions around gender equality amongst staff in DAC member institutions, going beyond the technical aspects of the tool. The marker has helped increase attention to and accountability for gender finance. Data is consistently used in DAC peer reviews and by a range of researchers and advocates, and it is published annually (OECD, 2021[3]).

The marker can also help increase awareness, understanding and commitment in looking for opportunities to address gender equality in different portfolios. Internal training opportunities and exchanges about the marker allow for policy discussions and complement the technical application of the marker. Some DAC members also use the marker and its scores as a basis in policy discussions on gender equality with partner governments (European Commission, 2020[4]).

The simple division in three of the gender marker scores allows for a relatively easy application. However, some DAC members note difficulties in determining the score of projects/programmes. Other DAC members find the gender marker too blunt a tool and have adapted its use for a more granular approach. Some use a four-point scale to respond to internal needs and translate these into the three scores of the DAC in reporting to the OECD. Some DAC members note that certain programmes with a gender lens or a low level of gender mainstreaming fall into the “not targeted” (score 0) category when reporting to the OECD, giving a false impression that these programmes are not gender-sensitive at all.

> *DAC members need to ensure that staff understand and correctly apply the DAC gender equality policy marker scores at the design stage of all programmes, and provide tools and training for staff as needed.*

Box 4.1. Methodology of the DAC gender equality policy marker: Monitoring policy intentions

The DAC gender equality policy marker is based on development partner intentions at the design stage of programmes or projects. The marker definition states that an activity should be classified as addressing gender equality (score Principal or Significant) if "it is intended to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls or reduce discrimination and inequalities based on sex." The eligibility criteria are that "Gender equality is explicitly promoted in activity documentation through specific measures that:

1. reduce social, economic or political power inequalities between women and men, girls and boys, ensure that women benefit equally with men from the activity, or compensate for past discrimination
2. develop or strengthen gender equality or anti-discrimination policies, legislation or institutions.

This approach requires analysing gender inequalities either separately or as an integral part of agencies' standard procedures.

It is applied to bilateral "allocable aid", including humanitarian aid. Bilateral allocable aid includes support to specific multilateral funds, pooled funding, support to civil society, sector budget support, donor country personnel and other technical assistance, and scholarships in the DAC country.

Bilateral allocable aid, as opposed to "bilateral aid", does not include types of aid for which it is not possible to identify the development partner's policy intention, such as: general budget support, core contributions to multilateral institutions, imputed student costs, debt relief, administrative costs, development awareness in DAC member country and refugees in DAC member countries. These aid categories are excluded from any reports and analysis on aid for gender equality published by the OECD.

Table 4.1. The three scores of the marker

Not targeted (Score 0):	The project/programme has been screened against the marker but has been found not to target gender equality. This score cannot be used as a default value. Projects/programmes that have not been screened should be left unmarked – i.e. the field should be left empty.
Significant (Score 1):	Gender equality is an important and deliberate objective, but not the principal reason for undertaking the project/programme.
Principal (Score 2):	Gender equality is the main objective of the project/programme and is fundamental in its design and expected results. The project/programme would not have been undertaken without this gender equality objective.

A principal score is not by definition "better" than a significant score. A twin-track approach to gender equality across members' development co-operation portfolios is needed, combining dedicated/targeted interventions – usually score 2 – with integrated aid, or gender mainstreaming – usually score 1.

All DAC policy markers apply to development partners' spending commitments. As such, they measure planned investments and not disbursements. Spending commitments are defined as "a firm obligation, expressed in writing and backed by the necessary funds, undertaken by an official donor to provide specified assistance". There is very little gap over time between commitments and disbursements, but there can be some lags in the case of pluri-annual disbursements (aid paid in several instalments). Commitments are recorded in full at the time they are made, even if they are multi-year commitments, and irrespective of when they are disbursed. DAC policy markers apply to commitments because they

provide a forward-looking picture by giving information about future expenditure, and fluctuate as aid policies change, and therefore better reflect development partners' changing political commitments.

The DAC policy markers measure inputs. They cannot and do not intend to measure the outcome or impact of a programme or project. They need to be complemented by monitoring and evaluation instruments to assess results (OECD, 2016[5]).

As is the case for all of the DAC policy markers, some inconsistencies in reporting against the gender marker can be observed. To respond to this, the OECD-DAC Network on Gender Equality (GENDERNET) prepared guidance on using the marker and also recommended "minimum criteria" (OECD, 2016[5]). These GENDERNET criteria are recommended rather than mandatory and are subject to inconsistent application by DAC members. An OECD review of the gender marker showed incongruences between the value of the marker and the title and description of the projects and found that development finance providers do not coherently report similar activities with similar scores. The review recommended steps to improve reporting quality, including establishing guidance on how to treat similar types of aid activities, adopting regular quality check mechanisms, and continuing learning and exchange (OECD DAC Working Party on Development Finance Statistics, 2020[6]).

In addition to the DAC gender equality policy marker, the OECD CRS tracks aid to two areas relating directly to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, captured in "purpose codes": aid to feminist, women-led and women's rights organisations and movements, and institutions, and aid for ending gender-based violence. Aid reported against one of these "purpose codes" is by default given score 2 (principal) against the gender marker (OECD, n.d.[7]). DAC members should make efforts to report their programmes correctly against these codes.

Application and quality control of marker scores

For the majority of DAC members, programme managers apply the score of the gender marker. It is positive that gender equality experts help to ensure the quality of reporting against the gender marker.[3] It is equally important that statistical units and reporters in DAC member institutions be familiar with the gender marker and are able to liaise with programme managers and gender advisers as needed and relevant, to ensure quality control and correct reporting to the OECD.

> *DAC members should aim to increase both the quality and the level of detail of descriptive programme information provided when reporting aid statistics against the gender marker to support accountability and transparency. As the DAC GENDERNET, members can also review the Handbook on the DAC gender equality policy marker.*

Box 4.2. DAC members' practice on applying the DAC gender equality policy marker

Weekly checks within Sida

In Sweden's International Development Co-operation Agency (Sida), the programme officer applies the DAC gender equality policy marker once a new programme is agreed upon. The agency's statistics team go through all new programmes on a weekly basis, checking the programme descriptions and, when needed, programme documentation to ensure that the marker score is correct. Should any questions arise, the statistics team liaises directly with the programme officer, using the GENDERNET Handbook as the basis.

In parallel, an automatic system picks up on basic logical errors, for example if a programme reported in the "ending violence against women and girls" purpose code does not score 2 against the marker. Before the annual reporting to the OECD CRS, additional spot checks are conducted.

The agency also organises training for staff around the DAC markers, including around why reporting is helpful and important. This approach allows for correct reporting but also for dialogue and awareness-raising around the gender marker and around gender equality more broadly within Sida.

Guidance and thematic statisticians in the United Kingdom

A review of DAC gender marker scoring by the United Kingdom in 2017 demonstrated the need to improve scoring against the DAC gender equality policy marker. In response, the department added guidance on its internal Aid Management Platform to support programme managers, who apply the marker score for new initiatives.

Once the policy marker scores have been allocated by programme managers, thematic statisticians working in the specific policy area verify the data and change anything that is noticeably incorrect. Gender marker scores are verified by statisticians responsible for disability and inclusion. Any more complex decisions around scoring that may need amendment are referred to the gender equality team which, if needed, also liaises with the programme managers. The central statistics team of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office manages reporting to the OECD.

Checklists and a traffic light system in the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has developed a checklist defining minimal standards for the DAC gender equality policy marker, as a complement to the Handbook. This checklist is a mandatory annex for each programme and contribution to partner organisations, and is verified when discussing and approving them. The SDC gender equality team has also made efforts to raise awareness about the policy marker and the use of the checklist, which was also addressed in staff trainings on gender equality.

SDC has identified financial targets using the DAC marker, and the gender equality team monitors and reports annually on respective achievements to different departments, using a traffic light concept of red, orange or green. The monitoring also includes the quality of annual reports from country offices, in terms of integrating the gender perspective. If declining figures resulted in a red light, this provided an opportunity for discussions on gender equality with different levels of management and fine-tuning of financial targets by department. This has also increased efforts to revise programme portfolios and budgets to increase focus on gender equality.

Financial targets

Several DAC members have set quantitative targets for their ODA for gender equality, and some are considering establishing targets. [4] Most DAC members that have set financial targets state that these not only help guarantee more aid for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls but also incentivise and raise awareness in their organisation by setting the stage for constructive discussions across teams. The targets can also to some extent help ensure long-term policy steering, despite shifting political priorities. In some cases, financial targets have allowed for honest discussions with management and lead to definition of more realistic targets, including adjusting targets by sector/department. However, any financial targets need accompanying measures, including leadership commitment, human resources and expertise, as well as a clear understanding of the criteria for the DAC gender equality policy marker.

Potential challenges of establishing financial targets include the risk of "gender-washing", since organisations may simulate working on gender equality in order to ensure funding from the DAC member. Targets for gender equality may also be perceived as setting up competition with other cross-cutting issues and sectors. It may also be difficult to identify the "right" financial targets in each sector, and targets may risk becoming a "ceiling" rather than an incentive. The DAC as a community has not so far discussed setting a common target for bilateral aid that integrates or is dedicated to gender equality.

Where and how ODA for gender equality is allocated

Most DAC members channel most of their total aid for gender equality through multilateral organisations and/or established civil society organisations based in DAC member countries. These organisations tend to have the advantage of economies of scale, with systems and processes that are equipped to handle large amounts of resources and to respond to DAC members' reporting requirements (OECD, 2020[8]; OECD, 2020[9]). A very limited amount of funding is channelled directly to local women's rights organisations based in partner countries. A couple of DAC members provide large amounts of aid to programmes integrating gender equality implemented by partner governments, but in general, financial support directly to partner governments is limited. Support for gender equality through the private sector is relatively limited but increasing.

Aid for gender equality is spread over various sectors, with the largest volumes consistently committed in the governance sector. Other sectors that receive high volumes of aid with gender equality objectives are education, health and reproductive health, and economic infrastructure and services. These financial allocations seem to correspond roughly with DAC members' policy priorities for gender (see Section 1.2). Two sectors that stand out as having consistently low shares of aid addressing gender equality are energy and humanitarian aid (OECD, 2016[10]). This is noteworthy, given the strong policy focus on gender equality in humanitarian aid in particular.

> *DAC members should ensure that aid allocations for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls align with policy priorities, and their global and regional commitments.*

Total Official Support for Sustainable Development

The Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD) statistical framework has been developed to present a global picture of resources in support of the 2030 Agenda. TOSSD stakeholders go beyond DAC members, and the aim is to obtain reporting from all development actors, including South-South co-operation (SSC) providers. TOSSD aims to keep the reporting form simple, so that it is accessible to new reporters.

TOSSD measures financing from the recipient perspective and includes partner countries' receipts of ODA, Other Official Flows (official development finance beyond ODA), triangular and South-South co-operation, and private finance mobilised by official efforts – as long as they comply with the definition of sustainable

development. Expenditures at global and regional levels for international public goods are also considered in TOSSD. When reporting on TOSSD, the reporters identify which SDGs their financing is targeting, including SDG5. Up to 10 SDGs can be reported on a single TOSSD activity. TOSSD does not specify whether the programme is dedicated to gender equality (principal) or mainstreamed (significant).

4.2. Making all development finance work for gender equality

The past few years have seen an overall increase in development finance beyond ODA and also an increased interest in finance other than ODA that addresses gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Capital markets are crucial sources of long-term funding to help close the SDG financing gaps and mobilise capital for sustainable development. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda, adopted at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in 2015, aligns *all* domestic and international resource flows, policies and international agreements with economic, social and environmental priorities.

Development finance institutions and banks, private investors, commercial actors and private philanthropy are intensifying investments with a "gender lens", recognising that gender-lens investing (GLI) is smart investing that can both help increase return on investments and contribute to leaving no one behind in developing countries. GLI is defined by many as integrating a gender equality into the financial analysis and decision making processes of an investment. Other more holistic definitions refer to deliberately incorporating a gender analysis into a financial analysis to achieve better outcomes (VERIS Wealth Partners, 2018[11]). Most definitions and criteria for GLI revolve around investing in women-owned or women-led enterprises, investing in enterprises that promote equal opportunities in the workplace (in staffing, management, boardroom representation, and along their supply chains), and/or investing in enterprises that offer products or services that substantially improve the lives of women and girls (GIIN, n.d.[12]).

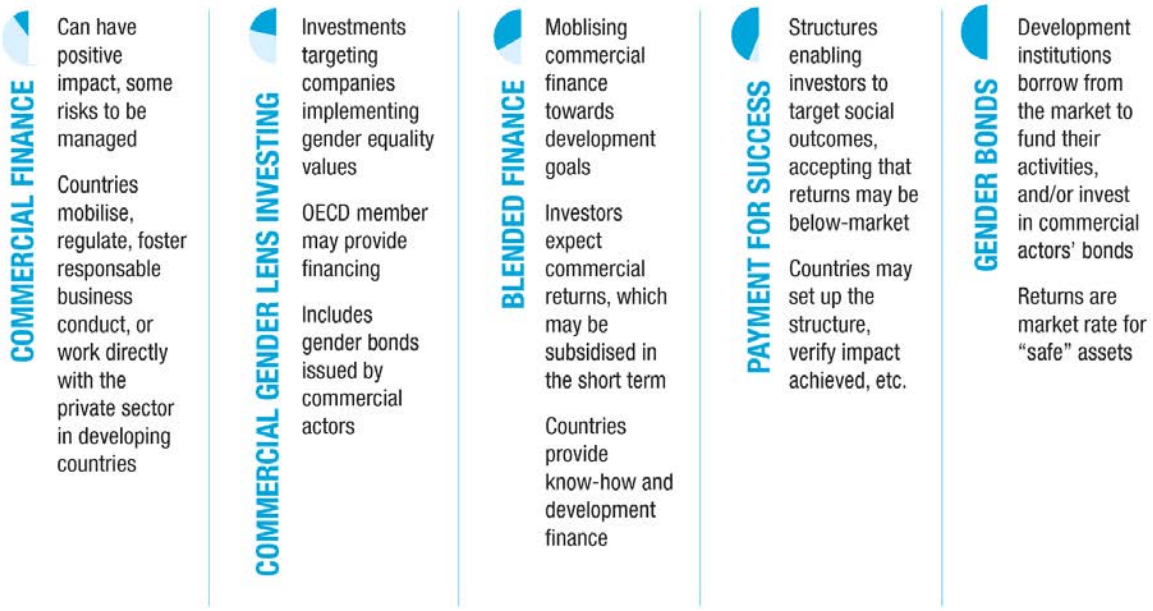
Many DAC members engage with different types of private actors and use financing tools beyond ODA for gender equality, including by partnering with commercial actors and/or private philanthropy, and setting up blended finance vehicles with development banks and development finance institutions (DFIs).[5] Financing approaches range from prioritising commercial return to prioritising social return (OECD, 2020[13]) (Infographic 4.1).

> *While funding beyond ODA cannot replace aid, and ODA will remain a key tool for funding gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, DAC members can partner with a range of actors and mobilise additional funding for gender equality using their ODA, their expertise on gender equality and policy dialogue as leverage.*

There is scope for better integration of gender equality throughout the cycle of the investment from planning, to implementation, reporting and lessons learned.

DAC members can support or leverage various types of dedicated investments in gender equality, gender-lens investing and the integration of gender equality objectives in development and climate investments. Gender-smart climate finance is relatively new, but it is growing fast as more investors apply a gender lens to their investments, and as evidence for the business case increases (2X Collaborative, 2021[14]). At the very least, all financing, including foreign direct investments and climate finance, should apply safeguards and should not have a negative impact on gender equality.

Infographic 4.1. Leveraging private finance can achieve social and commercial returns



Note: The different financing approaches can be seen on a scale of prioritising commercial return in grey on the left-hand side and prioritising social return, in blue on the right-hand side. These terms and categories are fluid and evolving – payment-for-success instruments, for example, can be used as a form of blended finance. Individual initiatives may include features of more than one type
Source: OECD (2020[13]), Putting finance to work for gender equality and women's empowerment: The way forward, https://doi.org/10.1787/f0fa4d91-en.

DAC members can adopt a variety of approaches to leverage additional funding beyond ODA for gender equality, including by:

- partnering financially with private actors at all levels
- providing guidance and financial incentives for financial actors to work on gender equality
- providing technical support on gender equality for actors in partner countries.

These approaches, presented in more detail below, are interlinked and overlap.

Financial partnerships with investors and private actors

DAC members and private actors can complement each other and create important synergies to address gender inequalities by combining the private sector's financial resources and innovation capacity with DAC members' resources, expertise and ability. DAC members can set up, contribute to or leverage innovative structures, funds and instruments dedicated to gender equality and involve different types of partners, including commercial actors and private investors. Private philanthropy also plays an increasingly important role in the development finance landscape.

Participating in blended finance vehicles for gender equality

Blended finance is an important partnership approach to funding the implementation of the SDGs, with clear potential to drive gender equality goals. Blended finance is defined as the "strategic use of development finance for the mobilisation of additional finance towards sustainable development in developing countries". Here, "additional finance" refers to commercial finance directly mobilised by development finance interventions in a blended finance structure, which would not otherwise be directed towards development-related investments (OECD, 2020[1]).

Blended finance can use a multitude of financial instruments to achieve both development and commercial goals, including grants, guarantees, technical assistance, credit lines or bonds (see below for "gender bonds"), equity investments and debt instruments. It can be used across a range of sectors critical for achieving gender equality. Investors often associate investments in partner countries with an unfavourable risk-return relationship. An effective blended finance transaction should structure and/or calibrate financial instruments to address investors' concerns about the risk-return profile of investment opportunities in developing countries. DAC members are already engaging in blended finance, although they are at varying stages in terms of the range of instruments used and how blending is carried out (OECD, Forthcoming 2021[15]).

In 2020, the OECD conducted a survey of 198 blended finance funds and facilities how their activities aligned with the SDGs, and to what extent they integrated or were dedicated to gender equality – aligned with the DAC gender equality policy marker methodology. Two-thirds (66%) of the assets under management of blended finance vehicles captured in the OECD survey were reported as either integrating or dedicated to gender equality. However, only 1% of assets under management were specifically dedicated to gender equality, indicating considerable potential to scale up blended finance dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Of blended finance vehicles dedicated to gender equality in the OECD survey, the key rationale cited for dedicating these vehicles to gender equality was the high potential for return enhancement. Vehicles dedicated to gender equality were mainly used in agriculture, education, and banking and financial services, and grants were the dominant financial instrument.[6] Vehicles dedicated to gender equality reported no challenges to their approach to gender equality. However, vehicles integrating gender equality as a mainstreamed objective noted resource constraints linked to gender equality, and lack of awareness and availability of data on the issue, as obstacles to integrating gender equality (OECD, Forthcoming 2021[15]).

> *As investors of blended finance, DAC members should assert their influence and ensure that gender equality is addressed, in line with their policy commitment to gender equality. When working with private sector partners, DAC members can ensure investments are managed appropriately for gender equality and development impact.*

Box 4.3. Examples of blended finance for gender equality

Gender equality in Australia's blended finance initiatives

Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) integrates gender equality into its investments so that initiatives strengthen capital markets that support gender equality objectives and capitalise on the contribution women can make to economic growth, to COVID-19 recovery and to climate resilience. The Investing in Women programme has boosted private impact investment in women's small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Southeast Asia since 2017. From Investing in Women investments of AUD 11.1 million, in 42 women's SMEs, the programme leveraged over five times as much in additional private capital. As DFAT's longest-running gender-lens investing initiative, Investing in Women is recognised for its strong demonstration effect, inspiring sustained organisational change in partners to consider gender and diversity throughout their investment processes, and to scale and launch new gender-focused funds.

All other DFAT blended finance programmes, including the Pacific RISE pilot and the Emerging Markets Impact Investing Fund (EMIFF), apply a gender lens as core to all their operations, activities, partnerships and investments, regardless of sectoral focus. EMIIF's investments will support women's SMEs as well as businesses that supply products or services that benefit women that adopt workplace gender-equality practices or promote gender equality throughout their supply chains.

Japan ASEAN Women Empowerment Fund

The Japan ASEAN Women Empowerment Fund (JAWEF) is a blended fund that invests through financial institutions in women micro entrepreneurs across the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region. Launched with support from the Japanese government, JAWEF leverages first-loss and mezzanine tranches to mobilise institutional investors. In 2016, Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA) and the Japan Bank for International Co-operation signed an agreement to invest in the fund, along with Sumitomo Life Insurance Company and other Japanese finance institution investors. JAWEF's mission is to encourage gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls by providing financial opportunities to women. It seeks to support women entrepreneurs in ASEAN countries. Lessons learned from the fund show that blended finance can be an effective tool for mobilising institutional capital for gender-lens investing, and that successive fundraising rounds may lead to more efficient mobilisation.

Women's World Banking Capital Partners Fund II

Several DAC members have provided catalytic funds to Women's World Banking Capital Partners Fund II, helping to mitigate risk for commercial investors and incentivising them to invest. This private equity limited partnership makes direct investments in women-focused financial institutions around the world.

Drawing on the lessons learned from the first fund, it employs a blended structure to bring together traditional development partner money with more commercial investors, bringing more capital to the table. The fund also provides technical assistance to investees, to help them improve internal gender diversity, better serve their customers, and increase their impact.

Development banks and finance institutions, and commercial actors

Multilateral and regional development banks and development finance institutions play a critical role in blending by deploying instruments and structuring mechanisms to mobilise the private sector.[7] Multilateral development banks provide large shares of private sector investments through private sector operations. However, a wider range of diverse actors is engaging in blended finance, from foundations and

philanthropic investors, to commercial actors, including institutional investors, commercial banks, private equity and venture capital funds, hedge funds, as well as corporations and SMEs (OECD, Forthcoming 2021[15]). Many DAC member ministries and agencies already collaborate with banks and development finance institutions (DFI). Bilateral DFIs are usually majority-owned by the national government and source their capital from development funds or benefit from government guarantees, enabling them to raise money on international capital markets and provide financing on competitive terms (OECD, 2021[16]).

Several examples show how DAC governments have provided impetus for a stronger focus on gender equality by their bilateral DFI, including by:

- defining gender equality as a policy objective when participating in blended finance vehicles
- granting loans with the explicit objective of investing in projects that promote gender equality
- issuing policy directives requesting that new investments explore the role of women and impact on gender equality.

DAC members undertake similar partnerships with multilateral DFIs and development banks.

In partnering with business, commercial investments can be used to support gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in two broad ways: through investment in companies offering services or products that significantly benefit women, such as dedicated loans or affordable maternal health care, and also through investment in companies led by women, or companies that support women employees and/or women's leadership through internal actions and policies (FSD Africa and UN Women, 2020[17]).

Initiatives such as the "2X Challenge", founded by the DFIs of the G7 member countries,[8] and the "DFI Gender Finance Collaborative"[9] has provided significant impetus for DFIs to develop shared financing principles, definitions and methodologies for providing women in developing country markets with improved access to support, leadership opportunities, finance, and products and services that enhance economic participation and access.

Using bonds as an incentive to channel private capital towards gender equality

A bond is an instrument that represents a loan made by an investor ("purchaser") to a borrower ("issuer"). Development impact bonds (DIBs) finance development programmes with funding from private investors, who earn a return if the programme is successful. Green, social and sustainability bonds have gained traction over the past few years in developed markets, given their potential to bridge the SDG financing gap. Their use is limited in developing countries. Bonds allow issuers to diversify their sources of funding and provide an alternative to conventional financing, which can often be more expensive (OECD, 2021[18]).

> *DAC members can make use of bonds to help create incentives and channel private capital towards gender equality goals.*

"Gender bonds" can be broadly defined as bonds that support the advancement, empowerment and equality of women, although no official definition exists, and credible reference standards are lacking (FSD Africa and UN Women, 2020[17]). So far, the number of investors in gender bonds has been limited.

Despite the modest size of the gender bond market globally, there is reason for optimism (Gouett, 2021[19]). Issuers can identify gender equality as the sole objective of a bond, or alongside other objectives in a broader social bond, or alongside green objectives in a sustainability bond. Gender bonds have been issued by financial institutions to fund ongoing loan portfolios that are intended for women entrepreneurs. Gender bonds could, however, also be issued by a public sector issuer that intends to direct all the proceeds towards a country's national strategy or action plan for gender equality (ICMA, UN Women, IFC,

2021[20]). Education may be another sector of interest for gender bonds (Osborne and Gustafsson-Wright, 2020[21]).

> *Opportunities exist for DAC members to provide incentives such as guarantees for gender bonds, and also to provide incentives for a gender equality focus of bonds in other thematic areas, including green bonds.*

Box 4.4. Examples of gender bonds

Examples of gender bonds investments include **JICA's gender bond** issued in 2021, which raised USD 181 million to promote the empowerment of women and girls and education. The bond proceeds will be allocated to JICA's Finance and Investment work for projects which meet the criteria of the DAC gender equality policy marker and include both projects where the main objective is gender equality and where gender equality is an integrated objective.

The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** launched its first gender bond in 2017 and has issued several gender bonds since then. The gender bonds have been effective in increasing awareness of ADB's activities and in broadening ADB's investor base, having attracted demand from investors who may not necessarily participate in ADB's regular bond offerings. The proceeds from the gender bonds are used to finance a pool of eligible projects that promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Projects include those funded either in whole or in part from ADB's ordinary capital resources that target gender disparities and promoting empowerment of women and girls. Projects typically address – either as part of the overall outcome of the or by incorporating them into specific project components – women's economic empowerment; gender equality in human development; reducing poverty among women; participation in decision making and leadership; and/or women's resilience to risks and shocks, including climate change and disaster impacts.

Another example is the private sector-issued **Women Entrepreneurs Bonds by the Bank of Ayudhya** in Thailand, with the aim of boosting lending to SMEs led by women. International Finance Corporation (IFC) and *Deutsche Investitions und Entwicklungsgesellschaft* (DEG) have signed up, and the pioneering investment is supported by the Women Entrepreneurs Opportunity Facility, a joint initiative of IFC and Goldman Sachs 10,000 Women.

Box 4.5. A multilateral approach to partnering with the private sector: The Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi)

The **Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi)** is a multilateral partnership that aims to unlock financing for women-led and women owned businesses in developing countries. Since its inception in 2018, We-Fi has allocated USD 300 million to address critical constraints for women entrepreneurs and is now operational in 52 developing countries. Housed at the World Bank, We-Fi's global scope is supported by a strong network of six Implementing Partners (multilateral development banks) and more than 140 executing partners from the public and private sector. Almost two-thirds of We-Fi's funds are allocated to low-income (International Development Association (IDA) eligible) and fragile countries. Its holistic approach is policy work and capacity-building through the public sector, paired with private sector development and blended finance innovations. A recent midterm review concluded that We-Fi fills a critical gap in the aid architecture as the only multilateral fund at scale addressing finance, markets, policy and skills gaps. The initiative is particularly strong in leveraging funds and has already leveraged approximately USD 1 billion.

Source: We-Fi (2020[22]), WE Persist, Rebuild, Empower Finance 2020 Annual report https://we-fi.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/WeFi-Annual-Report-2020.pdf.

Incentives and guidance for investors and financing actors

DAC members can provide guidance and technical assistance for investors and financing actors to integrate gender equality throughout development and climate investments, and at the very least, "do no harm" to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. This can imply undertaking research and providing support for commercial actors and private investors who may not have access to gender equality expertise.

This work can be facilitated by the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs), which offer businesses guidance on how to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in the workplace, marketplace and community. Established by UN Global Compact and UN Women, the WEPs are informed by international labour and human rights standards and grounded in the recognition that businesses have a stake in, and a responsibility for, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The principles focus on: High-Level Corporate Leadership; Treat All Women and Men Fairly at Work without Discrimination; Employee Health, Well-Being and Safety; Education and Training for Career Advancement; Enterprise Development, Supply Chain and Marketing Practices; Community Initiatives and Advocacy; and Measurement and Reporting (UN Global Compact and UN Women, 2021[23]).

Guidance and support in financing for gender equality also involves encouraging transparency and accountability through financial and results reporting. DAC members can engage with investors on the types of gender equality objectives the investments are aiming to achieve, and they can identify opportunities for supporting transformative change to achieve gender equality.

> *DAC members can provide specific incentives for investors and financing actors to integrate gender equality throughout development and climate investments, such as offering loans with the explicit objective of investing in projects that promote gender equality.*

The 2X Collaborative is an industry body that evolved out of the 2X Challenge and DFI Gender Finance Collaborative. Bringing together the entire spectrum of investors to promote gender-lens investing, it may prove helpful for capacity building amongst investors. The group facilitates peer learning across communities, to train and expand gender-lens investing practices to a wider group of commercial investors,

including DFIs, Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs), pension funds, asset managers, fund managers, financial institutions, public development banks and corporate institutions.

Towards transparency in financial and results reporting

It is possible to monitor the level of development finance for gender equality by applying the DAC gender equality policy marker to financial flows beyond ODA.

> *DAC members should aim to screen all their "other official flows" (OOF) against the marker and report these data to the OECD where feasible.*[10]

It is positive that a number of private foundations and some development banks and DFIs already use the marker. Members of the 2X Challenge – a group of DFIs founded by the DFIs members of the G7 – are aligning their gender-lens investing criteria[11] to those of the DAC gender marker. While reporting on the extent to which these "other" finance flows, beyond ODA, address gender equality remains a voluntary exercise, reporting will help increase the ability to both find existing gaps in financing, and create a more holistic picture of the financing landscape with regard to gender equality (OECD, 2021[24]).

Recent evidence indicates that there is little standardisation of reporting among the major DFIs in terms of project rationale, funding instrument or environmental, social and governance safeguards category (Publish What You Fund, 2021[25]). Likewise, evidence highlights that "transparency on impact performance, including targets and results" remains one of the most significant challenges in the impact investing field (GIIN, 2020[26]). There can be some difficulty linked to collecting data and measuring gender equality results in the context of finance "beyond ODA", due to the nature and structure of these funds. However, higher levels of transparency are fundamental to ensuring that development actors and their private sector partners provide the levels of accountability necessary for development partners, and improving overall development and gender equality results through sharing and learning from previous investments.

Box 4.6. Partnering with business: The U.K.'s Work and Opportunities for Women (WOW) Programme

Work and Opportunities for Women (WOW) is a five-year programme originally funded by the UK's former Department for International Development (DfID) that aims to improve access to economic opportunities for women "through business interventions in supply chains and economic development programmes". By partnering with and supporting businesses, organisations and programmes that are ready and willing to act on women's economic empowerment, facilitate change across supply chains, and drive international action on this issue, WOW works to eliminate systemic barriers that hinder progress.

The programme provides various entry points for companies in their efforts to address women's participation in supply chains. WOW can provide options to expand and deepen existing programmes; develop proof of concept to streamline the replication of successful interventions; ensure the sustainability of any efforts by using existing efforts to inform the creation of, or changes to, legislation and policy; and create opportunities for innovation and piloting new interventions.

In some partnerships with WOW, companies provide access to data on women working within their global value chains – information that is crucial for gaining a comprehensive understanding of women's experiences and challenges. WOW is able to analyse and use this data to identify challenges, barriers and opportunities for intervention and subsequently employ this information for further engagement. Additionally, while partnerships with some companies require a due diligence process, WOW also recognises the importance of working with companies that require more support for addressing women's economic empowerment. A pillar of the WOW programme is the help desk. Through this function, UK has supported technical assistance as well as expert analysis, and direction can be provided to departments and actors seeking guidance at any stage of their efforts to further women's economic empowerment. While companies were selected in a due diligence process, but the intention was also to work with companies that need improvement, and to provide companies guidance and support.

Source: DfID (2020[27]), Work and Opportunities for Women, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/869561/Programme-Overview-March2020.pdf.

Making development programmes less risky for investors through guarantees

Guarantees are financial instruments similar to an insurance policy, which provide financial compensation for the financier if the borrower is not able to pay back. This makes financing of the development projects less risky for investors (Sida, 2020[28]). DAC members might for example propose higher guarantee coverage – taking on more of the risk – when investing in companies that support women or offer services and products that benefit women.

According to OECD data on private finance raised for development, guarantees have raised the largest amount of private finance in recent years. They are rarely used, however, in blended finance vehicles dedicated to or integrating gender equality, indicating potential for scaling up (OECD, Forthcoming 2021[15]).

Box 4.7. Sweden's use of guarantees to support businesses led by women

Sida has numerous on-going guarantee projects in its portfolio. In 2020, the guarantee-frame was approximately USD 2 billion, mobilising a total of approximately USD 2.5 billion; 70% of the guarantees have gender equality as a significant or principal objective.

Guarantee with TBC Bank in Georgia: Sweden takes 60% of the risk on loans to start-ups and women-led SMEs specifically. Of 911 loan takers in Georgia, 199 are women-led businesses, and 22% of the loan volume has been taken up by women-owned SMEs. The Sida guarantee is approximately USD 25 million, and total mobilised capital is USD 50 million. Special effort has been made to ensure that loans are provided in the local currency, further reducing risk for the loan takers.

Enat bank in Ethiopia: Sida and the US Agency for International Development (USAID) support the Enat bank in by providing guarantees to support lending to women owned SMEs. Sida and USAID each provide a 25% guarantee cover. The 50% remaining risk lies with Enat Bank. All loan-takers are female-owned businesses (the majority with 100% female ownership, and no less than 51%).

Box 4.8. Facilitating access to credit for women refugees: Switzerland

The **Swiss Capacity Building Facility (SCBF)** is a platform with about 25 partners, mainly Swiss financial institutions and impact investors. Its aim is to assist financial institutions in developing countries by developing and disseminating innovative finance products for low-income people, smallholder farmers and small-scale entrepreneurs, and in particular, women. In 2018, the Facility launched a partnership with Jordan's Micro fund for Women (MFW) to set up a loan programme specifically for Syrian women refugees. The Micro fund benchmarked the needs of Syrian refugees and other foreign-born individuals through a feasibility study, and adapted its service offering accordingly.

This partnership allowed some 4,000 Syrian women refugees to access credit, in many cases enabling them to achieve economic independence. Based on the success of this pilot collaboration, the Micro fund expanded its lending and non-financial services to this client segment and generated further interest in refugee lending programmes among Jordanian and foreign microfinance institutions.

Note: For more information please see www.scbf.ch.

Support for local actors in partner countries in mobilising finance

DAC members can play an instrumental role in supporting partner country businesses and governments in mobilising finance for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and in becoming "investment ready".

Supporting the private sector in partner countries in mobilising finance

The private sector in developing countries is a source of employment and growth, with potential for positive effects on the situation for women. However, it can also risk undermining the potential for greater gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Given the high level of uncertainty and risk associated with developing markets, it is often challenging for entrepreneurs in general, and women entrepreneurs in particular, to access credit or investments (Sida, 2021[29]).

DAC members can play a role in supporting capacity building and mentoring of the private sector in partner countries:

- for businesses overall to help them meet some or several of the most common gender-lens investing criteria/standards, including but not limited to the share of women in the workforce and the quality of women's jobs, the share of women in senior management, and human resource and harassment policies
- for women entrepreneurs and women-led businesses and projects in developing countries to strengthen their financial viability and practices, as well as their lending capacity to help them become "investment ready".[12]

Supporting partner country governments and markets in mobilising finance

DAC members can also play a role in supporting partner country governments and markets in mobilising finance, including by:

- improving investment environments, including by helping to build capacity of local financial institutions and develop capital markets, to better benefit women. If partner governments are to issue gender bonds and attract private finance, for example, an adequate regulatory framework is needed. Partner governments overall have yet to participate in the gender bond market
- working with ministries of finance and economy to increase governments' capacity in gender-responsive public financial management and budgeting. This includes expanded use of *ex ante* gender-impact assessments, gender budget tagging, gender budget statements and gender budget audits.

Box 4.9. Good examples of supporting the private sector in partner countries: Sweden

Market sector development in Mozambique

The WIN (Women IN Business) programme in Mozambique was initiated and financed by Sida in 2019 and implemented by TechnoServe. WIN's objective is to economically empower women by supporting partners in the private and public sectors. These partnerships are designed to increase women's access to finance, equipment, business information and tools and wholesale/distribution of products, as well as to shape the rules and norms that govern women's entrepreneurship.

One of the 32 companies working with WIN is Energy Access Mozambique (ENGIE), an off-grid energy and financial services company focused on solar home systems (SHS). The company started operations in Mozambique in 2019 and aims to reach 200 000 households by 2023. WIN assessed its sales operations and identified several opportunities, including improving the recruitment guidelines and making job descriptions more gender sensitive. In this process, the company identified women as customers and as sales agents of particular strategic interest. By focusing on these areas, WIN increased the retention rate of women sales agents from 40% to 75%, and an increase of 80% in earnings of the women sales agents in the first year.[1]

WIN is also supporting Vodacom M-Pesa to reach more women customers and agents through various initiatives. M-Pesa is used by more than 5 million people[2] in Mozambique to store money digitally and make multiple transactions – from payments for basic needs and transfers to other mobile numbers or banks via mobile phone. WIN conducted a review of M-Pesa's Xitique product, which allows people to regularly save money. Through this partnership, M-Pesa made updates to product functionality and marketing strategy by responding to women's needs. This has contributed towards a 42% increase in the number of women regular users[3] in the past year, compared to a 26% increase in regular male users in the same period.

Support for private sector development in Tanzania

In 2017, with support from Sida, private sector development (PSD) actors in Tanzania engaged in a transformative journey. By 2021, the partners had accumulated considerable knowledge and hands-on solutions for PSD with a gender perspective. The actors are the Agricultural Markets Development Trust (AMDT), the Private Agricultural Sector Support (PASS), the Hanns R-Neumann Stiftung (HRNS) with the Coffee Farmers Alliance of Tanzania (CFAT), the Commission on Science and Technology/Small Industries Development Organisation (COSTECH/SIDO) and Tanzania Horticultural Association (TAHA).

The baseline from 2017 showed such challenges as: lack of adequate budgeting and knowledge; sex-disaggregated data; tools; human resource allocation; policies and strategies. Sida provided organisational capacity building tailored to each partner's needs, which focused on ownership, engagement and accountability in management and close collaboration, monitoring and learning with Sida. A central feature in the support was peer learning amongst the actors.

The organisational development had already had an impact at the project level in 2019, which continued throughout the COVID pandemic and were reported in 2021. TAHA measured an increase in the number of women owning greenhouses, and that they had higher yields in horticulture compared to men. The results subsequently led to more men wanting to work with and join the women's groups. HRNS/CFAT saw an increase in the transparency of the household economy between women and men, which led to improved decision-making processes. Both women and men in these households reported that the joint household planning led to tangible improvements in their livelihood. HRNS/CFAT also saw an increased number of women in leadership in farmer organisations and noted that these

had done well. PASS shared that the increased gender awareness had practical implications for the development of an innovative financial product to apply for loans from home from a non-smartphone device. The product targets women, who tend to have more limited mobility and less access to smartphones. The loans will also be linked to a Swedish loan guarantee to women and youth.

1. The growth in income was not linear, due to promotions held in different quarters of the year. Throughout the first year of partnership, women agents consistently earned above the amount at baseline.
2. Considering active customers on a 30-day basis.
3. Regular users defined as using the product more than once.

Checklist on financing for gender equality

DAC members can ask the following questions:

On to bilateral ODA for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls:

- Is funding allocated both to programmes that mainstream gender equality and programmes that are dedicated to gender equality?
- Do ODA allocations align with the identified policy priority of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls?
- Do staff have awareness of, understand, and correctly apply the DAC gender equality policy marker scores, to ensure accountability and transparency for ODA for gender equality? Can further awareness raising and trainings be undertaken around this tool internally?
- Is there a quality assurance process set up to ensure the robust and correct application of gender marker scores?
- Are the marker criteria embedded in programming design and approval requirements, to serve as guidance and incentive for incorporating and advancing gender equality?
- Are programmes correctly reported against the DAC statistical purpose codes relating to gender equality: aid to “feminist, women-led and women’s rights organisations and movements, and institutions, and/or aid to “ending violence against women and girls”?
- Has all possible descriptive information about programmes been provided in reporting aid statistics to the OECD?

On to development finance beyond ODA:

- Is the advancement of gender equality considered as an objective for different types of financial structures and instruments, including climate finance, blended finance, bonds and guarantees?
- Are synergies and opportunities for collaboration identified to strengthen dialogue and partnership with private sector actors, including private philanthropy, on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls? Are different actors’ comparative strengths identified and drawn upon?
- Are efforts made to build the case, set requirements, provide capacity development on gender equality and monitor results when partnering with private actors in blended finance vehicles, guarantees and other financing instruments?
- Are there discussions with private sector actors around opportunities for addressing and investing in transformative change for gender equality?

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Annex 4.A. Additional resources on financing

Bilateral aid for gender equality

For all data on ODA and bilateral allocable aid for gender equality, see the OECD DAC Creditor Reporting System database: https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=crs1.

Handbook on the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker, OECD 2016, https://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/Handbook-OECD-DAC-Gender equality -Policy-Marker.pdf.

While there is no dedicated "women's economic empowerment" sector in the OECD CRS system, the OECD has traditionally monitored aid integrating gender equality objectives in the economic and productive sectors as a proxy measure for aid to women's economic empowerment, picking up on a range of areas from agriculture and transport to business and banking. Similarly, aid for "women, peace and security" is monitored through the shares of aid integrating gender equality in fragile contexts, and/or the share of aid integrating gender equality in the sector of conflict, peace and security (OECD, 2020[30]) (see: https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-topics/development-finance-for-gender-equality-and-women-s-empowerment.htm).

The code "Women's rights organisations and feminist movements" (CRS purpose code 15170) tracks "Support for feminist, women-led and women's rights organisations and movements, and institutions (governmental and non-governmental) at all levels to enhance their effectiveness, influence and sustainability (activities and core funding). These organisations exist to bring about transformative change for gender equality and/or the rights of women and girls in partner countries. Their activities include agenda-setting, advocacy, policy dialogue, capacity development, awareness raising and prevention, service provision, conflict prevention and peacebuilding, research, organising, and alliance and network building." As with all financing data reported to the CRS, it is possible to cross-reference the data reported under this code with CRS "channel codes", in order to identify how much aid is provided by DAC members directly to local grassroots organisations and feminist movements in partner countries, without any intermediaries. This definition of the code was applied by DAC members starting from 2020 on 2019 flows.

The code "Ending violence against women and girls" (purpose code 15180) tracks "Support to programmes designed to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls/gender-based violence. This encompasses a broad range of forms of physical, sexual and psychological violence, including but not limited to: intimate partner violence (domestic violence); sexual violence; female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C); child, early and forced marriage; acid throwing; honour killings; and trafficking of women and girls. Prevention activities may include efforts to empower women and girls; change attitudes, norms and behaviour; adopt and enact legal reforms; and strengthen implementation of laws and policies on ending gender-based violence, including through strengthening institutional capacity. Interventions to respond to violence against women and girls/gender-based violence may include expanding access to services including legal assistance, psychosocial counselling and health care; training personnel to respond more effectively to the needs of survivors; and ensuring investigation, prosecution and punishment of perpetrators of violence". This code was applied by DAC members starting from 2017 on 2016 flows, allowing for accountability to deliver on and achieve SDG5 targets 5.2, "eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls", and 5.3, including "eliminating all harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation".

DAC members are increasingly aiming to address inequalities that intersect with gender (see Section 1.3) and there is some scope to monitor aid aimed to reduce these inequalities. The CRS includes a DAC policy marker focused on the inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities. This marker has the same scoring system as the gender equality policy marker, distinguishing between programmes/projects that have disability inclusion as the dedicated or "principal" objective (score 2), and programmes/projects with an integrated or "significant" objective (score 1). It is possible to cross the disability inclusion marker with the gender equality marker in order to identify aid that addresses the intersecting inequalities of gender and disability.

The CRS sector code focused on "Human rights" (CRS purpose code 15160) tracks aid for "Human rights programming targeting specific groups, e.g. children, persons with disabilities, migrants, ethnic, religious, linguistic and sexual minorities, indigenous people and those suffering from caste discrimination". Applying the gender marker to programmes/projects reported under this code makes it possible to identify aid that addresses the intersecting inequalities of gender and disadvantaged groups, such as ethnic and sexual minorities (OECD, n.d.[7]).

In addition, the purpose code "Emergency Response – Basic Health Care Services in Emergencies" (CRS purpose code 72011) includes the provision of basic health services, mental health, and sexual and reproductive health.

Making all development finance work for gender equality

For more information about development finance instruments, see: https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development.

A map of the Gender Finance Ecosystem, sponsored by the Tara Health Foundation and led by Catalyst at Large, can be found here: https://nexial.co/maps/gf.

Gender Lens Investing: Bending the Arc of Finance for Women & Girls: https://www.veriswp.com/thoughtleadership/gli-bending-arc-of-finance-women/.

The Women's Empowerment Principles: https://weps-gapanalysis.org.

Gender-lens investing criteria as defined by the DFIs in the 2X Challenge: https://www.2xchallenge.org/criteria.

Resources on funding the concessionary part of a blended capital vehicle:

- Women's World Banking Capital Partners Fund: https://www.womensworldbanking.org/gender-lens-investing/.
- CARE SheTrades Impact Fund: https://www.care.org/news-and-stories/ideas/beyond-gender-lens-cares-new-impact-fund-opts-for-gender-justice/.
- Japan Asean Women Empowerment Fund (JAWEF): https://assets.ctfassets.net/4cgqlwde6qy0/486sbWFRVDlqKpzxXutxke/ee0112a89c4589b579f370c0352c41ac/JAWEF_Case_Study_-_Final_final__2_.pdf.

About gender bonds in sub-Saharan Africa, see: https://www.fsdafrica.org/publication/viability-of-gender-bonds-in-sub-saharan-africa/ and watch the webinar here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DqrXfvTI8Iw.

Notes

[1] See the DAC and CRS code list: https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/dacandcrscodelists.htm.

[2] Reporting on the DAC gender marker is possible, but voluntary, for non-DAC development finance providers and for non-ODA financial flows. The DAC marker is used beyond the DAC. For example, the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) uses the methodology of the DAC marker in its data collection.

[3] Twelve of the 21 survey respondents noted that a gender expert is involved in verifying or providing quality control of the DAC gender equality policy marker scoring process, either at the design or review phase. This is more than in the 2013 GENDERNET study, when gender equality experts were involved in applying or reviewing scores in only one-third of responding DAC members.

[4] DAC members that had financial targets for gender equality at the time of the GENDERNET survey were: Austria, with 42.5% of funds channeled by the Austrian development co-operation in Africa to score 2 (principal) against the marker; Canada, with 80% for score (significant) and 15% for score 2; the European Union (EU), with 85% of new initiatives to score 1 or 2 (including both ODA and blending operations and guarantees by – 2025); France, with 75% of programmable aid to score 1 or 2, and 20% to score 2 by 2025, with the *Agence Française de Développement* (AFD), France's development agency, aiming for EUR 600 million to score 2 in the 2020-2022 period; Italy, with 10% of score 2 and the remaining ODA allocated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation Agency for Development Co-operation (MFA/AICS) as score 1; Japan, with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) aiming for 40% of aid to score 1 or 2; Korea (the Korea International Co-operation Agency) intends to double the number of projects that score 1 or 2; Slovenia, with 60% to score 1 or 2 by 2030; Switzerland, with a total of 85% of which at least 8% score 2.

[5] Thirteen DAC members reported that they used financing tools for gender equality and women's empowerment beyond ODA, such as partnerships with private companies and multilateral development banks and blended finance instruments.

[6] DAC members providing capital to blended finance vehicles devoted to gender equality that responded to the 2020 OECD blended finance survey include the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Sweden.

[7] Seventeen DAC members identified multilateral organisations as the main or one of the main modalities for funding gender equality programming. This included funding for dedicated gender equality projects, as well as core funding accompanied by regular policy dialogue to influence the multilateral organisation to address gender inequalities in line with their commitments.

[8] See more https://www.2xchallenge.org.

[9]See more https://www.cdcgroup.com/en/news-insight/news/development-finance-institution-gender-finance-collaborative/ .

[10] OOF are defined as official sector transactions that do not meet ODA criteria. OOF include: grants to developing countries for representational or essentially commercial purposes; official bilateral transactions intended to promote development, but not reaching the minimum grant element for a given recipient; and, official bilateral transactions, whatever their grant element, that are primarily export-facilitating in purpose. This category includes, by definition: export credits extended directly to an aid partner by an official agency or institution (official direct export credits); the net acquisition by governments and central monetary institutions of securities issued by multilateral development banks at market terms; subsidies (grants) to the private sector to soften its credits to developing countries; and funds in support of private investment.

[11] The 2X Challenge's gender-lens investing criteria focus on businesses founded or owned by women, women in leadership, women in the workforce, products or services benefitting women, and includes applying these criteria when investing through intermediaries.

[12] The International Trade Centre's "SheTrades" initiative is an example of a set-up that offers a network and platform supporting the participation of women-owned businesses in international trade (https://www.shetrades.com/en).

5 Results monitoring and evaluation

This chapter addresses monitoring and evaluation of gender equality. It suggests monitoring and evaluation approaches, including those that allow DAC members to monitor transformative change for gender equality.

Gender equality results need to be monitored and evaluated at whatever level they are developed. This chapter provides overall guidance, focusing primarily on the programme level, but the guidance is also largely applicable at other levels.

Measuring gender equality change, and especially gender-transformative change, requires working within existing frameworks and indicators, while providing flexibility and adaptation to reflect the nature and timescales of gender equality results. These are unlikely to be achieved within the timeline of a typical project. As with other complex social change, changes in gender relations can often be nonlinear and unpredictable. Changes that seem positive at first may quickly erode. A hard-won victory by community members for women's land rights, for example, can provoke a backlash against activists or an increase in gender-based violence. Monitoring and evaluation of gender equality results needs flexibility to track progress and achievements, and to capture negative impacts, resistance, reaction, holding ground and unexpected outcomes (Batliwala and Pittman, 2010[1]).

Each Development Assistance Committee (DAC) member is at a different stage in the monitoring and evaluation approaches and infrastructure it has in place, and the resources and capacities for monitoring and evaluating gender equality initiatives. Some DAC members are experimenting with innovative evaluation methods, including feminist evaluation.[1]

The rise of the results agenda – and increased emphasis on monitoring and evaluation of development efforts – has increased the capacity of DAC members to define and track gender equality outcomes and to evaluate gender equality results related to their investments. The focus on results has helped anchor gender equality in DAC member systems and build momentum for commitments to gender equality and women's rights (OECD, 2014[2]). Building a strong body of evidence showing the achievement of gender equality results, or the lack of them, can help build the political will to focus on investments in gender equality.

Meanwhile, the challenges associated with monitoring and evaluating gender equality results – particularly transformative change related to shifting power relations and changing norms – have become more apparent, along with the view of what counts as "evidence" of change. As tools and guidance on gender-sensitive or responsive monitoring and evaluation have increased, the need for indicators and methodologies better able to capture long-term change and transformational gender equality results is acknowledged by DAC members. Given the long-term nature of transformative change, investment in and use of *ex post* or impact evaluations and meta-evaluations may increase DAC members' capacity to evaluate gender equality results (USAID, 2021[3]). This is valid for official development assistance (ODA) funded programmes and equally for "other" types of investments, such as blended finance.

5.1. Monitoring gender equality results

Monitoring is "a continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing […] intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds" (OECD, 2002[4]). The DAC gender equality policy marker and its scores – while not designed or intended as a monitoring tool – can be used strategically in this context as a framework for monitoring efforts. The marker score may also need to be adjusted based on the monitoring (Chapter 4).

> *DAC members should consider adapting performance measurement frameworks and assessment tools to account for the timelines and complex nature of gender equality results. This might include encouraging partners to report on unanticipated results, either positive or negative, without undue judgement on programme quality.*

Undertaking a thorough risk assessment during the design stage to name potential risk and mitigation strategies is required good practice, although it does not preclude unexpected negative results (Chapter

2). Results need to be defined, monitored and evaluated using frameworks that are both flexible and learning oriented, where both positive and negative results provide insights for policy or programme improvement and future design (see Box 3.3 on the Women's Voice and Leadership programme).

Box 5.1. Measuring social norms change through storytelling: Finland

Traditional monitoring and evaluation frameworks across sectors are based on measuring performance against predetermined targets and visible change. They may thus not be adequate for measuring change in gender relations or gender discriminatory social norms. On the other hand, case-study-focused qualitative research, while powerfully explanatory, lacks the necessary population coverage to make robust causal inference claims about changing institutions, as expressed in behavioural norms.

In response to this challenge, building on lessons from a previous project, **Finland, UN Women Nepal** and its partners are exploring an appropriate mix of tools to better measure social change at impact level. This is closely linked to the need for effective monitoring of SDG5 impact indicators and is designed to understand its own contribution to changes in gender discriminatory social norms and harmful cultural practices, through the use of storytelling methodology. The initiative "Measuring social norms change through storytelling: Advancing the transformative shift towards gender equality by 2030" leverages the power of storytelling to measure and influence change in gendered power relations and social norms.

The aim of the research is to identify and understand pathways for change in social norms at the individual and community level, to enable transformative programming for gender equality. The mass storytelling tool combines the interpretive depth of storytelling with the statistical power of aggregated data for tracking patterns and trends in social behaviour. The aim is to generate a "feedback loop" of evidence and learning for long-term programming to influence social norms and end harmful practices. This qualitative storytelling research process is designed to measure change in social norms that lends itself to quantification. This could help identify social change with confidence, and it could also allow development partners to understand how they have or have not contributed to complex social institutions, and to design, adapt and integrate their evidence-based strategies and programming. The initiative will use a storytelling tool such as SenseMaker to track and interpret programmatic contributions linked to the SDG5 indicators to changes in social norms and gender equality. This qualitative storytelling research for measuring change in social norms is in use in four provinces in Nepal.

Results reporting

Results reporting can encourage political and financial support for policies, programmes and projects and help build a solid knowledge base. It can also introduce changes in the way institutions operate, leading to improved performance and accountability.

Development partners have for some time argued for more streamlined or simplified reporting, given capacity gaps.[2] Multilaterals and larger civil society organisations (CSOs) have systems for meeting members' reporting requirements, but small local organisations find it difficult to handle the reporting burden that comes with bilateral and multilateral funding, particularly quantitative data collection. Some DAC members are encouraging organisations to use alternative methods for integrating qualitative data in their reporting, such as embedding videos, music, case studies and vignettes to accompany data on quantitative indicators.

DAC members can also helpfully address specific gender equality objectives and results indicators with investors and private sector actors when engaging in "beyond aid" initiatives, such as blended finance (see Chapter 4).

> *DAC members should consider options for streamlining and simplifying reporting. The approach of using a narrower set of mandatory but adaptable indicators being taken by some DAC members is one example.*

A few DAC members have also experimented with using a common reporting template where they are funding the same organisation, instead of requiring separate reports. Other ways include less frequent reporting (e.g. moving from annual to bi-annual results reporting) and continuing to examine how to balance learning and accountability in institutional structures.

Box 5.2. Australia's Investment Performance Reporting system

Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has an Investment Performance Reporting system to assess performance and collects results of individual investments (projects) and their delivery partners during implementation and on completion. Investment Monitoring Reports (IMR) are completed each year by investment managers for all DFAT investments of a total value of AUD 3 million or higher. The IMR assesses progress against quality criteria, one of which is gender equality. Evidence is gathered from implementing partner reports, monitoring visits, reviews and evaluations, to provide an assessment of investment performance over the previous 12 months. The investment is rated from 1 to 6 on the following criteria, to assess an overall rating for gender equality performance in the reporting period:

- Analysis of gender equality gaps and opportunities substantially informs the investment.
- Risks to gender equality are identified and appropriately managed.
- The investment is making progress as expected in effectively implementing strategies to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.
- The monitoring and evaluation system collects sex-disaggregated data and includes indicators to measure gender equality outcomes.
- Sufficient expertise and budget allocations are available to achieve gender equality-related outputs of the investment.
- As a result of the investment, partners increasingly treat gender equality as a priority through their own policies and processes.

The gender equality ratings that are part of the IMR are crucial for ensuring that the twin-track approach to gender equality is fully implemented in all DFAT aid investments. For investments that do not include specific gender objectives at inception, the IMR becomes one of the few occasions when gender equality is discussed or considered, and in some cases, the IMR rating process itself is a mechanism for triggering consultations on gender equality. IMRs can be a way to motivate or negotiate with partners to try to improve gender equality in implementation of investments. In the final year of the project, a Final Investment Monitoring Report is completed, which assesses performance over the lifetime of the investment and provides lessons learned.

The IMR process gives DFAT an overall assessment of the effectiveness and achievements of the Australian development programme, feeding into policy dialogue, planning processes and capability development. Performance is tracked each year and reported publicly.

5.2. Evaluation of gender equality results

Evaluation is "the systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, […] efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of both recipients and donors" (OECD, 2002[4]).

The strategy of gender mainstreaming (see Chapter 3), should include a focus at the institutional level to address gender equality and empowerment of women and girls through internal organisational changes, such as resource allocation, strategic planning, policies, culture, human resources, staff capacity, leadership, management, accountability and performance management. These efforts also need to be evaluated.

Box 5.3. Evaluation Criteria

The OECD DAC has defined six criteria to guide development partners:

- relevance
- coherence
- effectiveness
- efficiency
- impact
- sustainability

These criteria provide a normative framework to determine the merit or worth of an intervention (policy, strategy, programme, project or activity). They can be used when designing action plans or programmes, as well as for monitoring and evaluation. They serve as the basis for making evaluative judgements.

The OECD DAC guidance "Applying Evaluation Criteria Thoughtfully*":* includes a section on applying a gender lens to these criteria. The section notes that "Evaluators should work in ways that thoughtfully consider differential experiences and impacts by gender, and the way they interact with other forms of discrimination in a specific context (e.g. age, race and ethnicity, social status). Regardless of the intervention, evaluators should consider how power dynamics based on gender intersect and interact with other forms of discrimination to affect the intervention's implementation and results. This may involve exploring how the political economy and socio-cultural context of efforts influence delivery and the achievement of objectives" (OECD, 2021[5]).

Source: OECD (n.d.[6]), Evaluation Criteria, https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm.

Data collection for evaluations

Ethical considerations must be front and centre in evaluating gender equality efforts, particularly in assessing and selecting the approach and methods used in an evaluation. In many contexts where evaluations are undertaken, support for gender equality is limited. Data security and safeguarding, paramount in every context, is especially crucial here.

The DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation commit members to abide by relevant professional and ethical guidelines and codes of conduct and undertake evaluations with integrity and

honesty (OECD, 2010[7]). Specifically, evaluators should note how they plan to ensure that the evaluation process does not cause any harm, respects participants' confidentiality and ensures informed consent of all participants in the evaluation process. Issues such as who asks who what types of questions, and what types of risks are involved in answering questions at the household, community or national level, must be taken into account including the potential risks of digital evaluations. Some DAC members have developed ethical guidance for research, evaluation and monitoring, not necessarily specific to gender equality, which should be applied to all evaluation and research (Thorley and Henrion, 2019[8]).

Good practice includes considering the following questions in the design phase of an evaluation:

- Have the evaluation design and data collection tools considered approaches to include full participation of different groups of women and girls?
- Do the data collection tools, and in particular, surveys, avoid perpetuating negative gender norms and model positive gender norms in the way questions are formulated?
- Are opportunities created for women and girls to collect data themselves through participatory data collection methods, engagement in analysis of data, strategic oversight of the evaluation process and the communication of findings?
- Will the data collection methods allow unintended results – positive and negative – to emerge on the well-being, lived experiences and status of girls and women?
- Does the evaluation team include local evaluator(s) with strong gender and intersectional analysis skills, and is it at a minimum gender-balanced?
- Have protocols on safety, data security and privacy issues been followed?

Box 5.4. Canada's approach to using a feminist methodology to capture data

As part of Global Affairs Canada (GAC)'s work in the Middle East and Maghreb, it worked with feminist researchers to design the Gender Equality and Empowerment Measurement (GEM) tool to collect project outcome data and to evaluate work on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The GEM tool uses feminist methodology to capture qualitative and descriptive data on gender equality and empowerment outcomes of development programming. It employs an intersectional lens for participatory focus group discussions and interviews used to capture the voices and perspectives of project partners. The GEM tool allows researchers, evaluators or project officers to gather data on project participants' experiences of empowerment, based on five empowerment categories: economic, psychological, physical, knowledge and social. The tool is also designed to gather information on the enabling environment, including cultural, legal and societal factors that may have contributed to these experiences of empowerment.

The GEM tool was piloted in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the West Bank and Gaza. It helped capture results on the ground, and participants expressed that they felt engaged in the focus group discussions. The tool has been peer-reviewed by feminist researchers, scholars, academics and experts from the Canadian non-governmental organisation (NGO) community.

Table 5.1. Techniques for data collection and analysis

Approach/tool	Considerations for data collection and analysis
Focus groups	Focus groups can encourage women and girls to express their views more openly than through conventional survey methods. Focus groups also provide opportunities for dialogue on gender equality and enable evaluation processes to contribute to changes in attitudes about gender. The inclusion of local evaluation consultants and advice from evaluation reference groups are important strategies to adopt.
Interviews	Special attention should be paid to including in the programmes women and girls who may have been forgotten or left out of discussions and decision making, but who may have insights related to the context and the evaluation questions.
Surveys	Surveys are commonly used to collect information on experiences of stakeholders in a programme or project. Feminist survey design experts have advocated for survey questions to avoid perpetuating negative gender-related social norms and to model positive norms in designing survey questions.
Case studies	Case studies can be particularly helpful for highlighting the experiences of women and girls to understand the effects of a particular programme or intervention. Case studies by definition are context-specific and allow a detailed narrative to emerge about how a programme has been experienced by stakeholders. Case studies, combined with participatory analysis, can be empowering, as they allow individual women or girls to understand and interpret their own situation.
Most Significant Change	The Most Significant Change (MSC) methodology is widely used for collecting stories of lived experiences and allowing the storytellers to select stories representative of the type of change being sought. Project stakeholders are involved in deciding the kind of change to be recorded and analysing data.
Outcome Mapping	As a planning, monitoring and evaluation approach, Outcome Mapping (OM) unpacks an initiative's theory of change, provides a framework to collect data on immediate, basic changes that lead to longer, more transformative change, and allows for the plausible assessment of the initiative's contribution to results.
Outcome Harvesting	Outcome Harvesting (OH) is designed to collect evidence of change (the "outcomes") and then to work backwards to assess whether or how an organisation, programme or project contributed to that change. This contrasts with the more traditional way of carrying out monitoring and evaluation, which is to start with activities and then attempt to trace changes forward through output, outcome and then impact levels. Women's rights organisations are experimenting with OH as an approach that is consistent with feminist monitoring and evaluation.
Participatory mapping	Participatory mapping refers to a spectrum of data collection tools that can be used for collecting women and girls' spatial access and knowledge of different resources, freedom of movement, and how this is affected by different relations within communities. The use of interactive, fun and engaging techniques facilitates an exploration of sensitive issues around differences in access and control over resources amongst different women, in a non-threatening manner.
Participatory visual storytelling	Participatory visual storytelling includes a variety of participatory tools aimed at transformative change embedded in action research. It empowers participants in telling their life story, as well as other experiences, through photography or video, as a basis for stimulating social change. Examples include PhotoVoice and participatory video, to help make women and girls' voices central in explaining empowerment and other processes of change from their perspective.
Evaluative rubrics	Evaluative rubrics set out criteria and standards for different levels of performance and describe what performance would look like at each level. These frameworks can be developed from the programme logic and developed in a participatory way by evaluators with programme stakeholders. Rubrics offer a process to make explicit the judgements in an evaluation and are used to judge the quality, the value or the importance of the service provided. Rubrics are made up of: • evaluative criteria: the aspects of performance the evaluation focuses on • merit determination: the definitions of what performance looks like at each level.

Note: This table is adapted from guidance provided on human rights and gender equality data collection and evaluation approaches in the UN Evaluation Group 2014 and the below sources.
Source: Newton et al. (2019[9]), *What do participatory approaches have to offer to the measurement of empowerment of women and girls?,* https://www.kit.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/KIT-Working-Paper_final.pdf; Oakden (2013[10]), Evaluation rubrics: how to ensure transparent and clear assessment that respects diverse lines of evidence, https://www.betterevaluation.org/sites/default/files/Evaluation%20rubrics.pdf; Better Evaluation (2014[11]), Photo Voice, https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/evaluation-options/photovoice.

Applying a gender equality analysis to the data available

Once necessary evaluation data, including gender data, have been gathered, the next step is to ensure that gender analysis is applied to that data. It is important to consider ways to engage women and girls in

the analysis of data. Their participation in interpreting data may bring a unique perspective important in triangulating evaluation data. In addition to participatory, inclusive approaches to data analysis, the following may be helpful:

- integrating contextual analysis such as gendered-related social norms, power dynamics as they affect different groups of individuals
- comparing data with existing community, country, etc., information on women and girls' rights and other social indicators, to confirm or refute trends and patterns already identified
- disaggregating survey data (if used) along lines of sex, age, education, geographical location, poverty, ethnicity, indigeneity, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity, and paying attention to trends, patterns, common responses and differences (following up, if possible, with further qualitative methods and analysis)
- analysing how far the programme has addressed structural factors that contribute to inequalities experienced by women and girls, especially those experiencing multiple forms of exclusion
- assessing the extent to which (different groups of) women and girls were included as participants in programme planning, design, implementation, decision making, and monitoring and accountability processes.

> *DAC members should design or commission evaluations that use mixed-method approaches to answer evaluation questions and include participatory data collection and data analysis techniques that allow women's voices and perspectives to be heard.*

Feminist evaluation

Feminist evaluation is grounded in feminist theory and principles and can help make the link to the feminist foreign policies that some DAC members have implemented (Chapter 1). An initial impetus was a recognition of the negative consequences of lack of attention to gender and gender inequities in conceptualising, designing, conducting, and analysing data (Frey, 2018[12]). Beyond this, there are no prescribed methods or tools for feminist evaluation, or indeed any agreed-upon definition of feminist evaluation.[3] Evaluators may explicitly use the term "feminist" to describe their approach or refer to a different term, while still using approaches based on feminist principles.

The gender and the feminist approach to evaluation differ in several ways. These include the kinds of questions posed, the design of the evaluation processes, how data and evaluation reports are used and by whom. Feminist evaluation acknowledges from the outset the need for transformative change in gender and power relations – i.e. it is values-driven – and explores and challenges the root causes of gender inequalities. Feminist evaluation emphasises the design of processes that are not only inclusive of diverse women and girls but engage them in ways that are empowering. This includes, for example, using participatory methods of data collection and data analysis that directly include project participants, who can give voice to and make meaning out of their own experiences. Crucially, feminist evaluation emphasises the position of the evaluators and encourages them to reflect on the assumptions and biases they bring to the evaluation. In other words, feminist evaluation holds that evaluations are not value-free.

Finally, feminist evaluation prioritises the use of knowledge generated in the evaluation process by those directly implicated in the evaluation. Evaluation findings should be accessible and barrier-free for all stakeholders. The most effective way to ensure this is to ask them what products will be most useful (social media, infographics, videos, briefings).

Box 5.5. Feminist evaluations in Canada

To carry out its feminist international assistance policy and promote gender transformative change in its foreign policy operations, GAC has adopted a feminist approach in its practices. Feminist evaluations look to encourage collaborative Global North and Global South partnerships, as well as participatory processes that place the voices of women and girls at the centre of the evaluation process.

This approach also enables those with lived experiences and contextual and cultural understandings of power dynamics and gender issues to guide evaluation practices. Feminist evaluation strategies facilitate reflection and dialogue, leaving room to adapt to evolving needs and information. This approach places effort and importance not only on the findings of an evaluation, but on the process, which helps promote empowerment and autonomy.

Learning and communication of monitoring and evaluation findings

Data generated in the monitoring of gender equality results, evaluations or performance assessment processes provide important information for DAC members on progress towards gender equality. The communication and dissemination of monitoring data and evaluation findings can potentially strengthen multiple levels of accountability on gender equality. Such data can be useful both to promote gender equality objectives externally and internally within the institution, in efforts to understand progress towards results and to course-correct where progress is not happening as anticipated.

A focus on results monitoring and reporting of DAC members' internal institutional gender equality efforts (i.e. Gender Action Plans) is as important as tracking results on programme or policy efforts. The value of evaluating institutional gender equality initiatives includes helping understand the relevance, coherence, efficiency and effectiveness of institutional gender mainstreaming (including gender policies, gender parity strategies, gender markers, financial tracking systems, gender analysis in programme and policy design); and building an evidence base of the correlations between institutional gender equality initiatives and development results. A strong evidence base showing the relationship between internal gender equality changes and programme outcomes can also build political will for investments in gender equality initiatives.

> *It is good practice to integrate learning-orientated approaches in monitoring and evaluation on gender equality.*

The development of a learning agenda is increasingly being used by DAC members and development partners in their gender equality work.[4] Typically, a learning agenda includes: a set of questions addressing critical knowledge gaps on gender equality identified during implementation start-up; a set of associated activities to answer them; and knowledge products aimed at disseminating findings and designed with use of multiple stakeholders in mind. A theory of change approach lends itself well to the use of a learning agenda. Learning questions can be framed to test and explore assumptions and hypotheses throughout implementation and to generate new evidence for advocacy and future programme and policy development. A learning agenda can be set at different levels, and ideally should be developed during the design phase of a strategy, project or activity. It can provide a framework for performance management planning, using regular feedback loops related to key learning questions, and can also assist in evaluation design, to prioritise evaluation questions.

Checklist on results monitoring and evaluation

DAC members can ask the following questions:

On monitoring:

- Do monitoring or performance measurement frameworks provide enough flexibility and direction to account for the complexity of transformative change to achieve gender equality when this is the objective of the intervention, including negative change or unintended outcomes?
- Do the programmes' accountability and reporting structures avoid unnecessary burdens on partners, by streamlining or reducing monitoring and reporting requirements? Do they aim to create an enabling environment for partners to engage in a way that does not require adapting or tailoring their systems?

On evaluation:

- Are the evaluation approaches used ethical, inclusive and participatory, and in support of accountability to affected populations? Have locally based evaluators and/or researchers been involved? Are women's voices and perspectives included and valued as a source of data?
- Has consideration been given to developing and resourcing a learning agenda relating to gender equality at the institutional level?
- Is monitoring and evaluation of gender equality at the institutional or organisational level linked with programme outcomes?
- Is there a strategy in place to share new knowledge and evidence on gender equality results from monitoring, evaluation and learning activities, internally and/or with other stakeholders and partners?

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USAID (2021), *Discussion Note: Ex-Post Evaluations*, https://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/dn-ex-post_evaluation_final2021.pdf. [3]

Annex 5.A. Additional resources on results monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring gender equality results

For insight and guidance on the value of participatory approaches, see the KIT Royal Tropical Institute working paper "What do participatory approaches have to offer the measurement of empowerment of women and girls": https://www.kit.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/KIT-Working-Paper_final.pdf.

For more information on monitoring whether projects and programmes are having their intended effect, and to make changes if they are not, see the Research and practice note "Changing Gender Norms: Monitoring and Evaluating Programmes and Projects": https://odi.org/en/publications/changing-gender-norms-monitoring-and-evaluating-programmes-and-projects/.

For examples of development, monitoring and evaluation of gender equality results at the country and sector level and the programme and project level, see the Asian Development Bank and Australian Aid's "Tool Kit on Gender Equality Results and Indicators": https://www.oecd.org/derec/adb/tool-kit-gender-equality-results-indicators.pdf.

For guidelines to help those who work on results-based monitoring (RBM), see the "Guidelines on designing a gender-sensitive results-based monitoring (RBM) system" from the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ): https://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/GIZ-guidelines-gender-sensitive-monitoring.pdf.

For examples of good practice where results from gender-integrated and targeted gender equality interventions are presented in compelling results reports that mix quantitative data with case studies, vignettes and data analysis, see UNICEF's "Gender Equality: Global Annual Results Report 2020": https://www.unicef.org/media/102281/file/Global-annual-results-report-2020-gender-equality.pdf or UNICEF's "Health Results 2020: Maternal, Newborn and Adolescent Health" report: https://www.unicef.org/media/102666/file/Health-Results-2020-Maternal-Newborn-Adolescent-Health.pdf.

Evaluation of gender equality results

For examples of gender equality evaluations, including evaluations of Gender Action Plans from DAC members and other development partners, see the UN Women evaluation portal: https://genderevaluation.unwomen.org/en/region/global?region=8c6edcca895649ef82dfce0b698ebf60&orgtype=c580545e97254263adfcaf86c894e45b.

For guidance on how to integrate an equity-focused and gender-responsive approach to national evaluation systems, see "Evaluating the Sustainable Development Goals: With a 'No One Left Behind' lens through equity-focused and gender-responsive evaluations": https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20americas/imagenes/publicaciones/2017/06/eval-sdgs-web.pdf?la=en&vs=4007.

For guidance on how to integrate a gender lens in UNICEF evaluations, or evaluations more generally, see the "UNICEF Guidance on Gender Integration in Evaluation": https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/documents/unicef-guidance-gender-integration-evaluation.

For a resource for development practitioners and evaluators who are seeking explanations and recommendations on how to include a focus on gender impact in commissioning or conducting evaluations, see the Methods Lab resource, "Addressing Gender in Impact Evaluation: What should be considered?": https://internationalwim.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Addressing-Gender-in-Impact-Evaluation-.pdf.

The United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) provides an evaluative framework for evaluations on institutional gender mainstreaming that could be adapted by DAC members in the practical guide "Guidance on Evaluating Institutional Gender Mainstreaming": http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/2133.

In "The 'Most Significant Change' Technique – A Guide to Its Use", Better Evaluation offers a practical tool for anyone seeking to use Most Significant Change (MSC): https://www.betterevaluation.org/resources/guides/most_significant_change.

For an accessible introduction to Most Significant Change, see: https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/most_significant_change.

For an example of survey design on women's empowerment, see the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab's "A Practical Guide to Measuring Women's and Girls' Empowerment in Impact Evaluations": https://www.povertyactionlab.org/sites/default/files/research-resources/practical-guide-to-measuring-women-and-girls-empowerment-appendix1.pdf.

For information on Outcome Mapping (OM) and how it can be used to unpack an initiative's theory of change and serve as a framework to collect data on immediate, basic changes, see Better Evaluation's resource: https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/outcome_mapping.

For ethical guidance on data collection, see the World Health Organization's "Putting Women First: Ethical and Safety Recommendation for Research on Domestic Violence Against Women" resource: https://www.who.int/gender/violence/womenfirtseng.pdf.

See also the subsequent report: https://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/intervention-research-vaw/en/.

For an accessible introduction to the basic concepts that underpin feminist evaluation, see Better Evaluation's resource "Feminist evaluation": https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/themes/feminist_evaluation.

For an overview and description of feminist evaluation and gender approaches, and of their differences, see the research paper, originally published in the *Journal of Multidisciplinary Evaluation,* "Feminist Evaluation and Gender Approaches: There's a Difference?": https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/resources/discussion_paper/feminist_eval_gender_approaches.

For an exploration of how quantitative impact evaluations and other technical choices and ethical considerations are changed by bringing a feminist intent to research into monitoring and evaluation processes, see Oxfam GB's discussion paper, "Centring Gender and Power in Evaluation and Research: Sharing experiences from Oxfam GB's quantitative impact evaluations": https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/centring-gender-and-power-in-evaluation-and-research-sharing-experiences-from-o-621204/.

Feminist evaluation can be used alongside, or combined with, other systems of monitoring, evaluation changes and learning for programmes, to help make sense of how social change occurs. For more information, see "Merging Developmental and Feminist Evaluation to Monitor and Evaluate Transformative Social Change": https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1098214015578731.

For examples of concrete steps that can be taken on data security and safeguarding evaluation participants, see "ActionAid's feminist research guidelines": https://actionaid.org/publications/2020/feminist-research-guidelines.

Notes

[1] Thirteen DAC members included gender equality in monitoring and evaluation frameworks for programming, and five members used additional annual quality checks. A few DAC members noted that they produce evaluations of gender equality as a cross-cutting issue, while others produced evaluation reports of their Gender Action Plans or other gender-specific programmes.

[2] Thirteen DAC members identified the inclusion of results from gender equality programmes and initiatives within regularly scheduled reports to be an important component of their systems for monitoring and evaluation. Of these members, some used report writing at varying stages of the intervention as a system for the monitoring and evaluation of gender equality programmes (quarterly, annually, mid-term, or at the end of the programme).

[3] The DAC Network on Development Evaluation is developing a Glossary of evaluation terms.

[4] Nine DAC members incorporated a learning agenda devoted to improving their work on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls within their development co-operation systems and processes (including monitoring and evaluation). The way these learning agendas are put into effect is extremely varied. Five members incorporated learning agendas in their programming, with dedicated work streams for knowledge management, or broader institutional learning systems. Examples of these agendas ranged from a gender unit being responsible for institutional learning and knowledge management, to help desks that give out rapid advice from external experts. Four members used systematic learning activities such as comprehensive and multi-year reports on the evolution and progress of approaches used to advance gender equality in development co-operation, including key lessons learned and recommendations for moving forward. Two members included their processes for evaluation and programme improvement as a component of their learning agenda, with learning questions integrated into evaluation questions when appropriate. One member noted that its learning agenda is carried out by a designated implementation team. Twelve DAC members indicated that they do not have learning agendas.

6 An institution that delivers for gender equality

This chapter addresses the institutional and organisational frameworks, human resources and capacity development needed in DAC member systems to address gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls effectively in development co-operation. It looks at the links between internal organisational culture and practices, and development efforts for gender equality.

Addressing gender equality goes beyond programming and funding – it needs to be understood holistically, as an issue that connects with the entire institution. It is essential to build institutions that enable staff to work towards gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through incentives and accountability systems, and which also integrate gender equality into their internal and human resource policies.

Efforts should be led by management, strategically supported by gender advisers and gender focal points, and implemented by everyone (Elroy, 2019[1]). Organisations are inherently gendered, as are all advantages and disadvantages, allocations of work and responsibilities, systems for imputing value, interpersonal relationships, and means of control there within (Navarro, 2007[2]).

Strong institutions that support gender equality are based in part on a foundation of strong policy frameworks. Harmonising and ensuring application of standards in an organisation is central. Aligning these standards with international commitments on human rights, gender equality and staff safety across departments and ministries, is also particularly relevant.

When examining different approaches to creating institutional frameworks that best support gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, it is important to consider how institutions are affected not only by their policies and practices, but also by the organisational culture, including leadership and ownership of gender equality and human resources policies. Explicit policies, standards, codes of conduct and ethical norms have an important impact on the culture within organisations and implementing partners. Developing an overarching organisational theory of change, including both organisational strategies and programming, to map the pathways for achieving gender equality results can be a useful exercise (Chapter 2). The linkage is clear: organisational culture informs policy, and policy contributes to organisational cultural change.

> *Setting a clear tone for internal culture and organisational values supportive of gender equality is essential for the transfer of values and requirements of all staff within and between institutions, and to external partners.*

6.1. Human resources

Both political and public support for gender equality has become a greater priority among many Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members. It has not, however, always been accompanied by investment in additional resources or stronger architecture for gender equality. Gender equality needs to be the responsibility of all staff and management, as well as of a team of dedicated specialists to the topic.

Staff dedicated to gender equality

Different models of institutional architecture to support gender equality have been put in place. Institutional arrangements, whether bilateral, multilateral, or for other kinds of actors, have included a wide range of structures. They include dedicated gender equality teams in programme or policy divisions, stand-alone gender equality units, and high-level gender advisers attached to leadership and networks of gender focal points in departments. Additional analysis and evaluation of how different structural arrangements affect organisational capacity and results on gender equality is useful. Greater insight into effective architecture could have important implications not only for DAC members, but partner governments and international organisations, since models are often replicated across institutions (Rao and Sandler, 2021[3]).

Headquarters level

At headquarters level, most DAC members have dedicated staff for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.[1] The teams and individuals concerned typically have to work at high pressure. Many models of gender architecture exist, but they often face situations where demand exceeds supply and

where budgets for those working on gender equality are inadequate (Rao and Sandler, 2021[3]). Many of the positions dedicated to gender equality include additional responsibilities such as responsibility for broader equal opportunities; or responsibilities for strategic engagement with a broader portfolio of multilateral partnerships, including gender equality as a priority consideration. Gender equality advisers or experts are also often involved in co-ordinating internal networks of gender focal points, spread across teams, departments or ministries; and participate in external or multi-stakeholder networks.

In the past, DAC members have identified the following qualities as important for gender equality advisers. It is important to note that such skills include technical expertise and experience specifically related to gender equality, and also leadership, relationship and facilitation skills; communication and negotiation skills; political sensitivity; sector-specific expertise, regional knowledge and experience working in partner countries; persistency, courage and humility; an open mind, innovative thinking and analytical capacity; flexibility; and team spirit. DAC members also noted other elements of expertise relevant for these positions, whether related to specific sectors or regions or to other cross-cutting issues (OECD, 2014[4]).

> *DAC members need to aim to have a sufficient number of gender equality advisers or experts in place, but also non-specialist employees or peers with the knowledge and commitment to address gender inequality in their areas of responsibility.*

Some members with large gender equality teams have taken an approach to staffing linked directly to thematic expertise. This includes staff working in a gender equality division or team, with additional dedicated responsibilities for preventing gender-based violence, humanitarian action, natural resources and governance, or LGBTIQA+ issues. The need for expertise on gender equality and other types of diversity issues need to be factored into broader workforce planning exercises.

> *While it is important for DAC members to keep in mind how gender equality is connected to other intersecting inequalities, it should not be assumed that staff responsible for gender equality necessarily have expertise on or should by default be responsible for leading work in the institution on all types of diversity issues or other kinds of inequalities.*

Regional and country level staff

Beyond representation at headquarters, it is common for DAC members to dedicate some staff resources to gender equality in country offices. Some have made the decision to incorporate responsibility for gender equality into the responsibilities of many or all staff, rather than designate a single specific focal point at the regional or country level. [2]

While all regional and country level staff should have some level of responsibility for gender equality, it is good practice to appoint dedicated staff.

Some DAC members are making efforts to involve national experts in country offices/embassies. More efforts should be made to recognise the importance of local researchers, and guidance and expertise can be drawn from youth experts, feminist experts, women experts and faith/religious experts, among others, to allow for contextual solutions, technical expertise and active, locally-led decision-making (Peace Direct, 2021[5]).

> *DAC Members should have policies and strategies in place to recruit a diverse pool of staff in country offices, including national gender equality experts.*

The role of gender equality champions and senior leadership

Supportive political leaders and senior leadership continue to be a key ingredient for DAC members' commitment to gender equality. Ideally, gender equality is the responsibility of all political leaders and senior staff, as well as every employee. An increasing number of DAC members have "gender equality

champions"[3]. However, how these "champions" are expected to operate, for example, at what level of seniority and with what balance between their gender equality and other responsibilities, varies widely.

> *DAC members can consider opportunities for appointing or awarding high-level and/or influential "gender equality champions" in capitals and in partner countries, to help raise the visibility of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, in addition to having a dedicated team and making gender equality the responsibility of all staff and management.*

Gender Equality Networks

Organisational networks for gender equality often include focal points in ministries and departments.[4] Most networks focus on representatives at the expert level, but some include senior leadership and/or management. In some cases, networks extend beyond headquarters, either to embassies, delegations or country offices; or to specific key representation offices. Networks can also be focused on multiple thematic areas, e.g. women, peace and security (WPS) or sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH).

Gender equality networks are a useful way to increase capacity building within institutions. For example, regular staff rotations can help build networks of staff interested in and knowledgeable on gender equality.

> *DAC members can connect to and collaborate with counterparts in other gender equality networks, either in other governments (whether DAC members or partner governments) or organisations. These might also be multilateral organisations, with similar networks, or international women's movement networks with extensive expert knowledge. Connecting and cross-sharing expertise can be an opportunity to exchange lessons learned in areas of common challenges.*

Human resource policies

There is a strong connection between an institution's internal organisational culture and its development policies and programming. Ensuring more equal representation from a broader range of groups is important in an organisation's workforce and influences how programmes and policies are designed. It is important that DAC members make sure that a range of perspectives and experiences inform decision making, both within institutions (within the staff pool) and with partners. Staff diversity is an important factor in achieving institutional objectives, including goals related to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

Elements of diversity include gender, educational and professional background, regional experience, ethnicity and other characteristics such as disability, in a range of personal and professional experience. Higher diversity and more gender-balanced employment are especially important for public sector institutions, so they can be more representative. Greater levels of diversity and a more gender-balanced public sector are associated with higher levels of productivity and creativity, as well as more inclusive policies and programmes (OECD, 2018[6]). Representation and inclusivity can build public credibility in a DAC member country, and enhance DAC members' relationships with partner countries or organisations through development co-operation. It is important that DAC members show leadership in this area, particularly if they set up development programmes to improve the human resources and organisational capacity of partner countries' public institutions.

The *OECD Recommendation for Gender Equality in Public Life* is worth bearing in mind when setting up institutional architecture in development co-operation to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

> *An institutional approach to human resources could include: promotion of merit-based recruitment; consideration of positive policies and practices to ensure a balanced representation of men and women in each occupational group (staff and management) in public sector employment; equal pay for equal work/work of equal value; and developing measures to remove implicit barriers within recruitment, retention and promotion processes, where appropriate and necessary (OECD, 2016[7]).*

Some DAC members have introduced specific policies to target increased recruitment of women, to establish a more gender-balanced workforce overall. This includes for example, specific targeting of women candidates for leadership positions, or specifically targeting recruitment of women from local populations. It is also vital that the women already recruited have the opportunity and the support so they can stay in their positions in the medium to long term. Retention policies considering work/life balance, equal pay, harassment/sexual harassment and pro-active mitigation measures are essential (ILO, 2020[8]).

Diversity beyond gender amongst staff

A number of factors should be taken into account in establishing an institutional architecture and human resources policies to reduce gender and other inequalities, as well as addressing the underlying conditions, including power imbalances and social norms.

To address intersecting inequalities internally, DAC members would benefit from a human resources strategy that takes into account diversity in many forms. This includes, for example, focusing on how a range of staff could include those representing LGBTQIA+ or ethnic/racial minorities, or those with disabilities. It is important to ensure that diversity and a range of experience are seriously considered in the employee or expert pool. It is important to recognise the potential barriers to recruiting, promoting and retaining staff representing minorities. Specific strategies should be put in place to address these particular challenges, throughout the full range of human resources processes, including recruitment, promotion and retention.

6.2. Capacity development for gender equality

For DAC members, capacity building takes a variety of forms – the most common ones being training and mentoring – and is linked to knowledge management and a variety of learning initiatives to address gender equality.[5] Capacity development is an ongoing cycle with staff, and retaining the relevant expertise is an important part of maintaining institutions' efficacy and adaptability. Since DAC members are increasingly seeking transformative change for gender equality, the link between the institutional learning agenda and organisational buy-in for this concept is crucial (Chapter 1).

How to make training effective

DAC members' most common form of capacity building is training. A number of factors influence the efficacy of training on gender equality:

- *Format and structure*: including options such as in-person or face-to-face; hands-on training; or e-learning/online models. It is important that staff based in country offices can also benefit from this training.
- *Participation and size*: smaller vs. collective training or group settings; interactive; peer discussion; exchange with partners/joint reflection; personal/group coaching
- *Audience:* targeting specific groups, such as senior management and human resource managers
- *Timing*: degree of regularity, such as annually or before specific missions/deployment
- *Requirements*: obligatory/elective training for all staff; specific training for certain categories/ groups of staff, etc.
- *Thematic/substantive considerations*: focused not only on gender equality and mainstreaming, but also on leadership, management and diplomacy; specific research skills; discrimination, harassment, bias, etc., or through integrating gender equality into training focused on other sectors/issues (e.g. results management, safeguards and protection from SEAH, etc.)
- *Training facilitators:* options for use of external or internal experts

- *Technical capacity*: additional training is required to make sure staff can access/use the resources available; and a variety of formats/techniques can be used in training.
- *Complementary materials:* as background or as a substantive complement to training, offering tools, good practices and easy access to guidelines.

While it is important to offer gender equality or gender mainstreaming training for all staff, if the timing and recurrence of such training are not considered (for instance, if staff are not retrained regularly) or these sessions are not complemented with nuanced and substantively relevant training on specific/thematic issues, initial mandatory training can become less effective in the medium to long term. It is helpful to aim for a valued outcome so that the training will be prioritised and attended by all.

A range of effective models for training are available. Several DAC members emphasised the importance of *in-person* or *face-to-face* training, noting the positive feedback from staff and an increase in the level of interaction between participants.[6] Many DAC members also noted the effectiveness of *hands-on* training, by including real-life examples or sharing specific experiences from those involved directly in programme implementation in country.

Other DAC members emphasised the need for *bespoke* or adaptable models of training, to appeal to a range of employees and staff with differing learning styles, who may be more receptive in a certain context. A diverse range of approaches to training is useful, offering both collective training in larger groups, but also the option for smaller, more targeted group workshops. It can be helpful to provide both formal and less formal contexts for training. DAC members, international organisations and partners stress the benefits of offering a variety of ways to communicate and build capacity, using different forms of training, including compulsory e-learning modules, in-person training and workshops, in co-ordination with appointed internal focal points.

DAC members have noted that using external experts is helpful for supporting reflective learning and promoting system change. Using external expertise, rather than internal resources, can motivate action. In any case, it is also important to guarantee that trainers being used are gender-sensitive and that stereotypes and biases around gender are taken into account in choosing trainers and session formats.

Creating safe spaces and creative formats for internal dialogue is also vital, for example, by targeting specific groups of staff or partners. One DAC member offered an instance of one successful internal yearly event, “Barbershop talks for men”, for reflection on masculinity, gender discriminatory norms and how to improve gender equality in the organisation. Reflective leadership dialogues have been described as important, as well as creating and facilitating space for managers to have honest conversations about harmful power dynamics and privileges in the organisation, and what must change to end misconduct. These can often lead to sensitive conversations requiring tools and methodologies to support leaders.

> *While targeting specific groups of staff or partners for capacity development can be useful, DAC members would do well to consider carefully the goals and expected outcomes of targeting certain groups, to study who could potentially be left out or excluded as a consequence.*

Capacity development programmes may not reach out to all concerned staff or institutions; and training or programmes aimed at increasing capacity, awareness or engagement may not include managers or senior officials (OECD, 2018[6])

Several DAC members noted the importance of including implementing partners in training with internal staff. This can offer a more structured space for joint reflection, to cultivate mutual learning and common understanding. Joint training or training open to implementing partners was also specifically used by one member as a way to reflect on the implementation and experience in joint gender action plans at country level. Timing of training was also noted as a potentially important factor in joint training. One DAC member plans training for key moments during project milestones or programme implementation and review.

It is important to mainstream gender equality considerations in all training and capacity-building initiatives, regardless of their thematic focus. Stand-alone training on gender equality, including thematic or substantive considerations on gender equality, can help ensure a comprehensive approach to the issue. It is essential to build understanding and knowledge around the root causes of such inequalities. It is often important to combine or complement gender equality capacity-building exercises with training on such topics as cultural barriers/shifts or discrimination and biases. One objective in such training is to concentrate efforts on increasing emotional awareness among staff and leadership on the impact of gender inequalities and existing power imbalances. Sharing personal testimony can be a powerful way to encourage a supportive and empathetic work culture. Creative methods for complex discussions have been noted as helping to facilitate dialogue. They could include airing video recordings of individuals sharing their stories of abuse and discrimination, after obtaining their consent, or interactive learning, for instance using a play with hired actors, to be shared and discussed amongst staff (see Annex 6.B for some suggested content for gender equality training).

Other approaches to capacity development for gender equality

Networks of gender focal points for exchange and learning, within and outside institutions

DAC members have also specifically used networks of gender focal points to promote learning and exchange. Gender focal point networks by definition span teams and departments, often including agencies beyond the development co-operation body. Certain DAC members facilitate such networks with internal communication channels or chat services, or online platforms. At least one member holds an annual conference to bring together all gender focal points – spread across missions and countries. This allows the focal points to exchange learning and good practices directly.

> *More frequent exchange and mutual learning between gender focal point networks and other relevant institutions can also be helpful for DAC members, to allow for a wider range of expertise and perspectives.*

Some progress has been made on cross-institutional networks focusing on specific topics within gender equality, such as ending sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. Multi-stakeholder networks offer an important venue for building knowledge on complex issues that require a multi-stakeholder response.

External events and conferences can also be useful as a way of raising awareness and establishing more extensive and experienced networks for capacity building.

Additional approaches and tools

Technology can help increase options for capacity development. Some DAC members have set up help desks where staff in headquarters and country offices can seek advice on gender equality issues. The help desks can also be used to link staff looking for additional resources and external experts.

Another model some DAC members have used is online knowledge databases (both internal and public-facing). This can include regularly updated guidance and checklists; and notes on gender equality and related topics, or specific contexts. Close partnerships (or even memoranda of understanding) with external actors, including academia, can offer staff expert sources of advice.

Many capacity development exercises conducted by DAC members are focused on building capacity of their own staff. Mechanisms to increase cross-exchange and lesson learning from implementing partners, partner governments and other development partners are also helpful. Institutional mechanisms supportive of gender equality, and development policies and programming, can be strengthened with input from the country-level perspective.

Using existing resources and expertise outside headquarters, including from local partners, can help build a supportive organisational culture in country offices or embassies. A participatory, integrated approach is

enhanced by including capacity building, tools, materials, and training by established and recognised expert local organisations, including women's rights organisations, UN agencies, country offices and national governments, on gender equality and non-discrimination.

One DAC member shared a successful experience with workshops with local partners on the agency's policies, which include requirements for implementing partners. This involved an inclusive approach and early engagement with partners to address risks and problems. Formulating joint standards helped to build a sense of ownership, which was described as helping to sustain a set of shared values, and an openness to nationally tailored approaches to ensure safe, non-discriminatory working places. Educational outreach programmes that include implementing partners can be especially important in ensuring that local populations can express their needs. This makes for better communication, and informs individuals of their rights, as well as the reporting mechanisms and support services available.

Capacity development, jointly with partners, can also strengthen the institutional set-up of a range of partners, including partner governments, but also other stakeholders such as private sector or international organisations (see also Chapter 3). Such exchanges increase capacity development by pulling from a larger range of perspectives and expertise, and can address the power dynamics inherent in such partnerships, levelling the playing field with open exchanges around common challenges.

6.3. Incentives and accountability for gender equality

Translating gender equality policy commitments into actions and results requires not only capabilities but also accountability and incentives relating to both performance – delivering on policy commitments to address gender inequalities in development co-operation – and behaviour at the individual level.

> *Efforts should be made to ensure strong leadership on gender equality among all staff in management positions. Continued capacity building and performance assessment is a long-term effort. This is valid for both DAC members and their implementing partners.*

Even in cases when requirements to mainstream or integrate gender equality considerations are long-standing and mandatory, at least one DAC Member found that the degree to which requirements are implemented varies greatly. In turn, managers consider the use of incentives and accountability measures to encourage staff to address gender equality.

Incentives for gender equality

Incentives for implementing policy commitments to gender equality

Institutional policies, strategies, rules and procedures provide structure to DAC members' practices. However, other factors contribute to the behaviour of staff that influence the implementation of such policies. In the context of improving practices to achieve better gender equality outcomes, it is important to take into account the incentive structures in place, whether they are explicit or implicit, formal or informal.[7]

DAC members take various approaches to putting in place incentives for integrating gender equality into their area of work, such as through:

- specific awards or mission contests
- integration of gender equality objectives in staff reviews or performance targets or
- the explicit use of financial incentives for staff when addressing gender equality.

These different approaches need to be selected and adapted to the institution.

> *DAC members can establish staff incentive structures to address gender inequalities both in development policies and programming and in institutional practices.*

Incentives for equal opportunities in the work place

The existence of certain policies and their fair or equal application can be an incentive for staff to take advantage of opportunities equally. One DAC member cited in the OECD survey (see Annex B) the guarantee of providing equal opportunities for staff to work reduced hours or remotely or at long distance (and encouraging all staff to use this policy), as an example of such a practice. This kind of policy can help address the challenge of ensuring that all staff have equitable ways of working in the workforce.

When deciding which model or format of incentives is the best fit for their institution, DAC members should establish specific objectives for the use of staff incentives. This could include, for example, targeting the promotion of the voice or the rights of vulnerable or minority groups, also linked to gender inequalities.

Incentives can also include the deliberate establishment of human resource or contractual policies that motivate progress towards gender equality within DAC member institutions.

Accountability for implementing policy commitments to gender equality

Accountability can involve multiple dimensions and contextual differences, and institutions define or interpret them in their own ways. While some DAC members have had established gender equality policies and strategies for decades, accountability is not always guaranteed.

In considering how to define accountability and put in place principles to track and manage an accountability framework, it is important to first consider *who* holds responsibility for gender equality policy commitments and how it is possible to hold them accountable. At the management level, this may include checklists as part of programme approvals, and potentially setting financial targets using the DAC gender equality policy marker (Chapters 4). At the operational level, aid quality checks and internal audit assurance reviews of compliance with gender equality acts can be helpful for accountability and are used by some DAC members. DAC members that have included gender equality in their legal frameworks are finding this helpful for accountability purposes (Chapter 1).

One tool – serving both for accountability and as an incentive – that DAC members and other actors have found helpful are performance reviews that integrate promotion of gender equality objectives as important criteria in defining professional success. Performance reviews can provide formal and informal opportunities for discussing and assessing staff contributions to identified gender equality objectives, as well as the identification of improvements that can be made to strengthen these contributions (Carucci, 2020[9]). This includes specific performance monitoring, routine check-ins, and annual evaluations.

These criteria should apply at all levels, from managers to working-level or technical staff. Performance reviews are important not only because they can determine rewards for high-level performance, or promote staff motivation and promotion, but also because they influence further career opportunities and advancement in an organisation. Successful reviews should be based on staff contributing to and ensuring a supportive, gender equal, inclusive and non-discriminatory work culture. Acknowledgement of actively leading and promoting such efforts is especially important for those in management or leadership positions.

> *It is important that accountability principles for gender equality be applied at all levels of an institution. Differences in potential consequences and level of responsibilities should however be taken into account.*

Several DAC members have noted that when everyone in an institution is considered to be accountable for gender mainstreaming, there is also a risk that *nobody* is truly accountable.

Box 6.1. Accountability and incentives for gender equality: German Technical Cooperation

Germany's technical implementing organisation, the *Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (GIZ), has an established overarching Gender Strategy that has been updated multiple times and is complemented by a set of guidelines. The Gender Strategy is also defined in relation to the long-term corporate and human resources strategy, reflecting its experience of the importance of explicitly connecting gender equality to the agency's overall strategic framework. There have been deliberate efforts to make gender equality part of all processes and systems in the organisation – including safeguards and management, and programme conceptualisation and analysis.

Accountability is a central pillar of the Gender Strategy. GIZ has dedicated gender equality advisers, but also identifies the staff member, manager and team specifically responsible for strategic elements of the gender strategy. Certain objectives of the Gender Strategy may be the responsibility of all staff, or specifically all managers, while others are targeted to certain organisational units or individuals. These responsibilities are also transparently available to all staff, set out on an internal platform (the Gender Navigator) in a roadmap where staff can identify gender focal points at corporate and country level, and familiarise themselves with the objectives and responsibilities of the different departments, corporate units and dedicated staff, including the **Gender Ambassador**, **Gender Commissioner**, **Gender Coordination Group** and **Equal Opportunity Commissioner**, for different elements of the Gender Strategy.

Digital instruments help facilitate the implementation of the Gender Strategy and promote accountability among all the staff for implementing the Gender Strategy. The **Gender Navigator** was set up as a platform to provide information on the implementation plans and annual monitoring reports of the departments and corporate units. The **Gender Pathfinder** (a chatbot-based digital tool) specifically supports individual staff. It compiles a list of personal responsibilities (within the objectives of the Gender Strategy and the action points laid out in the guidelines) based on the staff member's specific position and respective responsibilities.

The Gender Pathfinder and Gender Navigator are accessible in four languages. These platforms are complemented by a **Gender Gateway**, which provides easy access to the digital instruments mentioned above and also company-wide knowledge products, networking and exchange platforms, which facilitate **communication between the wider network of gender experts and gender focal points**. All staff can easily identify whom they should contact on different topics, across headquarters and in country offices.

One central accountability mechanism is the requirement that all corporate units and departments are responsible for producing a **report** on how they are implementing their objectives for the Gender Strategy. This is then accumulated and reported to management. These reports are also available on the Gender Navigator and the Gender Gateway, which again reinforces transparency internally. The reports are also an incentive mechanism, given that they are available to all staff in four languages – there is an element of peer pressure, between all the organisational units.

GIZ has also put in place several **incentive mechanisms**. This includes the organisation of an annual **Gender Week** – a week of activities and events around the world. All staff and country offices are called on to organise and promote relevant events, and this information is communicated to all staff publicly on a website and events map. From experience, this has incentivised an increase in the level of relevant events, and raising awareness on specific topics, as teams from around the world are motivated to contribute to a high-profile week of events.

Another important direct incentive is the **Gender Award**, which was established in 2008**.** Staff compete as teams (there is no individual recognition) by submitting contributions to achieve gender equality.

There are three categories of awards. The first prize includes monetary compensation for the team (which is allocated to specific gender equality-related activities), and there is the incentive of being recognised by senior leadership and external well-known experts. Over the years, the award has attracted a larger number of gained contributions and has motivated healthy competition between teams. The collaborative aspect of the competition is considered especially important for promoting gender equality, recognising the importance of collective efforts to achieve gender equality. It also avoids the impression that reaching gender equality can be limited to only individual contributions, or is the responsibility only of certain individuals.

Implementing the *OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life* has brought together lessons around accountability and mainstreaming throughout government and public services, which can also be applied to development institutions. The lessons learned have included using oversight institutions and advisory bodies mandated to monitor gender equality and mainstreaming policies, and to play an important role in accountability. These might include parliaments, audit institutions or independent oversight institutions, which have a unique view of government and can provide neutral, objective evaluations on policy formulation, implementation, evaluation and outcomes. The OECD Recommendation notes certain pitfalls to avoid, including:

- Oversight responsibilities within government institutions rather than independent bodies – thus compromising reliable results.
- Oversight and advisory institutions have vague/weak mandates and authority for monitoring gender equality strategies.
- Oversight and advisory institutions are inadequately staffed and resourced.
- Gender equality strategies' monitoring efforts are conducted without a clear analytical and measurement framework, producing results that are not robust and comparable over time.
- Monitoring efforts are vague or not conducted regularly (OECD, 2018[6]).

Determining what constitutes feminist principles of accountability is an important issue to explore. DAC members may, for instance, pursue "insider-outside" strategies with outside feminist advocates calling for accountability, while inside, feminist advocates push for specific changes that have proven to be effective (Rao and Sandler, 2021[3]).

DAC members need to carefully consider their accountability frameworks for gender equality, including what mechanisms can best support specific objectives.

Linking organisational culture with efforts to support gender equality

Development partners have tended to separate internal organisational culture issues, such as abuse of power and discrimination, from gender equality development policies and programmes. However, recognition is increasing that "walking the talk" is an essential ingredient for organisations committed to gender equality and empowering women and girls. Staff behaviour is in part reflective of institutional structures and organisational processes and culture. Internal organisational culture and values can increase organisational capacity to support gender equality in policies and programmes (OECD, 2019[10]). There are several existing accountability frameworks on which DAC members can draw.[8]

Accountable institutional culture and personal behaviour

DAC members should reflect on the interaction between trust and absence of impunity as critical factors in support of gender equality accountability in institutions. Other issues to take into account include the importance of fair accountability and distribution of responsibilities for all levels of staff; and the link between organisational culture and accountability.

Creating trust in an organisation's culture and in its reporting and accountability systems is of crucial importance. Transparency in terms of how an organisation, and in particular its management, handle misconduct and discrimination in the workplace, has been noted as essential both within organisations and in terms of external communication. The reported chain of consequences in the organisation and ensuring accountability and the action required to address misconduct is thus important to communicate to both staff and partners. However, power imbalances, impunity, undue privileges, hierarchy and inaction by management remain significant factors in many institutions, among both DAC members and other organisations. This can reduce trust in an institution and its policies, procedures and practices.[9]

An institution can reinforce the importance of accountability by showing that an action will lead to a predictable outcome. Clarity in this domain leads to trust in the policy and the tools. It is essential to illustrate concretely to staff and partners that "If I do this, this will happen". This is important both for positive encouragement, and for disciplinary measures such as dismissal and criminal charges for misconduct, or negative consequences for management if they fail to support or act as required. While this can apply to specific misconduct engendered by power imbalances and gender inequalities, this principle can also be extended to any failure to uphold responsibility for mainstreaming gender equality. Staff surveys and focus group discussion can be helpful in addressing organisational culture (Lokot, 2021[11]). It is important to build an internal organisational culture of openness to critique, and to consider gender, age and any other factors that might impact someone's willingness to critique (Peace Direct, 2021[5]).

Indications of lack of gender equality: sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment

One manifestation of a lack of organisational culture supporting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is ongoing SEAH. This is at its core an abuse of power, often fuelled by structural power imbalances, gender inequalities, poverty and various forms of discriminatory values and practices. It is also important to recognise that the intersection between gender, race, and identity have an impact on how sexual abuse takes place in international development (Peace Direct, 2021[5]). The deeply concerning recurrences of incidents of SEAH perpetrated by staff and other actors in the international development and humanitarian sectors has accelerated the urgent need for better accountability and protective measures, and for organisational change supportive of greater gender equality.[10]

The *DAC Recommendation on Ending Sexual Exploitation Abuse and Harassment in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance* (2019) provides a framework and calls for organisational architecture to support gender equality amongst DAC members, by addressing power dynamics and discrimination within organisations that can cause harm.

> *The DAC Recommendation points to the need for a coherent, collaborative approach to achieve a holistic internal and external organisational change.*

Embedding SEAH standards and policies in existing systems is an approach that has proved beneficial for various DAC members. It involves building on existing government policies on, for instance, discrimination, anti-corruption, child protection and feminist foreign policies. The fact that political and internal will exists to support such policies is helpful in advancing new perspectives in an organisation. In developing policies and standards, a broader participatory discussion and process, involving departments or units beyond those focused on gender equality, has been successful in clarifying laws, norms and values for staff. A DAC member shared one cross-departmental example, where the Ministry of Justice and the national police authority engaged in gender equality discussions with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at an early stage of the development of SEAH policies and standards (see Chapter 1).

Box 6.2. DAC Recommendation on Ending Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH)

The DAC Recommendation on *Ending Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance*, adopted by all 30 DAC members in 2019, provides a comprehensive framework to support, guide and incentivise governments and all actors to prevent and end SEAH worldwide. The Recommendation provides key prevention and support measures, including complaints and reporting mechanisms aligned with international standards, and placing the needs and rights of the victim and survivors at the centre of all efforts.

The Recommendation sets out a series of action points to support a gender equal, non-discriminatory and safe work environment and organisational culture. This includes recommendations to:

1. **develop clear SEAH policies and professional conduct standards** that are publicly available and conveyed to staff and senior management throughout key employment cycle moments, such as recruitment and disciplinary processes in preparation for and during missions, in performance management structures, and within leadership values. These policies, standards, procedures and requirements should also be included in all co-operative agreements and funding instruments, for example grants, contracts, memoranda of understanding, alongside remedies for breaches and reporting requirements.
2. **ensure senior-level engagement and leadership commitments** to improve or sustain positive organisational culture and norms on SEAH, including by holding regular senior-level discussions to encourage organisational change through value-based leadership, as well as recognising and communicating the links between sexual and reproductive health and rights, non-discrimination, human rights and gender equality.
3. **conduct training, raise awareness and communicate** on SEAH, and provide adequate ongoing resources to ensure cultural change and promote a mutually respectful work environment. This should include communication of codes of conduct, standards, anti-retaliation policies, requirements and the expected behaviour of management, staff and implementing partners. It should also provide clear guidance on mechanisms for filing complaints and reporting misconduct, accountability measures, and information on the implications of breaching standards. The training and capacity building must be regular and linked to gender equality training for management and staff.

Source: OECD (2019[12]), DAC Recommendation on Ending Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance: Key Pillars of Prevention and Response, https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/OECD-LEGAL-5020.

Checklist for an institution that delivers for gender equality

DAC members can ask the following questions:

On incentives and accountability:

- Is gender equality addressed holistically within the institution, as an internal value issue that goes beyond development policy and programming and relates to, for example, human resource policies?
- What incentives and accountability structures are in place for staff to address gender equalities in policies and programming, as well as internally in the institution?
- Are systems in place to address any internal organisational issues? Are there guidance, tools, capacity development opportunities and resources to implement the *DAC Recommendation on Ending Sexual Exploitation Abuse and Harassment in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance* effectively?

On human resources :

- Are measures in place to establish a gender-balanced workforce at all levels, including at the management level?
- Have deliberate measures been taken to advance inclusion and diversity?
- Are enough specialist staff members in place to develop, oversee implementation and follow-up on gender equality policies and programmes, and to support capacity building and learning opportunities among staff?
- Is gender equality the responsibility of senior management and all staff members, including through accountability and performance systems?
- Do staff have sufficient knowledge and skills to mainstream gender equality effectively across policies and programmes?
- Has the opportunity to appoint high-level “gender champions” been considered, to help raise the visibility of and the focus on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls?

On capacity development :

- Are staff provided gender equality training that helps them build an understanding of the root causes of gender inequalities?
- Are systems in place for staff to exchange and learn from each other about gender equality and other diversity measures, both in specific thematic areas and in relation to programme cycle management?
- Are staff given guidance on addressing gender equality that is relevant for their roles and responsibilities?

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Annex 6.A. Additional resources on an institution that delivers for gender equality

Human resources

For information on institutional approach to staff engagement with gender mainstreaming, the paper "Untangling Gender Mainstreaming: A Theory of Change based on experience and reflection" produced by the Gender and Development Network (GADN) Gender Mainstreaming Working Group, draws on learning from staff responsible for gender mainstreaming in nine international NGOs and explores the concept and practicalities of gender mainstreaming (see https://gadnetwork.org/gadn-resources/2015/3/6/untangling-gender-mainstreaming-a-theory-of-change-based-on-experience-and-reflection.

Capacity development

Designed for course writers, staff and practitioners responsible for course assessment and evaluation, the Commonwealth of Learning's "Learning Resources Gender Evaluation Rubric" is a tool for assessing gender-responsiveness of course development, revision, delivery, assessment and evaluation and for conducting assessments to gauge progress (see: http://oasis.col.org/bitstream/handle/11599/3491/Learning%20Resources%20Gender%20Evaluation%20Rubric.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.

As noted in the Full Report Review of Corporate GE Evals 2015.pdf, "While gender equality and empowerment of women institutional results are undoubtedly important as results in their own right, they can also play an important role in improving effectiveness towards gender equality and empowerment of women development results or even development results more broadly. Yet, there was limited information available to support this assumption or understand the nature or extent of such linkages or how such linkages could be forged or strengthened".

Insider-outsider strategies: The International Center for Research on Women's annual report card on the UN Secretary-General, advocacy to create UN Women, and the work of the Women's Major Group and other networks to secure aspirational targets and indicators in the SDGs are examples of insider-outsider strategies that have yielded promising results.

Accountability and incentives

For an example of an organisational (and system-wide) accountability framework, see the UN system-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/promoting-un-accountability/un-swap-results/2020.

Annex 6.B. Suggestions for content of gender equality training

The content of training for capacity building and knowledge management for gender equality and women's empowerment will vary based on the training's purpose. It is good practice to ensure that all participants in a training have a base-level of knowledge pertaining to the content. In some cases, the content may also be built on the successes and failures that DAC members and practitioners have identified within their system or area of work. To provide practical examples of the content of training, these activities have been drawn from USAID's "The Gender Integration Continuum Training Session User's Guide" (USAID, 2017[13]).

The "Vote With Your Feet" exercise facilitates the understanding of participants' own experience with, and internalised beliefs about gender, and how these impact their views of programmes: http://www.igwg.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/FG_VoteWithYourFeet.pdf.

In the activity "Gender and Related Terms", participants are given the opportunity to learn about specific vocabulary that, for the sake of group learning and dialogue throughout the training, should be understood and accepted. This also allows participants to explore how terms such as "gender" and "empowerment" have different meanings to different people: http://www.igwg.org/training/developing-a-shared-vocabulary.

EngenderHealth's activity "Act Like a Man, Act Like a Woman" encourages participants to consider gender norms and roles with which they may or may not be familiar, as well as the consequences of not following these prescribed norms and roles: https://www.igwg.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/ActLikeAMan.pdf.

The gender equality continuum (Chapter 1) can be used as the frame for gender equality training. In the US Agency for International Development example, training participants are divided into smaller groups reflecting on different programme examples and placing these along the continuum, from "harmful" to "transformative". After the exercise, they are asked:

- Why did your group place it here? What elements/information in the scenario helped you determine where to place it on the continuum?
- Did everyone in your group agree on placement? What elements generated the disagreement? What elements did everyone agree on?
- Was there any information missing or not clear that would have helped you determine where it resides on the continuum? Did any of you extrapolate from what was in the project scenario description? Can you explain any assumptions you made?
- Did any of you think about the "intent" of the project when it was designed, versus the actual outcome? Did this influence where your group decided to place the project? How?
- Do you (larger group) agree with where the project is placed? Why? Why not?
- If groups with the same scenario description did not agree on where it belonged on the continuum, ask the other group with the same project what they think.
- Do you think their argument has merit? For blind, exploitative, and accommodating scenarios: What changes can you make to move this project towards transformative?
- Do any of you think your project description could have resided in more than one place? Why?

Notes

[1] Ten DAC members indicated having fewer than five members of staff dedicated to gender equality at headquarters level. Six DAC members indicated having more than 10 staff, four of which had gender equality teams of more than 25 staff.

[2] Thirteen DAC members noted that they have at least one focal point for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls per embassy or country office. Some members noted that they may not have staff dedicated to gender equality at all offices, but identified specific focal points in certain embassies or country offices. Similar to the range of responsibilities at headquarters, at country-level, some DAC members reported integrating the responsibility for gender programming to staff as one part of their overall portfolio (even if they are not fully dedicated to this issue). The way that this is formalised varies. At least one member reported that no staff was dedicated to gender equality outside headquarters.

[3] Some DAC members indicated having gender equality champion positions that are high-ranking government officials, usually at ambassadorial level, with portfolios dedicated to gender equality. Some DAC members also indicated having gender equality champions at mid-level rank within ministries that oversee foreign affairs, or development co-operation agencies. A smaller number of DAC members identified that their champions are personnel with portfolios that are not fully dedicated to promoting gender equality, but gender equality is a significant component of their role, or high-ranking officials who have affiliations with global movements such as “She Decides” and “HeforShe”.

[4] Thirteen DAC members reported having an organisational network of focal points within staff dealing with gender equality.

[5] Seventeen DAC members indicated that they have institutional capacity building, knowledge management and learning initiatives to address gender equality in place. Most commonly, these took the form of courses, modules and training (15 DAC members), toolkits and learning packages (4), access to technical and expert support (4), internal networks (4), information-sharing platforms (4) and informal organised discussions (1).

[6] Most DAC members noted that the most effective approaches to capacity building, knowledge management and learning on gender equality were in person and regular training and opportunities for peer discussion and exchange.

[7] Twelve DAC members noted the inclusion of the use of incentive systems in some form for leading or promoting work on gender equality within their institutional frameworks.

[8] Existing accountability frameworks include but are not limited to: the United Nations’ System-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the Gender Equality Seal for Public and Private Enterprises supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Labour Organization Participatory Gender Audit, and the EDGE Certification.

[9] Lesson learned from discussions in OECD DAC Reference Group on Ending Sexual Exploitation Abuse and Harassment.

[10] https://www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/

Annex A. Survey of DAC Network on Gender Equality (GENDERNET) members

Following discussions and an agreement at the 17th plenary meeting of the DAC Network on Gender Equality (GENDERNET) held on 2-4 October 2019, the OECD issued a survey of GENDERNET members to inform the work to be taken forward by the Secretariat on members' approaches to gender equality and women's empowerment.

With this aim, the survey sought to provide inputs into an analysis on, and highlight, good and emerging practices for working on gender equality and women's empowerment for future Guidance.

The survey questions addressed the issues raised in this Guidance and provided the foundation for its content. These questions covered the following topics in five sections:

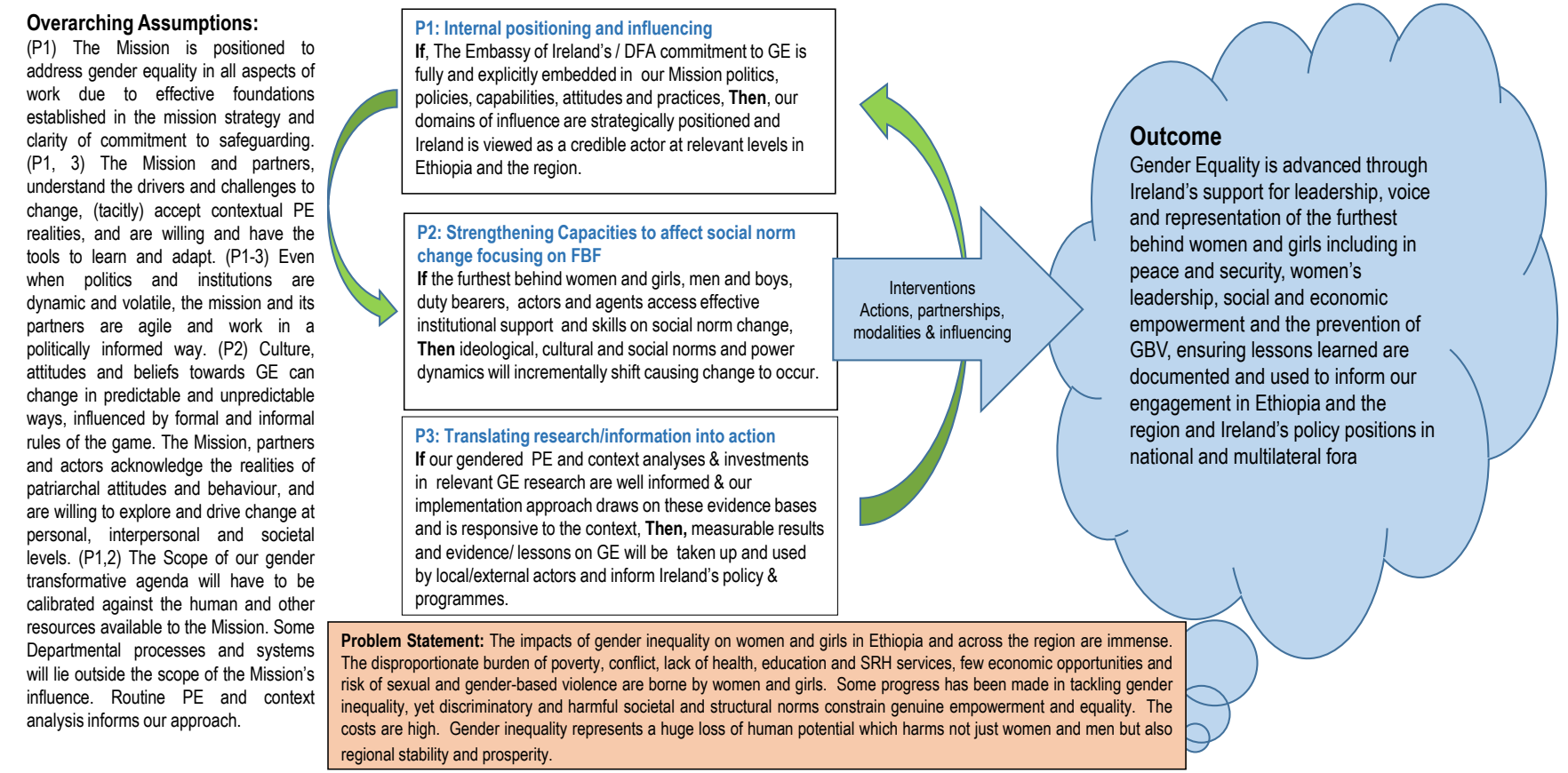
1. Political support and policy frameworks for gender equality and women's empowerment, including thematic priorities and additional linkages;
2. Approaches to programme implementation;
3. Financing for gender equality and women's empowerment;
4. Systems and processes (including monitoring and evaluation) for the effective delivery of gender equality and women's empowerment; and
5. Capacity to deliver: Human resources for gender equality, including knowledge management.

GENDERNET members with more than one institution involved in this work (e.g. a Foreign Ministry and development agency) were encouraged to submit one single questionnaire per country. Respondents were also encouraged to provide any tools they wished to share with other GENDERNET members and set out any additional thoughts or good practices regarding any of the aforementioned topics.

The survey took place between December 2019 and September 2020. Twenty-four (24) out of 30 GENDERNET members responded to the survey: Australia, Austria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, the EU, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Annex B. Example of a theory of change

Figure B.1. Example of Theory of Change



Note: The Irish Embassy in Ethiopia uses this equality theory of change framework to work towards transformative change for gender equality.

Annex C. Examples of a results framework

The Netherlands utilises a collaborative indicator system for results reporting in its development co-operation for gender equality and agenda for the empowerment of women and girls. To support and elevate the Strengthening Civil Society policy framework, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) created a system for results reporting called “basket indicators”. Basket indicators were designed to deliberately capture broad categories of results so that partners can develop and use systems for results reporting that are tailored to their own programmes and efforts yet still contribute to the MFA’s greater evaluation and monitoring framework.

Table C.1. Result Framework: including quantitative basket indicators and qualitative measurement

Impact area 1: All women and girls enjoy the right to a life free of violence	Impact area 2: Women influence decision-making and take leadership positions in public, private and civic sphere and their voices are heard	Impact area 3: Women's economic rights, empowerment and entrepreneurship is strengthened	Impact area 4: Women participate meaningfully and equally in conflict prevention, peace- and state-building and women's and girls' rights are protected in crisis and (post-)conflict situations	
Outcome 1. The enabling environment is strengthened to promote zero tolerance for all forms of violence against women and girls in public and private life	**Outcome 2. The enabling environment is strengthened to promote women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere**	**Outcome 3. The enabling environment is strengthened to promote women's economic rights and empowerment and to encourage female entrepreneurship.**	**Outcome 4. The enabling environment is strengthened to promote women's meaningful and equal participation and leadership in conflict prevention, peace- and state-building and protect women's and girls' rights in crisis and (post-) conflict situations at all levels**	
QUANTITATIVE BASKET INDICATORS				**QUALITATIVE MEASUREMENT / guiding questions**
1.1. # of laws, policies and strategies blocked, adopted or improved to eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls in public and private life (link Strengthening civil society - SCS2)	2.1. # of laws, policies and strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere. (link SCS2)	3.1. # of laws, policies and strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's economic rights, empowerment and entrepreneurship (link SCS2)	4.1. # of laws, policies and strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's meaningful and equal participation and leadership in conflict prevention, peace- and state-building and protect women's and girls' rights in crisis and (post-)conflict situations. (link SCS2)	Explain how, as a result of CSO L&A activities, governments, private sector, multilateral bodies and entities and societal groups change their laws, policies and strategies to support Women's Rights and Gender Equality. From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where L&A activities did not result in the desired change, and/or where other actors (not CSOs) were more important for bringing about change. In answering this question, it helps to consider… • …describing the content and level (local, national, regional, international) of law, policy and strategy

				• …explaining the advocacy process towards changes, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies • …describing the implementation process and extent of progress • …explaining the advocacy process towards implementation, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies
1.2. # of times that CSOs (disaggregated by women-led, youth-led or other and formal/informal) succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on violence against women and girls, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building (link Strengthening civil society - SCS3)	2.2. # of times that CSOs (disaggregated by women-led, youth-led or other and formal/informal) succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building (link SCS3)	3.2. # of times that CSOs (disaggregated by women-led, youth-led or other and formal/informal) succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women's economic rights, empowerment and entrepreneurship, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building (link SCS3)	4.2. # of times that CSOs (disaggregated by women-led, youth-led or other and formal/informal) succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on promote women's meaningful and equal participation and leadership in conflict prevention and peace- and state-building and protecting women's and girls' rights in crisis and (post-)conflict situations, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building (link SCS3)	Explain how CSOs have played a transformative role in decision making processes through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building. From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where CSOs were unable to play a transformative, and/or where other actors (not CSOs) were more important for this. In answering this question, it helps to consider… • …explaining how CSO involvement changes decision making processes and policy discussions of targeted government, private sector and societal actors • …explaining how and what frames introduced by CSOs are taken up by targeted actors, for instance by the media, in policy documents and in official speeches • …explaining how and what CSO issues reach the agenda of targeted government, private sector and societal actors
1.3 # of individuals (disaggregated by type, age and gender) with improved attitudes and practises towards the elimination of all forms of violence, including harmful practices	2.3 # of individuals (disaggregated by type, age and gender) with improved attitudes and practises towards women's voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes	3.3 # individuals (disaggregated by type, age and gender) with improved attitudes and practises on women's economic rights, empowerment and entrepreneurship.	4.3 # of individuals (disaggregated by type, age and gender) with improved attitudes and practises on promoting women's meaningful and equal participation and leadership in conflict prevention, peace- and state-building and protecting women's and girls' rights in crisis and (post-) conflict situations	Explain how, as a result of capacity strengthening and L&A activities targeted individuals, for example (central/ decentral) government staff and leaders, MPs, local leaders, private sector leaders, religious leaders, journalists, opinion makers, influencers, youth leaders, societal group leaders and other drivers of change changed their attitudes, practices and norms to support

				Women's Rights and Gender Equality. From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where capacity strengthening and L&A activities did not result in the desired change, and/or where other actors (not CSOs) were more important for bringing about change.
				In answering this question, it helps to consider…
				• …describing the content of attitude, practise and norm changes
				• …explaining the process towards changes, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies
				• …describing the implementation process and extent of progress
				• …explaining how the improved attitudes and practises of targeted individuals in your program has led to social norms changes at different levels (local, national, regional, international).
Outputs	**Strengthened capacity of women, women's rights organizations, CSO's, government & private sector to enhance women's rights, empowerment and gender equality**			
	QUANTITATIVE BASKET INDICATORS		**QUALITATIVE MEASUREMENT/ guiding questions**	
Output indicators	5.2.1 # of organizations (disaggregated by women-led, youth-led or other and formal/informal) with strengthened capacity to advance women's rights and gender equality (link Strengthening civil society - SCS5)		Explain the capacities and expertise developed for performing political roles and implementing advocacy strategies. From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where CSOs were unable to increase their capacity.	
			In answering this question it helps to consider…	
			• …explaining what different types of capacities different types of CSOs need for performing different political roles and implementing advocacy strategies	
			• …explaining how this is context-specific and tailors to the needs of CSOs and their constituencies	
			• …explaining the process of capacity building, what approach works and what doesn't	
	5.2.2 # of individuals with strengthened capacity (knowledge and skills) to advance women's rights and gender equality (disaggregated by type, age and gender)		Explain how, as a result of capacity strengthening targeted individuals have improved knowledge and skills to advance women's rights and gender equality. From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where capacity strengthening did not result in the desired change.	
			In answering this question it helps to consider…	

		• …explaining the content of the capacity building activities
		• …describing the changes in knowledge in skills
		• …describing the targeted individuals
		• …explaining the process towards changes, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies
		• …describing the implementation process and extent of progress

Source: Women's Rights & Gender Equality (WRGE) Result Framework - including quantitative basket indicators & qualitative measurement (internal document).

Glossary

Digital Gender Gap, or digital divide, is the difference between groups of people, namely between women and men, with and without access to technology and the internet. Women and girls often have less access to the internet and technology that permits access to the internet, a reality that is most prevalent in developing countries. This issue is crucial to the gender equality agenda as the lack of equal access to technology and the internet prohibits women and girls from accessing information and speaking out. The lack of access and involvement of women and girls in this arena can further exacerbate existing inequalities and can negatively impact countries' economic development (Plan International, 2021[1]).

'Do no harm' is a principle that was developed in "response to the growing recognition of the potential negative effects of aid" (Charancle and Lucchi, 2018, p. 4[2]). The application of this principle means to take steps to avoid exposing individuals or groups of people to additional risks through an intervention, and to consider how potential negative effects on communities, economies and the environment, can be mitigated.

Gender refers to "the roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society at a given time considers appropriate for men and women. In addition to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, gender also refers to the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialisation processes. They are context/ time-specific and changeable (…)" (UN Women, OSAGI Gender Mainstreaming: Concepts and definitions, https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsandefinitions.htm).

Not all individuals identify with a binary concept of sex or gender categories of male and female, masculine and feminine. Gender and sex are related to, but different from, gender identity. Gender identity refers to a person's deeply felt, internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond to the person's physiology or designated sex at birth. (WHO, Gender and Health webpage https://www.who.int/health-topics/gender#tab=tab_1).

Gender equality refers to the "equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognising the diversity of different groups of women and men (…)" (UN Women, OSAGI Gender Mainstreaming: Concepts and definitions https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsandefinitions.htm).

Gender mainstreaming is "the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, regulations, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality" (ECOSOC 1997).

The empowerment of women and girls concerns their "gaining power and control over their own lives. It involves awareness-raising, building self-confidence, expansion of choices, increased access to and control over resources and actions to transform the structures and institutions, which reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and inequality. This implies that to be empowered they must not only have equal capabilities (such as education and health) and equal access to resources and opportunities (such as land and employment), but they must also have the agency to use these rights, capabilities, resources and opportunities to make strategic choices and decisions (such as is provided through leadership opportunities and participation in political institutions)." (UN Women Training Center https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/mod/glossary/view.php?id=36&mode=letter&hook=E&sortkey=&sortorder=). In the context of 'gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls', the empowerment of women and girls is critical for, and a means to achieve, gender equality. It is however not sufficient. Rather, addressing the root causes of gender inequalities, and working to change harmful social norms including together with men and boys, is essential to realise sustainable gender equality.

Intersectionality is a theoretical framework that suggests that social identifiers (such as race, ethnicity, faith, socioeconomic status, class, caste, geographic location, age, ability, sexual orientation, religion, migration status and gender) come together, or intersect, at a micro level to result in an individual's lived experience (Coleman, 2019[3]). This experience is considered within the various social, institutional, and structural systems of privilege that reinforce oppression (sexism, ableism, racism) (Bowleg, 2012[4]). Such a framework encourages more comprehensive study and analysis, and allows for a greater understanding of how this information can be utilized to inform policy and programmes and benefit those who are experiencing disproportionate levels of marginalization, discrimination, or barriers.

Survivor-centered is an approach that describes a set of principles, beliefs, and actions where the rights, needs and wishes of a survivor of violence are prioritised when designing and implementing programmes and policies, collecting data, and more. This approach necessitates safety, confidentiality, respect and non-discrimination (GBV AoR Working Group, 2019[5]).

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Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls

GUIDANCE FOR DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are prerequisites to the realisation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This Guidance is a practical handbook for development partners supporting those global ambitions. Designed around the programme cycle and beyond, it provides practical steps for practitioners and examples of good practices, as well as checklists and recommendations on how to drive change.

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