

Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls

Guidelines for Implementing the EU Gender Action Plan
in Austria's Development Cooperation (2024-2030)

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List of Abbreviations

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
ADC	Austrian Development Cooperation
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CESCR	Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights
CLIP	Country Level Implementation Plan
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EC	European Commission
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
EU	European Union
GAP III	Gender Action Plan III
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GE	Gender Equality
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
GM	Gender Mainstreaming
GPDEC	Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation
GRB	Gender-Responsive Budgeting
HO	Head Office
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
INTPA	Directorate-General for International Partnerships
LAP	Local Action Plan
LGBTIQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MFA	Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs
MS	Member State
ODA	Official Development Aid
NAP	National Action Plan
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Development, Development Assistance Committee
PSEAH	Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Sexual Harassment
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals

SOGI	Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
SSR	Security Sector Reform
STEM	Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
SWD	EU Joint Staff Working Document
TOC	Theory of Change
UN	United Nations
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	United Nations Populations Fund
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UN WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
VAW	Violence Against Women
WE	Women's Empowerment
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

Introduction

“Gender Equality has a transformative effect that is essential to fully functioning communities, societies, and economies”.

(UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres)

Gender Equality (GE) is both a goal in itself, as well as a prerequisite for long-term democratic, equitable and sustainable global development. The guidelines “Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls”¹ summarise the **key positions** of the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC)² concerning the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in international development cooperation.

According to the underlying Theory of Change³, the following **impact goal** has been defined for the period of 2023-2030:

ADC makes an effective and gender transformative contribution to implementing the Agenda 2030 in pursuance of the goals of the Three-Year Programme on Austrian Development Policy and the EU Gender Action Plan III.

The guidelines serve as a strategic document for the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs’ (MFA) Development Cooperation efforts and the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), offer orientation for other Austrian ODA actors, and inform partner governments and civil society institutions about **ADC’s gender equality approach and modalities of its implementation**.

They consider the findings of the evaluation of the EU’s external action support to gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment (2010-2018)⁴, follow up on the recommendations of the OECD/DAC Peer Review⁵ and have been developed with a view to accomplish three main goals:

1. to ensure the Austrian Development Cooperation’s compliance with international and national gender equality commitments,
2. to implement the commitments and objectives of the EU Gender Action Plan III and the Three-Year Programme on Austrian Development Policy in cooperation

¹ hereafter referred to as “the guidelines”

² Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) refers to

- a) in the very strict sense: MFA and ADA
- b) in the strict sense: the Austrian federal actors as to the Austrian Development Cooperation Act
- c) in the wider sense: all Austrian Actors insofar as they are engaged in actions of development cooperation (eligible for Official Development Cooperation according to OECD/DAC rules)

³ see Annex 3 of these guidelines

⁴ European Commission, Directorate-General for International Partnerships, Evaluation of EU support to gender equality and women’s empowerment in partner countries: final report. Volume 1, Main report, Publications Office of the European Union, 2022, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2841/36067>

⁵ Austria - DAC Peer Review of Development Co-operation, 2020

- with other development actors, including civil society,
3. to enhance efforts in relation to the gender-transformative implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and in particular of Goal 5, “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” ensuring that no-one is left behind.

These guidelines comprise **two parts**:

Part I refers to the international framework and relevant binding gender equality commitments, which guide Austria’s international cooperation including the **strategic approach to gender equality and development** (see 1.3).

Part II includes concrete **directives and standards** intended to guide ADC (incl. ADA head office and ADC coordination offices) as well as ADC’s implementing partners. It also lists **practical tools** for implementing the EU Gender Action Plan III, taking into consideration the **thematic and regional priorities** of ADC.

The implementation of the guidelines ensures that all ADC interventions – including humanitarian aid and cooperation with the private sector – enhance **women’s, girls’ as well as men’s and boys’ opportunities** to fully exercise their human rights in all areas of life.

The **thematic priorities** are promoted **in line** with the defined **priority sectors** of the **ADC’s country and regional strategies**.

The guidelines become applicable on the date of their publication and are valid for the period of 2024 - 2030. They will be updated in 2027 based upon new provisions as adopted in upcoming EU INTPA guidelines and directives as well as revisions of the Three-Year Programme on Austrian Development Policy.

1 Part I: International Framework and Strategic Approach

1.1 International and National Commitments

The guidelines are embedded in the commitment to the internationally agreed Human Rights Standards and Principles in the field of Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment (GEWE), promote a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) to development and contribute to reaching Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5⁶ within the Agenda 2030.

Austria has ratified United Nations (UN) conventions in the field of human rights, and acknowledges all human rights to be universal, interdependent, and indivisible. GEWE are internationally recognised goals derived from the Convention on the Elimination of all Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action (1995), the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (VAW), the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD 1994), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CPRD), the Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights (CESCR), the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (CETS No. 210, Istanbul Convention), and outcome documents of the annual sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), as well as respective EU agreements⁷. Austria is a member of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) for the period from 2021 to 2025 and will continue to strengthen the rights of women and girls through gender mainstreaming and targeted actions in accordance with its long-standing foreign, security and development priorities.

⁶ SDG 5: see <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal5>

⁷ Articles 2, 3 and 21(1) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), Article 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2000/C 364/01), the Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015 (COM(2010) 491 final), the EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development 2010-2015 (SWD, SEC(2010) 265 final), Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council, Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (2015-2019), „Keeping human rights at the heart of the EU agenda“ (JOIN(2015) 16 final), 28.4.2015

These guidelines serve to implement the EU Gender Action Plan III (2021-2027)⁸ and its successors, the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (2015-2030), The OECD/DAC Recommendation on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of All Women and Girls in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance (2024), the United Nations Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325 and its subsequent resolutions⁹), also collectively known as the WPS agenda, the EU Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (WPS 2019-2024), the Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action Compact (2021)¹⁰; the provisions regarding Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI), as well as on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI)¹¹ rights¹², and the EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy.

In humanitarian settings, Austria adheres to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Handbook on Gender in Emergencies, the Guidelines on Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings, the EU Commission Staff Working Document: Gender in Humanitarian Aid SWD (2013) 290, the Report of the Secretary-General for the World Humanitarian Summit: One humanity: shared responsibility (2016), the OECD/DAC Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus (2022), the OECD/DAC Recommendation on Ending Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance (2021), the Austrian Strategy on Humanitarian Assistance (Strategie der Humanitären Hilfe Österreichs, 2023) and compliance with international humanitarian law provisions.

At national level, the commitment to gender equality is enshrined in the Austrian Development Cooperation Act¹³.

Gender Equality and Environmental and Climate Protection are the two cross-cutting issues to be considered at the strategic level and in all interventions.

Within the framework of the Austrian budgeting process and in line with the EU GAP II and III provisions a gender target is defined for development cooperation. According to this target at least 85 percent of ADC interventions financed via the MFA should

⁸ In late 2023, the EU extended the duration of the Gender Action Plan from 2025 until 2027

⁹ See <http://www.peacewomen.org/why-WPS/solutions/resolutions>

¹⁰ <https://wpshcompact.org/>

¹¹ Council of the European Union: Guidelines to promote and protect the enjoyment of all Human Rights by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) persons, Luxem-bourg 2013.

¹² Such as the landmark Resolution of the Human Rights Council in 2011 on Human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity (A/HRC/RES/17/1917/19) and a subsequent Resolution in 2014 (A/HRC/RES/27/32).

¹³ See <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetz-esnummer=20001847>

contribute significantly or principally to gender equality (see Gender Markers 1 or 2/OECD DAC, Annex 2)

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment is one of Austria's key priorities in bilateral and multilateral fora. Gender mainstreaming has become an integral part of all ADC thematic sectors and country strategies, programmes and projects, and is to be systematically integrated in **all aid modalities**. Austria will continue to promote Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB), which is enshrined in the Austrian constitution¹⁴, in international development processes such as the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (2015)¹⁵ and the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC).

1.2 Policy Coherence

MFA and ADA cooperate with the other Austrian federal ministries and other public institutions in the field of Official Development Aid (ODA) for its contribution to SDG 5 and to ensure gender-responsive implementation of **all other SDG Goals of the Agenda 2030**. In line with respective DAC standards, ADC will further promote gender-specific issues as a crucial element of increased policy coherence.

1.3 Strategic Approach to Gender Equality and Development

1. Three-pronged Approach for promoting Gender Equality

In line with the EU GAP III, the guidelines are based on a three-pronged approach to gender equality, which consists of:

- Political and Policy Dialogue,
- Gender Mainstreaming, and
- Targeted Actions aimed at improving Gender Equality and the lives of women and girls in all their diversity.

2. EU Key Areas of Engagement and ADC Priority Areas

Through partnerships and interventions ADC contributes to the **thematic areas of engagement of the EU GAP III**:

- (a) Ensuring freedom from all forms of gender-based violence (GBV) and the protection from sexual exploitation, abuse, and sexual harassment (PSEAH)¹⁶.

¹⁴ Federal Constitutional Act, Article 13, alinea 3, and more precisely, Article 51, alinea 9 (1)

¹⁵ See: financing for development - <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/ffd3/press-release/countries-reach-historic-agreement.html>

¹⁶ ADC: Organisational Policy on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Sexual Harassment (2022).

- (b) Strengthening economic and social rights and the empowerment of women and girls
- (c) Advancing equal participation and leadership of women and girls
- (d) Promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)
- (e) Implementing the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda (UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions)
- (f) Addressing challenges and harnessing the opportunities offered by the green transition and the digital transformation

Considering the Three-Year Programme on Austrian Development Policy in general and gender-specific focus areas in particular, the following **priority areas** have been identified¹⁷:

Lead by example: Increased accountability of all stakeholders in development cooperation (ADC actors including MFA and ADA, partner organisations, international and national CSOs, public and private sector, multilateral institutions, academia) for gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment.

Priority A Inclusive poverty reduction and enhanced economic and social rights of women and girls in all their diversity across all poverty reduction interventions.

Priority B Increased peace and human security for all through consistent engagement in and integration of the Women, Peace & Security agenda (UNSCR 1325 and subsequent resolutions).

Priority C Improved participation and influence on decision-making processes by women and girls in all their diversity, on **environmental** and **climate change** issues, entrepreneurship especially in the **green economy**, and the **digital transformation**.

3. Core Principles: Gender-transformative, Intersectional and Human Rights-Based Approach

In line with the three core principles by which EU interventions should be guided to tackle the root causes of gender inequality, ADC will promote:

- **A gender-transformative approach** to shift gender-power relations, address discriminatory social norms and stereotypes and engage women and men in all their diversity together to become agents of change: Gender roles and relations are learned through socialisation processes and **are not fixed but changeable**. Fostering participatory approaches and working with men and boys for gender equality and on masculinities is instrumental for the **transformation of unequal gender and power relations**.

A gender-transformative approach looks at change across three key dimensions:

¹⁷ A detailed description of these priorities can be found in Part II of these guidelines.

- 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 status¹⁸ (see Chapter 2 for a list of suggested monitoring indicators mapped against these three dimensions).¹⁸
- An **intersectional approach** to address gender inequalities by considering potential simultaneous occurrence of multiple forms of discrimination: Particular aspects of a person's perceived or actual identity based upon ethnicity, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, class, disability, language etc. might overlap and lead to **"multiple discriminations"**, stereotyping and violence. This needs to be analysed and considered for policy design and throughout the project cycle management. ADC recognises the **diversity¹⁹ of women, men and non-binary gender identities** and thus explicitly refrains from perceiving women as a homogenous and vulnerable group per se.
 - An **approach based on human rights (HRBA)**, putting emphasis on the identification of the poor and marginalised, the recognition of the relevant normative national and international human rights framework, the principles of participation and empowerment, equality and non-discrimination, and the progressive realisation of human rights. ADC recognises the importance of asserting women's and girls' human rights, including the promotion of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)²⁰ and the protection from all forms of violence. ADC is committed to ensuring non-discrimination in the exercise of all human rights, regardless of sexual orientation and gender, and to applying a "do no harm" approach.
 - **Equal participation and leadership** of women in political and public life and at all levels of decision-making, in the thematic priorities and beyond, including in the context of institutional transformation and accountability.

¹⁸ OECD (2022): Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in development co-operation. DAC Guidance for Development Partners, <https://www.oecd.org/development/gender-equality-and-the-empowerment-of-women-and-girls-0bddfa8f-en.html>

¹⁹ See Annex 1 Definitions of main terms

²⁰ For further information, see ADA Focus Paper on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, https://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Publikationen/

4. CSO partners for women's and girls' rights and gender equality

ADC engages with and supports **international, national** and local **women's (rights) & gender equality civil society organisations (CSOs)**. The international women's movement, and men engaged in gender equality work, both in the global South and in the North, are important actors and experts in their field, who provide services, raise awareness on human rights challenges and hold governments to account. Partners are encouraged to involve diverse civil society and women's rights organisations in all development policy planning and implementation to counter the shrinking space of civil society actors in many contexts. Their expertise, project implementation and institutional and capacity development need to be adequately funded.

2 Part II – Implementation

The Austrian Development Cooperation primarily operates in the following focus countries and focus regions:

Sub-Saharan Africa (**Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Uganda, Mozambique**), Western Balkans, **Moldova, Armenia, Georgia** and the **Palestinian Territories**.

Country strategies, sectoral and regional programmes, and guidelines for joint operations are developed in close dialogue with ADC partner countries. The main reference documents for the definition of the ADC thematic priorities for gender equality and women's empowerment are the Three-Year Programme on Austrian Development Policy as well as the Austrian Strategy on Humanitarian Assistance (Strategie der Humanitären Hilfe Österreichs, 2023) with the EU Gender Action Plan III serving as an overarching guiding framework. ADC will further build on national and regional strategies and frameworks to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, such as the African Union Agenda 2063 (2013) and the Maputo Protocol (1995).

ADC holds itself and partners accountable to gender equality and women's empowerment as a collective responsibility for all. This transformation requires **gender-responsive leadership**, adequate **institutional capacity** and further measures that are outlined in **chapter 2.3** on Institutional Transformation and Accountability (**Lead by example**). In the context of ADC funded interventions actors are encouraged to consult with women's organisations and organisations that promote gender equality and women's rights.

2.1 Thematic Priorities and Areas of Engagement

ADC will continue its long-standing commitment to gender equality and the advancement of women's and girls' rights by setting the following strategic priorities:

2.1.1 Priority A: Inclusive poverty reduction and enhanced economic and social rights of women and girls in all their diversity by promoting a three-pronged and gender-transformative approach across all ADC interventions²¹

Current projections show that poverty is likely to deepen for women and girls globally. The rate of people living on less than \$1.90 a day is expected to rise again and if this current trend continues, by 2030 more women and girls will live in extreme poverty in

²¹ Derived from Three-Year Programme on Austrian Development Policy Priority A: Poverty Reduction through the Promotion of Inclusive Economic and Social Development

Sub-Saharan Africa than today. For many, poverty impedes access to essential services, such as education and health, leading to further inequalities, and perpetuating existing ones²². Gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls are drivers of sustainable development in all its dimensions, including ending poverty and hunger, promoting prosperity and inclusive growth and building peaceful, just and inclusive societies. Women's equal participation and leadership in political and public life are essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

ADC will continue to promote the following interventions, among others:

- to cover basic needs such as **food, water and energy** security in a gender-responsive/transformational way;
- to ensure equal access to **vocational education, training and higher education**, including enhancing women's and girls' decision-making power over their education and vocational choices; and increasing their access to non-traditional sectors, incl. STEM and jobs in the green and digital transition.
- addressing gender stereotypes and **discriminatory norms and practices in schools** and training institutions and promoting **comprehensive sexuality education** for all youth and adults, including out-of-school youth, as well as its inclusion in school curricula and in the professional training of teaching staff;
- to support the provision of gender- and age-sensitive **sexual and reproductive health services** and advocacy to strengthen sexual and reproductive **rights**, including the right to family planning;
- to prevent **gender-based violence** (GBV), including sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, and sexual harassment (SEAH) and harmful social norms and practices against women, girls and people who do not conform to the gender binary, and to demand that actors take responsibility for violations and implement measures for psychosocial support and justice. Strengthen and protect the main defenders of women's rights, namely women's (rights) organisations, feminist social movements, and activists. Work with specialised actors and international partners such as UNFPA and UN WOMEN;
- to support **women's economic empowerment and opportunities, access to decent work**, and entrepreneurship, and to promote the redistribution of unpaid care work, the establishment of quality care services and social protection schemes; this also includes advocacy and initiatives for better recognition, distribution and remuneration of unpaid **care work**;
- to foster a socially responsible and **accountable private sector** that meets and promotes gender equality and human rights standards, and

²² UNWOMEN and United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division 2022, 2022: Progress on the sustainable Development Goals, The Gender Snapshot 2022, p. 6

- to explore gender-criteria for the selection of **blended finance** interventions and/or “**gender lens investing**” as options for addressing gender equality more deliberately in a wide range of investment areas.

The **digital transformation** is increasingly intersecting with and gaining importance within the above listed fields of action. Digital Technologies have the potential to drive progress and offer new solutions towards achieving the SDGs, but gender inequality in the physical world is replicated in the digital world. There is a large gender gap in women’s and girls’ **digital access** as well as in **meaningful digital use**. Reasons include inequitable access to education and harmful social norms that exist in the “offline” world and impact digital realities and potential benefits for women and girls. Women and girls and people of diverse gender are also at greater risk of digital harm including online harassment and cyberbullying. ADC contributes to **closing the gender digital divide** with a focus on supporting interventions that include measures to improve access to digital technologies, digital literacy and increased online security of women and girls.

There is still a lack of **reliable data** on key aspects of GEWE on a global and country level. ADC therefore aims to support **the production, availability, accessibility and use of quality data and statistics** including on discriminatory social norms, laws and practices as the underlying drivers of gender inequality. Through the support of initiatives of multilateral actors such as UN bodies or the OECD in cooperation with national statistic institutions, ADC will contribute to improving the coordination and availability of gender-specific data at global and partner-country level, and promote policy dialogue among diverse stakeholders including civil society actors and government representatives on this issue.

2.1.2 Priority B: Increased peace and human security for all through consistent engagement in and integration of the Women, Peace and Security agenda / UNSCR 1325 and subsequent resolutions²³

More than twenty years ago, the international community recognised the essentiality of women’s participation for achieving and sustaining peace by adopting the landmark resolution on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325). The scope of the resolution has expanded in the past two decades with subsequent resolutions, also collectively known as the WPS agenda.

In 2021, Austria reinforced its commitment to the WPS agenda by becoming a signatory of the Women, Peace, Security and Humanitarian Action Compact²⁴. The EU adopted

²³ Derived from the Three-Year Programme on Austrian Development Policy Priority B: Increased Peace and Human Security

²⁴ See <https://wpshacomact.org/>

an Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security and has integrated the WPS agenda as one of the thematic areas of engagement into the EU GAP III.

ADC contributes to the operationalisation of **Austria's National Action Plan** on implementing UNSCR 1325 with the MFA as the coordinating body, other ministries, and international and national civil society actors. This implies for ADC to support and increase the provision of programme/project financing related to peace and security initiatives specifically focusing on women's and girls' empowerment and gender equality.

In its commitment to advance the effective implementation of the WPS Agenda, ADC efforts include interventions that

- promote equal participation and leadership of women and girls in policy-making decisions and processes in all areas related to peace and security, such as conflict prevention, conflict resolution, mediation, post-conflict rehabilitation, Rule of Law, Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR), Security Sector Reform (SSR) and peacebuilding, in both formal and informal decision-making and priority setting;
- engage with national and grassroots women's organisations, local public authorities and journalists to enhance the **localisation process of the WPS agenda**, i.e. to formulate and further develop National Action Plans (NAPs), local action plans (LAPs), local legislation and to integrate the contents of WPS resolutions into community development;
- support the increased **protection and safeguarding** of women's and girls' rights, as well as the increase in women's and girls' access to justice at local, national, regional and international levels by putting emphasis on restorative justice, the rights of survivors and victims, and the protection of women human rights defenders;
- provide, in the context of climate and conflict-related humanitarian crises, adequate and appropriate **relief and recovery**, and promote the rights and meet the needs of women and girls. Recognising and strengthening the **role and contribution of women humanitarian responders** is a vital element to achieve this.

As crises and conflicts tend to become more protracted, a thorough and **gender-responsive** consideration of the interlinkages between humanitarian, development and peace sectors is necessary to more effectively meet people's needs, mitigate risks and vulnerabilities and eventually contribute to sustainable peace. To strengthen the coherence between humanitarian, development and peace efforts, the OECD/DAC has adopted the DAC recommendation on the **Humanitarian Development Peace nexus (triple nexus)** in 2019. ADC interventions support the creation of an enabling political, policy and programmatic environment for a gender-responsive implementation of the DAC recommendation on the triple nexus.

Implementing the Women, Peace and Security agenda includes working with men and boys and focuses on SGBV prevention work by using (new) media and working with journalists to change the way of portraying women (and men), thus combating prevailing stereotypes that undermine women's and men's constructive roles securing sustainable peace and development.

ADC programming also considers how gender influences all aspects and types of migration and how migration influences gender roles and gender equality in our partner countries. In migratory situations in our partner countries, we strive for safe and human rights-based assistance to the populations in need. Given the gender-specific nature of migration, the following are central to our work: understanding how gender affects the types of migration undertaken; responding to how gender influences access to social services, economic growth, capacities, risks and vulnerabilities; ensuring diversity and inclusiveness in consultations and participation in activities; and addressing how migration influences gender roles and relations.²⁵ Taking into account gender-specific migration trends means the difference between implementing a project that successfully addresses the specific needs and capacities of all beneficiaries, and one that might fail to do so and perpetuate inequality.

2.1.3 Priority C: Improved participation and influence on decision-making processes by women and girls in all their diversity, on environmental and climate change issues, entrepreneurship in the green and circular economy, and the digital transformation²⁶

Women's **vital role in climate change adaptation and mitigation** efforts as well as in the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity is highlighted in various international conventions and intergovernmental processes including the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the 2030 Agenda.

Currently, gender inequalities, along with other societal inequalities, **intensify the negative impacts of climate change and environmental degradation** and vice versa. Women's greater dependence on and unequal access to natural resources, public services and infrastructure coupled with gender-imbalances in household responsibilities mean that they are **disproportionately affected** by environmental degradation and climate

²⁵ IOM, Gender and Migration: <https://www.iom.int/gender-and-migration>

²⁶ Derived from Three-Year-Programme on Austrian Development Policy Priority C: Preservation of the environment and protection of natural resources

change. Experience further shows that as communities are plunged into recurrent crises, tensions within families and between partners rise and gender-based violence increases.

Mainstreaming gender in climate-centred interventions is fundamental for the realisation of women's rights and to ensure that no one is left behind. Only when women and girls **equally benefit from climate resilient resources and technologies**, there is more time available for education, paid work, or public participation. It is of special importance to support women and girls in all their diversity in **active roles for designing and developing strategic responses to climate change**. An increased **presence of women in decision-making** has shown to increase the adoption of pro-environmental legislation and the implementation of pro-environmental policies. Increased diversity in research, technology development and policy-making is key to finding effective responses to the climate, biodiversity, and pollution crises. Women and girls need **access to information** about adaptation and other options. **Food security** and **health aspects** need to be addressed.

ADC is committed to **link efforts** in **achieving gender equality** and the preservation of the environment, the protection of natural resources and **fighting climate change** and its consequences.

Within its priority areas, ADC will continue to promote gender equality and women's empowerment through interventions in the following fields of action, among others:

- Protecting women's rights by recognising the **gendered impacts of disasters**, ensuring gender sensitive planning and preparedness and addressing "secondary impacts" such as increased levels of gender based violence;
- Strengthening women's and men's **adaptive capacities** and promote **participatory, locally led adaption** that supports communities to survive and thrive in a changing climate;
- Supporting **gender-transformative climate action** by addressing challenges and harnessing the opportunities offered by the **green transformation** and the **digital transformation**; this includes ensuring that women and men equally benefit from education/training and jobs in the green economy and the circular economy;
- Facilitating the **equal participation** of women in all their diversity in **decision making processes** on environment and climate change issues;
- Promoting alternatives to polluting living practices, especially for everyday activities;
- Strengthening the resilience and adaptive capacities to climate-related disasters in a gender-responsive manner;
- Supporting gender-responsive preparedness and anticipatory action.

On a policy level, ADC promotes the integration of gender equality in all strategies and agreements on climate mitigation, adaptation, disaster risk reduction (DRR) and

sustainable management of natural resources and biodiversity at national, regional, and international levels.

2.2 Tools of implementation

The implementation in focus countries and regions will become an integral part of all country and regional strategies and entail the identification of specific GAP III objectives relevant for the respective country or region. As stated in section 1.3.1 above, this will be pursued by a **three-pronged approach**, combining **gender-mainstreaming**, **targeted** gender equality **initiatives** and **political and policy dialogue**.

2.2.1 Political and Policy Dialogue

Political and policy dialogue on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment will help to create a shared understanding of domestic issues, perspectives, and approaches to the effective promotion of GE in our partner countries. Austria's political and policy dialogue in this regard will be particularly guided by the country-specific recommendations issued by the Committee of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (**CEDAW**) and by the **Universal Periodic Review (UPR)** of the Human Rights Council.

These concrete entry points, together with the findings and recommendations of EU country and sector-specific gender analysis²⁷, will be taken into consideration when drafting country strategies, during sector reviews, and in the context of sector and programme-based approaches for cooperation.

ADC will, together with EU Member States, promote the strategic EU engagement **at multilateral, regional and country level** (Team Europe) and jointly **step up implementation of GAP III in each partner country and region**, in close cooperation with partner governments, civil society, the private sector and other key stakeholders. ADC will support CSOs and women's organisations to engage in policy dialogue and consult them on policy issues.

Austria is a member of the OECD/DAC and engages in the development of and is guided by OECD/DAC standards and instruments. Austria's engagement in the **DAC Reference Group on SEAH** will be continued to further promote and engage in exchange and learning on good practice related to the implementation of the **DAC Recommendation on Ending Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Sexual Harassment**. Technical and financial contribution to the joint expert peer learning dialogue with the secretariat and members

²⁷ See: Country Level Implementation Plans (CLIPs) and Gender Country Profiles (GCPs) | Capacity4dev (europa.eu)
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of **GENDERNET** and **ENVIRONET** will guide ADC focus on and implementation of the Climate/Gender Nexus.

Austria further supports **UN WOMEN and civil society actors**, among others, in its policy and advocacy efforts towards a more systematic application of Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) as a tool for transformative financing for GE.

2.2.2 Gender Mainstreaming in Programme Cycle Management (PCM)

Gender mainstreaming and special targeted interventions to promote gender equality are complementary strategies. Special interventions can target either women alone, both women and men in all their diversity, or men alone.

ADC **promotes gender-transformative approaches** whenever possible. **Humanitarian programming** will continuously aim to be **gender-responsive**.

2.2.2.1 Project-Level Minimum Standards of ADA for the consideration of gender equality

ADC has defined minimum standards for the consideration of Gender Equality in programmes and projects in line with the EU GAP III and the OECD/DAC Guidance on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in development co-operation (2021) as follows:

- A **gender analysis** as an integral part of the design of all new programmes and projects is used for evidence-based results-based management; it considers existing EU gender country profiles and/or “Country Level Implementation Plans” (CLIPS). An assessment on risks related to sexual exploitation, abuse, and sexual harassment (SEAH) will be included. A gender-sensitive **description** of the composition of the **target group(s)**;
- **Identified gender inequalities** as part of **the problem analysis**;
- **Gender-responsive results/indicators** are defined, and **sex-disaggregated data** is collected, analysed, used, and monitored throughout the project and programme cycle;
- **Steering measures** are put in place to ensure equal benefits of project/programme results for both men and women;
- **Gender expertise** is available and consulted in programme/project cycle management;
- Relevant **EU Gender Action Plan III indicators (Joint Staff Working Document²⁸)** are adapted to the specific sector/programme context. The

²⁸ See <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020SC0284&-from=EN>
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indicators need to be integrated in the logframe and will measure **the contribution** of a programme to the achievement of the EU GAP III objectives to be reported.

ADA funded programmes and projects including humanitarian assistance need to comply with OECD/DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker (in short Gender Marker) 1 criteria except for justified exemptions²⁹ (see also Annex 2).

2.2.2.2 Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB)

Austria has enshrined Gender-Responsive Budgeting in its constitution. ADC continues to promote GRB through **political** and **policy dialogue**, as well as through support to specific research, programmes, and projects of governments at national and local level, and through support to parliaments, academia, and civil society organisations.

In partner countries, ADC promotes the integration of GRB into public financial management systems. Partner country institutions are encouraged to facilitate a more strategic involvement of and to increase their support to national **“gender machineries”**, such as gender/women’s ministries or gender focal points in the various line ministries.

2.2.3 Special Targeted Actions

Special targeted interventions are essential for reaching gender equality and for complementing gender mainstreaming³⁰. They can target either women alone, both women and men, or men alone, or a non-binary target group and are especially required to achieve gender-transformative change.

In the interest of overcoming discriminatory social and institutional norms and stereotypes, an active **engagement of men** as change agents and “gatekeepers” is also promoted. Their unconditional commitment to the international gender equality and women’s rights agenda will be an important selection criterion for potential partner organisations.

The Gender Continuum³¹ will be used as an analytical tool in programme design and implementation and to support ADC staff and partners - development practitioners and humanitarian actors - to assess the contribution of their intervention to gender equality.

²⁹ See Handbook on the OECD/DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/Handbook-OECD-DAC-Gender-Equality-Policy-Marker.pdf>

³⁰ ECOSOC agreed conclusions 1997/2, cit.op. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/pdf/e65237.pdf>

³¹ Further explanations can be found in Annex 1

2.2.4 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)

The **gender targets** for development cooperation³² guide ADC both in its programming and management. The *Results Matrix of ADC's Support to Gender Equality* is a supporting tool for the planification of the annual work plans and provides measurement criteria for yearly monitoring of ADC's contribution to gender equality.

ADC is committed to secure the share of new programmes and projects that have gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment as a significant (GM1) or principal (GM2) objective **of at least 85% by 2025**, in line with the EU GAP III.³³ In Africa, ADC aims to progressively approach 42,5% of funding targeting gender equality **as the main objective (GM2) by 2030**.

In accordance with the commitments of the Addis Ababa Action Plan on Transformative Financing for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, Austria has adopted the UN target of a minimum of **15% of all peacebuilding funds** to have **gender equality** as a **principal objective**.

With regard to Humanitarian Aid, ADC has pledged to meet a **15% target** of all **humanitarian programming** to be **gender-responsive** in line with the Austrian Commitments for the **Agenda for Humanity**.

Project applications are appraised by ADA programme staff at country or head office level and the intervention is assigned a score of the OECD/DAC Gender Marker. Recommendations will be discussed with the applicants to ensure the compliance with the gender quality criteria.

Monitoring of recommendations

ADC coordination offices and ADA project teams, supported by HQ programme managers and advisors for gender equality and development, regularly follow up on the recommendations deriving from ADC's risk assessment and quality assurance process. This monitoring process facilitates the identification of necessary improvements and can potentially lead to the introduction of steering measures as set out in the ADC Minimum Standards for Gender Equality in programmes and projects.

³² Impact Goal 12.4: <https://wirkungsmonitoring.gv.at/kennzahl-detail/anteil-der-projekte-der-oeza-zur-foerderung-der-gleichstellung-17333-164/>

³³ 1.1.1 Target: 85% of new programmes and projects score Gender Equality Policy Marker 1 or 2 by 2025 https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/swd_2020_284_en_final.pdf

Evaluation with gender indicators in the context of evaluation planning

Evaluations³⁴ of ADC-financed interventions will assess their contribution to progress (or lack thereof) towards gender equality by analysing the data collected through the gender-specific and sex-disaggregated indicators.

CSO partners are encouraged to share best practices and lessons learnt during implementation of ADC (co-) financed programmes and projects with the wider development community in Austria and in partner countries, and generally through evidence-based advocacy.

2.3 Institutional Transformation and Accountability

2.3.1 Priority Area: Lead by example

Increased collective accountability of all stakeholders (ADC representatives from MFA and ADA, partner organisations, international and national CSOs, public and private sector, multilateral institutions, academia) for gender equality and women's & girls' empowerment

Gender-responsive Leadership

The importance of leadership commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is widely recognised and emphasised in both, the EU GAP III and the OECD/DAC Recommendation for Gender Equality.

ADA management staff, including heads of ADC coordination offices, will promote gender equality and women's empowerment at all levels to reinforce an **institutional gender equality culture**.³⁵ This includes promoting gender-balanced leadership at ADA political and senior management levels as also foreseen in the EU Action Plan on WPS. Performance-based incentives for good practice on gender equality and women's empowerment measures in development cooperation will be explored.

ADA will conduct an internal gender and diversity audit, whose findings and recommendations will be translated into clear and tangible outcomes and accompanied by improved leadership, coordination, coherence, evidence and analysis, as well as adequate financial and human resources.

³⁴ Evaluations follow the ADA Guidelines for Programme and Project Evaluations (2020): https://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Evaluierung/Evaluierungs_Leitfaeden/Guidelines_for_Programme_and_Project_Evaluations_ADA_2020.pdf

³⁵ Reference to EU GAP III joint working doc pillar 4

Gender-competent partner organisations

In order to ensure effective gender mainstreaming, ADC partner organisations are required to comply with project-level minimum standards for Gender Equality. ADA also requests its partners to provide information on institutional standards related to the prevention and response to SEAH in development cooperation and humanitarian aid. Organisations will be assessed to ensure compliance with the ADA Organisational Policy on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH).

Humanitarian aid will integrate measures for the prevention of and response to gender-based violence including medical and psychosocial support as necessary and must ensure the equal participation and active voice of women and girls at all stages of the project cycle management.

ADC deliberately promotes good practice and learning on effective gender equality programming. Gender and inclusion capacity development activities are components of ADC interventions. Strategic partnerships focusing primarily on GE will be evaluated to ensure compliance with ADC quality standards and generate learning on implementing gender-transformative approaches.

Institutional Capacity Development and Training

ADC will invest in capacity development to further strengthen the gender and diversity competence of staff, which may include partner institutions and implementing agencies. ADA will provide onboarding introductory gender trainings and advanced gender trainings. Depending on the specific issues of trainings, ADC partners will be involved as co-organisers and/or as the training target group. ADA will further promote relevant capacity development opportunities offered by qualified international and national NGOs and training institutions to increase the outreach within the development community in Austria.

The empowerment of women and girls is most effective if gender is a primary focus of all interventions. ADC will continue to explore, identify and increase the number of specific targeted actions which promote Gender Equality as the primary objective in our focus countries and regions. Good Practice and Learning from these initiatives will increase the expertise on how gender inequalities can be effectively addressed within ADC thematic focus sectors considering the local context, legal framework and regulations and social discriminatory gender norms and practices.

Additional in-depth trainings are offered on a regular basis or distributed via ADA's intranet. This includes PSEAH trainings for ADA staff.

Gender Focal Point Network

ADA has institutionalised a Gender Focal Point Network with at least one representative from each of the following departments: Programmes and Projects International, Evaluation and Statistics, Organisational Risk & Innovation, Development Communications, and one gender focal point from each coordination office. This network ensures that gender specific information is available across ADA and that training and capacity building opportunities are communicated to staff and partners. It is further responsible for the timely gathering of data for reporting on the provisions of the EU GAP III. The network will be strengthened, including by offering knowledge opportunities and tools.

Adequate Resources

In addition to the explicit commitment to gender equality, pursuing the aim of establishing the equality between women and men was also included in the Austrian Constitution as a budgetary principle. Since 2013, gender budgeting must be applied at federal level.

The MFA has defined an impact goal for gender equality and applies the OECD/DAC Gender Marker to plan and monitor spending commitments. 85% of new programmes and projects shall have gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment as a significant (GM1) objective or principal (GM2) objective, which corresponds to the EU GAP III targets and the measurement criteria defined for the priority areas as outlined in the ADC Results Matrix for ADC Support to Gender Equality.

Research on gender and development

ADC supports **research on gender and development**, especially on innovative, gender transformative topics with specific focus on

- the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda
- the gender and climate Nexus,
- the promotion and application of GRB
- the implementation of gender-transformative actions in all ADC thematic priorities
- gender-equitable as well as restrictive masculinities and related social and gender discriminatory institutions

Evaluation

An **evaluation of the ADC gender guidelines** will be conducted for the period 2015 to 2025. Specific attention will be given to lessons learned in selected partner countries, including lessons learned from the cooperation with multilateral organisations and NGOs.

The results of this assessment will inform an update of the guidelines in line with the EU GAP III revision process and will be based on good practices and consider emerging international trends.

2.3.2 Quality Assurance & Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management (EGSIM)

ADC's approach to gender equality is based on a **Theory of Change** (TOC, see Annex 3) and a **Results Matrix** of ADC's Support to Gender Equality, which serves as a tool to implement, monitor and evaluate its gender guidelines and contribution towards the implementation of EU GAP III.

Quality assurance for the implementation of GEWE and integration of gender mainstreaming into all aspects of dialogue and programming is a shared responsibility of the ADA Head of Programmes and the Heads of the coordination offices. Support is provided by the HO Advisors on Gender Equality and Development.

The **Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management (EGSIM)** system is of particular importance. The EGSIM Manual defines the overarching policies, the principles and standards governing ADA's environmental, gender and social impact management, as well as the processes for its application. It further ensures that environmental, gender, and social risks and adverse impacts, including risks related to sexual exploitation, abuse, and sexual harassment, are identified, avoided, minimised, mitigated, and managed.

2.4 Visibility

Gender inclusive language and use of imagery

Visibility of and awareness-raising on gender issues among constituents and the general public is essential. Gender equality will therefore be reflected in ADC's internal and external communication, products and public image.

The type of language used influences the way in which people think and perceive the world around them. Research has proven the discrimination women are exposed to, when only the male form (generic masculine) is used when referring to all sexes. To ensure that women are visible in language is therefore an important step towards gender equality.

ADC is committed to using gender-inclusive language. For documents in the German language, both gender forms should be written out fully. The use of the gender star or any other punctuation marks (such as a colon or an underscore) should be avoided. The principle of gender-inclusive communication is that all genders that are meant are named, including non-binary people. When appropriate, gender-neutral designations may be chosen in the interests of simplification.

When choosing imagery for publications, social media posts, etc., ADC is committed to use inclusive and diverse images that do not reinforce gender stereotypes.

In practice this means:

- **Research, advocacy and public relations materials** should use gender-inclusive and non-binary language and apply a gender equality perspective;
- **Senior leadership** should regularly raise and promote issues regarding gender equality;
- Staff members in charge of communication and advocacy should be trained in **gender-inclusive and non-binary communication** and integrate gender equality into communication strategies;
- Communication strategies need to include specific provisions to **eliminate any bias** and **stereotypes** that support gender discrimination;
- Austrian legislation such as the **Equal Treatment Law**, the application of **gender-responsive budgeting**, or laws aiming at **eliminating violence against women**³⁶ etc. will be promoted strategically.

Reporting

ADC will annually report on the progress made towards the ten main objectives listed in the chapter **“Institutional and strategic objectives and indicators” of EU GAP III**.

Additional reporting on gender-responsive institutional change is done yearly through the annual review of the implementation of the National Action Plan on Implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (the “WPS agenda”) as well as through monitoring surveys on the Implementation of the DAC Recommendation on Ending Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance.

³⁶ Such as the Law on Protection from VAW, Equal Treatment Law, etc.

Annex 1: Definitions of Main Terms

Annex 1 defines several main terms used in the guidelines. Definitions are based on glossaries of the EU and the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), as well as on UN, ILO and other selected institutions:

Gender

Gender refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as 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. Gender determines what is expected, allowed, and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies, there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context. Other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis include class, race, poverty level, ethnic group and age.

Gender Equality

Gender equality implies that the interests, needs, rights and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognising the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centred development.

Gender Mainstreaming

The systematic consideration of the differences between the conditions, situations and needs of women and men in all Community policies and actions. The adoption of Gender Mainstreaming as the main global strategy for promoting Gender Equality was established in 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. Gender Mainstreaming is defined as: *the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes in any area 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*

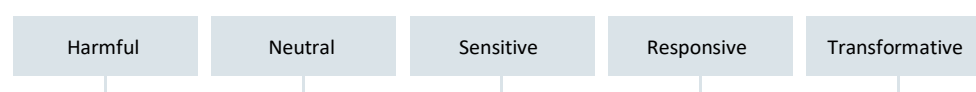
goal is to achieve Gender Equality.³⁷ In short, analysis and subsequent action are key elements of gender mainstreaming.

Gender Analysis

The European Commission defines “gender analysis as the study of differences in conditions, needs, participation rates, access to resources and development, control of assets, decision-making powers, etc. between girls/women and boys/men in their assigned gender roles.”³⁸ It is important to understand these differences to ensure that EU funded actions tackle gender inequalities and discrimination where needed, and that they benefit equally girls, women, boys and men. Gender should not be a barrier to benefitting from international development actions.

Gender Continuum

The continuum has five points: from harmful on the left to transformative on the right:



Gender-Harmful: Gender inequalities are reinforced to achieve desired development outcomes. Uses gender norms, roles and stereotypes that reinforce gender inequalities.

Gender-blind/neutral: Gender is not considered relevant to development outcome. Gender norms, roles and relations are not intentionally affected (neither worsened nor improved).

Gender-Sensitive: ADAPTS Gender norms. Gender is a means to reach set development goals. It ensures equitable allocation aligned with the pre-existing inequitable structures, systems, divisions in society relating to gender. Gender norms, roles and access to resources, are addressed, in so far as needed to reach project goals. A gender-sensitive programme will respond to the different needs and constraints of individuals based on their gender and sexuality. These activities significantly improve women’s (or men’s) access to opportunities, protection, treatment, or care. However, they do little to change larger contextual issues that lie at the root of gender inequality.

Gender-Responsive: CHALLENGES Gender norms. Gender is central to achieving positive development outcomes. Changing gender norms, roles and access to resources are key components of project outcomes. The opportunity is provided to begin

³⁷ ECOSOC, 1997

³⁸ <http://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/concepts-and-definitions>

questioning, experimenting and challenging inequitable gender and age, and other diversity related norms.

Gender-Transformative: CHANGES Gender norms. Gender is central to promoting Gender Equality and achieving positive development outcomes. The intervention intends to change and transform the unequal gender relations - structures, systems, and divisions relating to gender (and age); it promotes shared power, control of resources, decision-making, and support for women's empowerment.

Gender Audit

A participatory gender audit is a tool and a process based on a participatory methodology to promote organisational learning at the individual, work unit and organisational levels on how to practically and effectively mainstream gender. A gender audit is essentially a "social audit" and belongs to the category of "quality audits", which distinguishes it from traditional "financial audits". It considers whether internal practices and related support systems for gender mainstreaming are effective and reinforce each other and whether they are being followed. It establishes a baseline; identifies critical gaps and challenges; and recommends ways of addressing them, suggesting possible improvements and innovations. It also documents good practices towards the achievement of gender equality and enhances the collective capacity of the organisation to examine its activities from a gender perspective and identify strengths and weaknesses in promoting gender equality issues. It monitors and assesses the relative progress made in gender mainstreaming and helps to build organisational ownership for gender equality initiatives and sharpens organisational learning on gender.

Gender-Responsive Budgeting

Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) is the application of Gender Mainstreaming to the budgetary process. It means incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues, taxes and expenditures, in order to promote Gender Equality. GRB examines how budgetary allocations affect the social and economic opportunities of men and women, boys and girls. Reallocations in revenue and expenditure and restructuring of the budgetary process may be necessary in order to promote GE. GRB thus contributes to the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, inclusiveness, and accountability of government budgets, as well as to greater gender equality.

Care Work

Care work may be very broadly defined as the work of looking after the physical, psychological, emotional and developmental needs of one or more other people. It varies

widely in intensity and effort. The provision of unpaid care and domestic work has a profound implication on our understanding of poverty and well-being. Because of their socially ascribed roles, women and girls do the bulk of unpaid care and domestic work, which includes household maintenance activities such as cooking and cleaning as well as person-to-person care activities such as child and elder care or caring for family members with disabilities. Women continue to be mainly responsible for the “care economy” as an extension, or an integral part, of domestic labour. Care work has low status and attracts low pay if performed as employment and none at all when performed as housework. SDG 5 calls under *“Target 5.4. Recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.”* Such work must be reduced and redistributed between households and the State (through provision of services and infrastructure) and between women and men, to counteract women’s time-poverty and poverty. The International Men Engage Alliance focuses on the support of men’s positive involvement in maternal and child health, as fathers or caregivers.

Circular Economy

The circular economy is a model of production and consumption, which involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products as long as possible. In this way, the life cycle of products is extended³⁹. The circular model can be viewed as a facilitator and instrument to accomplish numerous SDGs and must be examined from a gender perspective to discover how it may help deliver more equal conditions. In order to build a sustainable, all-encompassing, and just model to create systemic solutions, the circular economy needs a social, economic, and political framework that is gender equal.⁴⁰

Diversity

Diversity is broadly defined as “the range of values, attitudes, cultural perspectives, beliefs, ethnic background, sexual orientation, skills, knowledge and life experiences of the individuals making up any given group of people” (European Commission, 1998). It also refers to strategies to maintain diversity in its different forms. Nowadays, apart from biological diversity, it is especially important in the fields of economic, cultural, and social diversity. *„Diversity indicates differences and communalities, which shape individuals based on their personal identities, their different and common origins and group membership“*⁴¹. Diversity refers to the differences, such as sex/gender, race/

³⁹ European Parliament (2023)

⁴⁰ Circular Innovation Lag (2022): Towards a Gender-Inclusive Circular Economy

⁴¹ Liegl, Wladasch: Vielfalt und Chancengleichheit im Betrieb, Vienna 2010.

ethnicity, age, physical and mental ability, socio-economic class, language, religion, nationality, education, sexual orientation, family/marital status, HIV status, and so on. These differences may be visible or invisible, and they influence each person's values, beliefs, attitudes, behaviour, and life. The diversity topics, which are relevant in the field of legal compliance are based on the specific national (and in our context - European) Equal Treatment and Anti-Discrimination Laws; and are mainly embedded in labour law regulations.

Engaging Men and Boys for Gender Equality

Stereotypical social norms lock women and men, as well as girls and boys into unequal power relations thus limiting the possibilities of taking control of one's own life, as well as the tolerance of diversity in identity, appearance, and behaviour. Men and boys are also negatively affected by stereotypical ideas on masculinity, which may lead to putting themselves and others at risk. The term "masculinities" refers to patterns of conduct linked to the positions of men in a given set of gender roles and relations. The plural is used because patterns of masculinity vary over time, place and culture. Gender socialisation refers to the social construction of what it means to be and behave like a man, boy, woman, or girl (or other gender identity). Research has shown that many of the harmful gender norms that lead to future gender inequalities are taught to boys and girls through their interactions with their family, friends, and community as children. For example, men are sometimes raised to be tough and emotionally stoic whilst girls are taught to be fragile, and sometimes inferior or subordinate to men and boys. These gender norms can lead to gender inequalities and perpetuate violence against women and children. Hegemonic masculinity refers to a singular dominant idea of what it means to be a man or a boy.

Engaging men and boys through partnerships with innovative partners from academia and NGOs is necessary to implement transformative programmes on cultural and social norms involving men who actively promote gender justice and combat gender-based violence. Supporting men's positive involvement in maternal and child health, as fathers or caregivers, is highly relevant for a more equal distribution of unpaid care work and therefore also for women's economic empowerment. An appropriate and safe space for dialogue on complex issues related to working with men for furthering action on human rights/social justice should ideally be ensured in close cooperation with women's rights organisations.

Green Economy

A green economy results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. It is defined as low carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive. In a green economy, growth in

employment and income are driven by public and private investment into such economic activities, infrastructure and assets that allow reduced carbon emissions and pollution, enhanced energy and resource efficiency, and prevention of the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services⁴². Green Economy impacts will not be sustainable if gender equality is not achieved. To accelerate the goal, gender-sensitive data play a powerful role⁴³.

Human Rights-Based Approach

A human rights-based approach is a conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights. It seeks to analyse inequalities which lie at the heart of development problems and redress discriminatory practices and unjust distributions of power that impede development progress. Mere charity is not enough from a human rights perspective. Under a human rights-based approach, the plans, policies, and processes of development are anchored in a system of rights and corresponding obligations established by international law. This helps to promote the sustainability of development work, empowering people (rights-holders) themselves — especially the most marginalised — to participate in policy formulation and hold accountable those who have a duty to act (duty-bearers).

Non-Binary

Non-Binary is widely used to describe a gender identity that cannot be categorised as masculine or feminine. Non-Binary people experience their gender in all different ways. It could be experienced as a combination of male and female, neither male nor female, or something completely independent of notions of conventional gender identities. Non-Binary is an expansive umbrella term, and many gender identities discussed fall under it.

Political Dialogue /Policy Dialogue

There is no clear cut and standardised definition for “political” or “policy” dialogue. ‘Policy’ and ‘political’ are often used interchangeably; but not all policy dialogue is political, and some gender issues are sensitive and political. For a clearer understanding, in this context “political dialogue” is understood as the dialogue, which is held on the level of diplomats in the countries of cooperation. ‘Political dialogue’ is a long-term process of negotiation, which is effective as it develops within the framework of contacts and collaborative relationships where trust, mutual respect and openness are built up over a long period of time.⁴⁴

⁴² UN Environment Programme

⁴³ UNDP

⁴⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sweden, cit.op. Holvoet 2013

“Policy dialogue” is the more technical dialogue, held by a different level of aid officials (e.g. heads of development cooperation, technical staff, etc.) in the countries of cooperation. ‘Policy dialogue is a means by which development cooperation agencies advance major policy concerns and assess the room of manoeuvre in addressing them. National partners participating in policy dialogue are generally doing the same.’ The goal is to jointly work e.g., on direct general budget support modalities, sector wide approaches, national development strategies, or sector policies. The dialogue can be formal and structured or informal and ad-hoc.

Practical Gender Needs and Strategic Gender Interests

Practical gender needs can be defined as immediate necessities (water, shelter, food, income and health care) of women or men within a specific context. Strategic gender interests, on the other hand refer to the relative status of women and men within society. These interests vary in each context and are related to roles and expectations, as well as to gender divisions of labour, resources and power. Strategic interests may include gaining legal rights, closing wage gaps, protection from domestic violence, increased decision-making, and women’s control over their bodies. The purpose of introducing such distinctions between practical gender needs and strategic gender interests is to alert the programme specialist to the importance of addressing the structural challenges to women’s empowerment. It is not to lock women’s realities and experiences into rigid and pre-set notions of what is a strategic need versus what responds to a practical need. For, in many instances, changes in women’s practical conditions of life influence power relations between men and women within the community. To ensure sustainable benefits, both practical needs and strategic interests must be taken into account in the design of policies, programmes and projects.

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI)

Sexual orientation refers to the inherent or immutable enduring emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to other people. Categories of sexual orientation include attraction to members of one’s own sex (gay men or lesbians), attraction to members of the other sex (heterosexuals) and attraction to members of both sexes (bisexuals). Gender identity can be defined as one’s sense of oneself as male, female, a blend of both, neither or transgender. One’s gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth. When one’s gender identity and biological sex are not congruent, the individual may identify as transsexual or transgender. Transsexuals are people who transition from one sex to another. Transgender refers to people whose identity, expression or behaviour does not conform to what is usually associated with the sex they were born in the place they were born). LGBTI is the abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (persons born with sex characteristics that do not fit typical male or female bodies) persons.

Targeted Action / Affirmative (positive) Action

Affirmative action to counter gender-based discrimination comprises special - mostly temporary – measures to redress the effects of past or continuing discrimination to establish de facto equality of opportunity and treatment between men and women. In a gender context, targeted measures are used to refer to interventions with a specific purpose to correct gender imbalances and to promote equal inclusion of men and women. Such measures are targeted at a particular group and are intended to eliminate and prevent discrimination and to offset disadvantages arising from existing attitudes, behaviour and structures based on stereotypes concerning the division of social roles between men and women. These measures can be integrated into projects, programmes, sectors and country programmes and underpin efforts at mainstreaming gender and diversity in larger interventions promoting rights and gender equality. Affirmative action in favour of women should not be considered as discriminatory against men in a transitional period.

Women's and Girls Empowerment

Empowerment can be understood as: *“The process of gaining access and developing one's capacities with a view to participating actively in shaping one's own life and that of one's community in economic, social and political terms.”* The ADC gender guidelines understand their work based on a holistic approach, which understands women's & girls' empowerment as the combined effect of changes in:

- A woman's own knowledge, skills and capabilities (agency);
- The societal norms, customs, laws, institutional practices and policies that shape her choices in life (structures); and
- The power relationships through which she negotiates her interests (relations).

This comprehensive understanding of empowerment not only requires an increase to women's and girls' individual agency but also to change structural barriers to shift social and cultural norms, policies and key relationships in ways that allow women and men to step into new roles. Experience and evidence from research indicate that progress across all these three dimensions of empowerment is needed to achieve sustainable results. This approach leads Gender Analysis and programming to take practical and strategic gender interests into account.

Annex 2: DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker requirements

The OECD statistically tracks aid in support of gender equality and women's rights using the OECD/DAC gender equality policy marker (Gender Marker in short). As part of the annual reporting of Austria's aid to the OECD/DAC, Austria is required to indicate for each intervention whether it targets gender equality as a policy objective according to a three-point scoring system. Interventions marked as significant (score 1), and principal (score 2) are counted as gender equality focused aid by the DAC.

NOT TARGETED (Score 0)	The project/programme has been screened against the marker but has not been found to target gender equality.
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.

For a detailed explanation on the DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker, see the OECD's handbook⁴⁵:

For easier application ADA has defined some **additional** and concrete criteria that are to be understood in **conjunction with the official DAC definitions**. They are as follows:

Gender Marker 1

- Development interventions: Interventions that are characterised as a gender marker 1 need to have a specific objective/outcome targeting gender equality. This specific objective should be supported by qualitative and quantitative gender indicators.
- Humanitarian assistance: Humanitarian interventions that are characterised as a gender marker 1 should be based on a gender (needs) assessment and include at least one targeted gender-responsive output or main activity.

Gender Marker 2

Interventions that are characterised as a gender marker 2 are designed with gender equality as the main objective of the intervention fundamental in its design and expected results.

⁴⁵ <https://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/dac-gender-equality-marker.html>

Annex 3: Theory of change (TOC)

