

How do individual donors address gender issues in their policy, programming, and financing at country level?

Donors, both individually and collectively, have made numerous commitments to advance gender equality through their official development assistance (ODA). For instance, the **European Commission (EC)** has acknowledged that gender equality is a fundamental human right and instrumental to achieving the MDGs. Gender equality is considered to be one of the key principles of EC development cooperation, with the EC committed to both mainstreaming gender and supporting specific actions for women's empowerment. Collectively, **OECD** member countries have also made similar commitments and have proposed the **gender equality policy marker** as a way to monitor members' financial support for gender equality interventions. Furthermore, in the recent **Accra Agenda for Action (AAA)**, donors made a commitment to ensure that their policies address issues of gender equality in a more systematic and coherent way. Moreover, they agreed to ensure that development policies and programmes are designed and implemented in ways consistent with their agreed international commitments on gender equality, human rights, disability, and environmental sustainability.

The research conducted under the EC/UNIFEM programme '**Integrating Gender Responsive Budgeting into the Aid Effectiveness Agenda**'

assessed to what extent some of **these gender equality commitments had been put into practice**. In addition to the **EC**, the research covered another major donor in each of the ten countries. The second donor was chosen based on the size of its support to the country, and its use of new aid modalities, such as general budget support (GBS) and sector budget support (SBS). The donors reviewed were **DFID** (Uganda, Ethiopia, India, Nepal, and Rwanda), the **Netherlands** (Tanzania), **Sweden-Sida** (Mozambique), **Spain-AECID** (Morocco and Peru) and **France** (Cameroon).

This brief presents examples of how donors addressed gender equality concerns in their aid management practices and instruments in the select countries. It is important to note that these are not necessarily representative of donor practices beyond the countries covered in the study. The research reviewed the following:

- gender analysis, actions, and indicators in donor country strategies;
- gender equality-related financing, both for government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs);
- gender-sensitive monitoring and performance indicators, as well as



tracking of gender financing and monitoring of gender;

- internal gender-related structures, such as gender focal points (GFPs);
- gender toolkits, guidelines, and training; and
- support to budget reform and national financial management systems that are conducive to gender responsive budgeting (GRB).

DONOR COUNTRY STRATEGIES

Donor country strategy papers outline the core areas of donor support in a given country. They also provide an indicative resource envelope to support the activities. Most country strategies refer to gender equality as a cross-cutting issue that needs to be mainstreamed into all areas of support.

The **EC** generally lists gender among several cross-cutting issues in the country strategy papers (CSPs). The CSPs usually include an analysis of the main gender issues in the country. Some CSPs also address gender issues in their sector-specific sections and interventions. Often, however, there is very limited detail and evidence of the practical interventions to address gender issues, beyond general statements about it being a cross-cutting issue. The EC's 2008-2013 **Ethiopian** CSP is an exception. The paper clearly describes interventions to promote gender equality, also including the underpinning resource commitments. The paper refers to the establishment of a dedicated gender fund to support small projects that promote gender equality in line with Ethiopia's poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) and the National Action Plan on Gender Equality. The paper also states that the delegation plans to hire a gender issues expert to work as a gender focal point on governance issues and to liaise with government and other donors on the gender fund. The EC's CSP for **Tanzania**

is another exception, as it explicitly states that gender should be taken into account in the EC's macro-economic support (GBS) to Tanzania. However, no detail of how this will be done is given.

DFID, on the other hand, seems to give a more detailed analysis of gender issues and specific actions to address these in its country assistance plans (CAP), combining a twin-track approach of gender mainstreaming and targeted interventions for women. In **Nepal**, DFID's Interim CAP (November 2007- April 2009) prioritised peace building and inclusive development, through supporting the implementation of peace agreements, the delivery of health and education services, the inclusion of under-represented groups into political and governance structures, and the improvement of economic opportunities for poor people, including women. The previous CAP focused on increasing women's political participation and their access to services, through targeted interventions for girls and women. In **Rwanda**, DFID's 2003-2006 CAP focused on supporting the Ministry for Gender and the Promotion of Women and its partners to address the high levels of gender inequality and female poverty through policy change and monitoring.

Sweden-Sida's Mozambique strategy goals refer to gender equality on themes of culture, rural development, infrastructure, and education. The strategy emphasizes that gender equality issues must be a major consideration in all development cooperation, given women's vulnerability and their importance in poverty reduction. The strategy stresses that programme target groups should be disaggregated by gender and age during the planning, implementation, and evaluation of programmes and projects. Two of the nine entry points for Sida's gender policy interventions refer to budget or sector support: the importance of gender budgets analysis, especially in medium-

term expenditure framework discussions, and the participation of gender officers in donor co-ordination, is highlighted. Despite this, the research suggests that the agency has not introduced a gender perspective into GBS in Mozambique.

Gender is a key priority in **Spain-AECID's** strategies in **Peru and Morocco**. In **Peru** AECID focuses its 2007–2010 development aid programme on poverty reduction and good governance, through three major programmes: democratic governance, social cohesion, and sustainable economic development. One of AECID's seven strategic objectives in Peru is to increase women's autonomy and capacities. AECID supports programmes that promote women's political representation and strengthen Peru's gender equity policies and mechanisms. For instance, AECID finances the Ministry of Social Development and Women (MIMDES) to implement the Peruvian National Plan to Fight Violence against Women. It also supports the Directorate of Women to monitor the implementation of the Equal Opportunities Plan (PIO), and to establish a Gender Observatory. In **Morocco** gender and development is similarly identified as one of AECID's four priority sectors.

Similarly, gender is one of the **Netherlands's** focal areas of support in **Tanzania**, along with health, local governance, and the private sector.

France is the only donor studied that does not explicitly mention gender issues in its key goals of growth and poverty reduction in its Partnership Framework Document (DCP) in **Cameroon**.

GENDER EQUALITY-RELATED FINANCING

The research shows that donor support to gender-equality interventions is mainly channelled through national women's machineries or NGOs. Some gender equality-related

work is also supported in sector ministries. Donors do not generally ring-fence funding for gender in the sense of setting aside a specified amount to be allocated for gender-related purposes. The **EC in Ethiopia** is an exception, with a dedicated gender fund of USD 10 million to support small projects that promote gender equality in line with Ethiopia's PRSP and the National Action Plan on Gender Equality. However, several of the country reports noted that even where allocations were not directly allocated for gender equality, if funding was primarily targeted to sectors where the policies were gender-sensitive, the funding would promote gender equality. Gender-targeted allocations were generally small compared to the overall size of donor assistance.

Financing for sectoral gender interventions

In the countries reviewed, donors tended to support gender-equality related interventions in sector programmes in the traditional 'soft' sectors, such as education and health. For instance, the **EC** delegation in **India** funds sector programmes that address caste and gender disparities in access to social services. One of these programmes, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, works to reduce gender and social gaps in primary education, for instance by reducing the number of out-of-school children. The National Rural Health Mission addresses the rural population's reproductive health, child health, and primary health care issues. The **EC** in **Cameroon** is an exception to the focus on 'soft' sectors: the delegation supports an initiative that attempts to integrate gender equality issues into the **road construction sector**. The programme aims to increase women's involvement in road programme planning, implementation, and monitoring, their employment in road infrastructure projects, and equal pay between female and male contractors.

DFID in **Nepal** supported gender-related work in the **education and health sectors**.

One of the programmes is the National Education for All (EFA) programme, which includes a girls' scholarship programme, efforts to recruit more female teachers, elimination of user fees and other incentives to encourage girls to complete their education. DFID also financed the National Health Sector programme by providing direct funding and technical assistance for a National Safe Motherhood programme. In **Ethiopia**, DFID supported an assessment exercise to strengthen gender equality in the Ministry of Education's General Education Quality Improvement Programme. In the health sector DFID supported maternal health care, focusing on increasing the number of women health extension workers, improving women's access to contraceptives, water, and sanitation.

Much of the **Netherlands'** gender-related funding to the government in Tanzania is in the health sector. The Netherlands has for instance provided support to the National Fistula Programme (fistula is a common reproductive health condition related to problems during childbirth).

Financing for government gender actors

As stated above, many donors in the review countries provided support to the national women's machinery or the ministry of women.

The **EC** in **Ethiopia** supported the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development by providing US\$5 million to fund 'women's activities', with coordination to be provided by the Ministry of Women's Affairs in 2008/09. In **Tanzania**, the **EC** recently committed EUR 250,000 to the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children (MCDGC). The EC also provided funds to the ministry's national 'Say No to Violence against Women' campaign, and a needs assessment for a special police unit to deal with violence against women.

Similarly, **DFID** in **Rwanda** supported the Ministry for Gender and the Promotion of Women and its partners to mount a policy and monitoring response to the high levels of gender inequality and female poverty during 2003-2006. DFID also supported the National Women's Council. However, the funding for the gender equality components is small as a proportion of total aid: according to researcher calculations, it makes up 2.1% of DFID's overall budgetary allocations.

The **Netherlands** in Tanzania has supported the MCDGC, funding the development of the MCDGC strategic plan in 2005 and 2006, with a total of EUR 99,000.

In **Peru**, **Spain-AECID** supported the Directorate of Women to establish a Gender Observatory and to monitor the implementation of the Equal Opportunities Plan (PIO). AECID also supported the Ministry of Social Development and Women to translate the Plan into native languages, and disseminate information on the implementation of the Plan. AECID also supports the Ministry to implement the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women.

Even though gender equality is not a goal for **French Cooperation** in **Cameroon**, the cooperation has supported the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Family (MIN-PROFF) from 2004 to 2006.

Financing for non-governmental organisations' gender work

In most of the countries, donors supported non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that conducted gender equality-related work. In most cases it is not known what share of the overall NGO funds gender NGOs attracted, but some of the examples suggest that these shares may be small.

The **EC** typically allocates funds for NGOs that work on issues of human rights, democracy, governance, and sexual and

reproductive health. The EC also provides funding to women's NGOs in several countries. For instance, the EC delegation in **Uganda** has several budget lines managed by the EC Headquarters (HQ) that finance projects implemented by non-government actors. One of the budget lines provides funding for gender equality activities. Similarly, **the EC delegation in Tanzania** has in the past funded NGOs, such as the Tanzanian Gender Networking Programme (TGNP), and Women's Empowerment in Zanzibar, under EC HQ budget lines on sexual and reproductive health and poverty-related diseases. **The EC in Peru** provides small grants to NGOs for interventions aimed at strengthening the implementation of the equal opportunities policy. Although **India is** the largest recipient of the EC's NGO cooperation funds in Asia (with more than EUR 125 million supporting 150 projects), the research does not mention any gender-related projects that the cooperation funds support.

In **Nepal**, over a third of **DFID** funds in the Enabling the State Program and the Rights, Democracy and Inclusion Fund, which aims to strengthen rights, democracy, gender equality and inclusion in Nepal, were allocated to women's NGOs. In **Uganda**, DFID supports NGOs through a basket fund, but this does not explicitly provide funds for gender equality activities. In **Ethiopia**, DFID has supported gender equality-related advocacy and service delivery work through NGO partnership programmes. The programmes have in the past provided resources to organisations like the Ethiopia Women's Lawyer Association.

In **Mozambique**, about 15% of **Swedish** aid was allocated to **civil society and private sector organisations**. Four percent of these funds went to gender-focused activities of Fórum Mulher, a national umbrella organization of NGOs working to further women's rights and economic and politi-

cal empowerment. Sida considers gender equality as a criterion when it makes decisions about allocations to NGOs.

The **French cooperation in Cameroon** has funded NGOs that promote women's rights through the Social Development Fund (FSD), which supports community development activities in social, economic and environmental arenas. The sums are small however, constituting around 1% of France's support to NGOs.

The **Netherlands in Tanzania** provided the bulk of their gender-related support to non-state actors as institutional funding to REPOA (Research on Poverty Alleviation, a non-profit organization, which regularly carries out consultancies for the Government). REPOA houses and provides the secretariat for the Gender Macro Policy Working Group (a group established in 1999 to assist the MCDGC to mainstream gender issues into Government policies and strategies). However, only a fraction of the support to REPOA was for gender activities. Non-state actors working on women's health issues have also been supported: in 2006, the Netherlands funded the African Medical Research Fund by more than EUR 760,000, for doctors to carry out operations at local level to end obstetric fistula. Support (EUR 100,000) was also given to Kivulini, a women's rights NGO, which works on domestic violence prevention. In the past the Netherlands has also supported TGNP, a leader on GRB work in Tanzania.

Most of **Spain-AECID's** support for gender equality interventions in **Morocco** goes to Spanish and Moroccan NGOs. Although gender and development is one of the AECID's four priority sectors, none of its aid to Morocco in 2006 was recorded against the women and development priority sector. The agency has recently agreed to support a new USD 8.4 million multi-sectoral programme to address gender-based violence in six regions in Morocco.

Support to budget reform and national financial management systems that are conducive to gender responsive budgeting

Donors, such as DFID, the World Bank, and Germany, are increasingly providing support to budget reform and public finance management (PFM) systems. The research did not review the practices of the World Bank and Germany, but in its analysis of GRB experiences attempted to explore the extent to which support to GRB has been integrated into technical assistance and support provided to budget reform. A number of donors—DFID (in **Uganda and Rwanda**), Netherlands (in **Tanzania**), CIDA (in **Cameroon**), Spain (in **Peru and Morocco**), EC (in **Morocco and Uganda**), and Belgium (through UNIFEM in **Mozambique and Morocco**)—have been providing consistent support to GRB work. In some countries such as Rwanda, Morocco, and Uganda, GRB work has been closely linked to budget reform. However, review findings indicate that in the rest of countries harmonization between support to budget reform and GRB has been minimal. The aims of GRB and budget reform are the same: efficiency, equity, transparency, achievement of results, and accountability. Harmonization can be achieved by integrating GRB capacity development into technical assistance packages related to budget reform. Harmonization on GRB and budget reform tools seems a necessary area of action, following the recommendations of the AAA for supporting capacity for strengthening national systems¹. This alignment is also necessary to effectively implement gender equality commitments that governments and donors and have made.

GENDER-RELATED INDICATORS AND MONITORING AND TRACKING

Gender-sensitive performance indicators

In general, only a few country reviews mentioned the use of specific gender-sensitive

indicators, included in donor country strategy performance assessment frameworks (PAFs), which are used to monitor progress and determine how much funding donors will disburse.

The **EC** tends to include performance indicators from a country's PRSP in its country strategy papers (CSP). Reviews found instances of gender-sensitive sectoral indicators in CSPs. For instance, in **Uganda**, the EC's CSP has gender-sensitive performance indicators for the education sector. In **Tanzania**, although the EC's CSP indicators are not gendered, most of them derive from the MKUKUTA (PRSP), and as some of these are sex-disaggregated or gender-specific, this can be read as implicit inclusion of gender indicators. However, even though gender issues and interventions are discussed in a CSP, these issues do not always make it to the list of indicators. For instance, although the CSP states that macro-economic support should pay attention to gender issues, the indicators for this support do not include any explicit gender issues, except "Key targets for social sectors and macro economics as set in MKUKUTA for 2010 achieved".

Gender-sensitive variable tranche indicators for GBS

Gender issues can be integrated into GBS disbursements through gender-sensitive performance criteria or indicators in PAFs. The EC guidelines on general budget support (EC, 2007) suggest that gender issues could be taken into account in the choice of performance criteria and indicators for the disbursement of tranches. However, country examples suggest that the use of the variable tranche is decreasing. In this fixed/variable tranche mechanism, a part of GBS is paid on attainment of certain indicators. Variable tranches generally make up 35% of programmes.² Fixed tranches are either disbursed in full (if all conditions

are met) or not at all (if one or more conditions are not met). All of a variable tranche is disbursed if the target is attained, half is disbursed if an indicator is not met but there is progress, and if no progress is made, nothing is disbursed.

The fixed tranche indicators are usually related to progress in implementing the national development plan, PFM, and macro-economics. The variable tranche indicators are split into PFM and social sector indicators that are often result indicators. On average, PFM and budget indicators account for 45% of the value of variable tranches, whilst education and health indicators account for around 22% and 25% respectively.³ The EC recommends the use of outcome-level result indicators in GBS variable tranche indicators. Examples of outcome-level result indicators are HIV prevalence amongst 15-24 year old women attending ante-natal clinics, girl/boy ratio in secondary education, and bed net use last night by currently pregnant women. The EC argues that outcome-level result indicators capture a wide range of actions under the control of the government and can be closely linked to measures of poverty reduction.⁴

The **EC** delegation in **Tanzania** has eleven social sector indicators in the variable tranche- six in education and five in health- as well as four to five PFM indicators. The social sector indicators include sex-disaggregated or sex-specific indicators: in education, “Girl/boy ratio in secondary education”; and in health, “bed net use last night current by pregnant women”, and the “HIV prevalence amongst 15-24 year -old women attending antenatal clinics”. In **Mozambique** five indicators related to PFM are linked with 50% of the variable tranche, and the other eight indicators with the remaining 50%; these include four women/girls output indicators for education and health. The **EC delegation in Mozambique** has not included the gender mainstreaming indicator that appears in the

donor-government GBS PAF⁵, as one of its variable tranche indicators, because it is a process rather than a result indicator.

Tracking gender-related financing and monitoring results

In the countries reviewed, donor agencies did not generally track their gender expenditures, or the gender impacts of programmes. A few examples were found where donors did monitor progress on gender-related results. For instance, **DFID in India** tracks and reports on progress on gender issues on a quarterly basis.

The **EC** in **Ethiopia** monitors its projects and programmes with a web-based electronic information management system, the ‘Blue Book’. The system provides information to the public about EC-funded activities, the instruments and government systems used, implementing organizations, beneficiaries, costs of activities, and the results of initiatives. However, the system provides limited gender-related information.

INTERNAL GENDER-RELATED STRUCTURES AND TRAINING

Gender focal points

Most donor delegations in the review countries have staff members assigned as gender focal points (GFPs). However, these GFPs were not necessarily gender experts and typically worked on gender issues on a part-time basis. The **Netherlands in Tanzania** was an exception: their gender officer has no other thematic responsibilities.

The **EC** generally appoints staff members with other primary thematic responsibilities as GFPs. For instance, in **Rwanda**, the EC’s GFP is in charge of social affairs. In **Mozambique**, the EC has a part-time gender focal point, whose main responsibility is handling the EC budget ‘Investing in People’ for CSOs. In **India**, the EC Development Advisor is the gender ‘correspondent’.

DFID similarly tends to combine the role of a GFP with that of a social development adviser/officer. This is the case both in **Uganda** and **Rwanda**.

Sweden-Sida in **Mozambique** has a part-time GFP located in the department of democracy and human rights. Again, this focal point spends a fraction of his time on gender issues; his main responsibility is managing support to CSOs.

Spain-AECID also has a gender focal point in its Peru office.

The lack of systematic consultation and participation of donor GFPs in internal and external discussions about macro-economic support emerged from the research. The case of the GFP in the **EC** delegation in **Mozambique** highlights that whilst there are ad-hoc consultations, there is no systematic process of internal consultation about the integration of a gender dimension into GBS and SBS. Despite this, the GFP participated in the process of drawing up the CSP, and was also consulted about which indicators should be included in the PAF and the EC variable tranche.

Gender guidelines, toolkits, and training

The reviews did not investigate in detail whether donors had developed gender toolkits and guidelines or how these were operationalised. A few of the country reports did, however, mention gender-related instruments and approaches developed by the respective donor head offices. The reports noted that these are not systematically used at country level. The **EC**, for instance, has developed gender equality manuals and toolkits, but these were not generally used in the country delegations.

Generally, donors did not address gender issues in their new aid modality (NAM) guidelines. The **EC** was an exception, having explicitly referred to **gender in its NAM guidelines**. **Sweden-Sida** in **Mozambique** also reported that Sida was drafting a gender policy manual for all aid modalities.

The reviews did not explicitly investigate what kind of gender training donor agencies provided their staff. The Mozambique report was an exception: it reported that all of **Sida's staff** in **Mozambique** had received general background training on gender issues.

Endnotes

¹ Para 15.c of the Accra Agenda for Action states: "Developing countries and donors will jointly assess the quality of country systems in a country-led process using mutually agreed diagnostic tools. Where country systems require further strengthening, developing countries will lead in defining reform programmes and priorities. Donors will support these reforms and provide capacity development assistance."

² European Commission (2005) EC Budget Support: An Innovative Approach to Conditionality.

³ European Commission (2005) EC Budget Support: An Innovative Approach to Conditionality.

⁴ European Commission (2005) EC Budget Support: An Innovative Approach to Conditionality.

⁵ "PES/OE (Economic and Social Plan/ State Budget) and BdPES (PES implementation report) in which the actions, budgets and progress in gender are reflected"

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