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**A new strategy for
gender equality post 2015
Workshop
3 September 2014**

WORKSHOP FOR THE FEMM COMMITTEE



DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR INTERNAL POLICIES
POLICY DEPARTMENT C: CITIZENS' RIGHTS AND
CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

GENDER EQUALITY

**A new strategy for gender equality
post 2015**

Compilation of briefing notes

Workshop
3 September 2014

Abstract

Upon request by the FEMM Committee, the Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs Policy Department will hold a workshop on "A new strategy for gender equality post 2015". The Workshop will provide an analysis and respective recommendations for actions to be taken by the European Commission and other European actors before 2020 in 7 different areas to improve the situation of women and to reach gender equality: Gender Mainstreaming, Gender Budgeting and monitoring; Economic independence and the position of women on the labour market; Maternity leave, paternity leave and parental leave and unpaid care work; Women in political and economic decision-making; Dignity, integrity and violence against women; and Gender aspects of foreign affairs and development cooperation.

**Document requested by the
Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality**

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THE POST-2015 FRAMEWORK FOR GENDER EQUALITY POLICY IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

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Abstract

Upon request by the FEMM Committee, this in-depth analysis aims to inform its Members about the most important strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the field of gender equality policy in foreign affairs and development cooperation for the European Commission until 2020. The analysis identifies the existing legal framework and the actions taken in on-going and previous strategies for equality and provides recommendations on the approach to improve women's position in society for effective equality between men and women after 2015.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The year **2015** will be a milestone for the future of women's rights and gender equality policy in EU external relations as it provides the opportunity to take stock of a number of international and European initiatives (Chapter 1). While **aid flows in support of gender equality and women's empowerment** (Chapter 2) have risen significantly over the past years in the international and EU context, most of this aid went to the education and health sector, while **women's lack of economic and political empowerment** (Chapter 3) remain among the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals agenda. Sustained investments and a renewed international commitment to gender equality are thus crucial.

Among international organisations, the EU stands out in its support for gender equality, both in terms of its commitment to the implementation of the global **women, peace and security agenda** (Chapter 4), as well as in terms of its commitment to **mainstream gender across all areas of EU external policy** (Chapter 5). However among the EU's external policy agencies, competency in gender policy analysis and receptiveness to gender mainstreaming vary across the respective policy areas. While the European Commission's Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation – Europeaid – (5.4) seems to have taken the lead on the matter, the Directorate-General for Trade (5.3) has not given much attention to gender inequalities. Other external policy services including, the Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (5.1), the Directorate-General for Enlargement (5.2) and the European External Action Service (5.5) have recently begun to take important steps towards a systematically gender mainstreamed policy.

A number of **strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats** can be drawn out of this analysis (Chapter 6). First of all the EU has a strong policy framework in place covering most aspects of the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment in external policy, involving regular reporting on progress at a high level. Second, investments have been made to institutionalize expertise and capacity-building. Nevertheless, despite the fact that political commitments and high-level reporting tools create momentum and awareness-raising, effective implementation on the ground remains unclear. In addition, the analysis reveals that policy development and follow-up have been uneven across policy areas, while institution-wide gender expertise remains insufficient, dissipates, and is situated mostly at the lower levels of the hierarchy. Also the external environment forms a threat in the sense that donors operate in a context of economic crisis, marked by insufficient resources and priority overload. Sustained investments in the support of the global gender equality agenda thus remain essential.

The European Parliament should therefore call upon the Commission and the EEAS to develop a strong position on gender equality and women's rights in foreign affairs and development cooperation, so that the EU can take a leadership role in promoting the gender equality agenda globally after 2015. More specifically, the following **recommendations** (Chapter 7) are provided and discussed: building a coherent gender equality policy across all aspects of external relations, broaden and deepen the EU's gender policy in its external relations and development cooperation, sustain and strengthen political leadership and accountability and further invest in institution-wide expertise and capacity-building.

INTRODUCTION

Background

In May 2014, a new Parliament was elected which - in cooperation with the Council - will appoint the new Commission consisting of a President and 27 Commissioners each responsible for a particular area of competence. A particular role is played by the High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) for Foreign Affairs. The main responsibility of the Members of the European Parliament in the appointment process will be to **hear the designated Commissioners** in the respective competent committees about their strategy and action plans for the next 5 years and to approve them.

Furthermore, the year 2015 will be a **historic moment for women's rights and gender equality** as it provides the opportunity to stake stock of a number of international and European initiatives, among which the European Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015, the EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development 2010-2015, the 15th anniversary of the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action, and the need for a new framework building on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Aim

In the **preparation phase for the hearings** of the new Commissioners and the **drafting of new European strategies for equality between men and women**, the analysis as well as the accompanying workshop have the purpose to provide the Members of the FEMM Committee with information about what will be the internal and external challenges and opportunities in the field of gender equality in foreign affairs and development cooperation for the Commission until 2020. To identify them, the existing legal framework and actions taken in on-going and previous strategies for equality are analysed and recommendations provided.

Methodology

The EU's gender equality policy in its foreign affairs and development cooperation will be assessed by means of a **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis** involving the identification of the internal and external factors that are favourable and unfavourable to achieving the policy objectives. The two main components of this strategic planning method are the indicators of the internal situation described by strengths and weaknesses and the indicators of the external environment described by opportunities and threats. The SWOT analysis was developed through a study of relevant strategic and planning documents, legislation and statistics. The desk study was complemented by a series of interviews in the European Commission, the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the EU Delegations and the extensive, in-depth field experience of four case studies conducted in 2011 and 2013 (EU cooperation with Rwanda, Liberia, South Africa and Botswana).

1. THE RELEVANCE OF 2015 FOR THE FUTURE GENDER EQUALITY POLICY IN EU EXTERNAL RELATIONS

KEY FINDINGS

- The year 2015 is a crucial moment for the future of women's rights and gender equality policy in EU external relations as it provides the opportunity to take stock of a number of international and European initiatives.
- The EU should seize this opportunity to strengthen its commitments to the promotion of gender equality.

The year 2015 will be a milestone for women's rights and gender equality in EU external relations as it provides the opportunity to stake stock of a number of international and European initiatives.

First, **the European Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015** representing the European Commission's work program to promote gender equality into all its policies comes to an end in 2015. The European Commission will draft a new strategy for the next five years to which the FEMM committee will provide extensive input. This event is an important moment for the FEMM committee to scrutinize the work of the Commission in the strategy's five designated areas, including 'gender equality in external actions' and to urge the EU to strengthen the gender perspective in all its policies.

Second, **the EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development 2010-2015**, also known as the Gender Action Plan (GAP) will also come to an end. In May 2014 at the meeting of the EU Foreign Affairs Council, the Council has called upon the EU and its Member States to develop an ambitious and robust successor, building on the progress of the current GAP, applying lessons learned and taking into account the post-2015 agenda. The Commission and the EEAS in collaboration with the Member States have therefore set up a Taskforce to define objectives, indicators and the reporting format for the GAP's successor. The FEMM committee will soon be able to scrutinize the new GAP, covering the period from 2016 to 2020, and analyse whether it focuses on results and addresses remaining shortfalls, while taking into account the aid effectiveness agenda as well as international conventions and agreements such as CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action.

Third, also for the global community the year 2015 is a critical time to take stock as it marks several key anniversaries, including the adoption of **the Beijing Platform for Action (1995), the UNSCR 1325 (2000) and the Millennium Development Goals (2000)**. Most importantly the United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals Agenda will come to an end. To prepare a new global framework, the UN System, member states and civil society organizations have begun to discuss priorities for a post-2015 development agenda. The EU, being a major supporter of the MDG-agenda and having made impressive efforts to strive towards achieving its goals, has taken a proactive role in outlining its position on the post-2015 agenda. In a Communication entitled 'A Decent Life for All - Ending Poverty and Giving the World a Sustainable Future', published in February 2013, the Commission has highlighted that the post-2015 overarching framework should put

'particular emphasis on moving towards a rights-based approach to development, on reducing inequalities, as well as on the promotion and protection of women's and girls' rights and gender equality'. As 2015 also marks the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the UN Platform for Action, this milestone is a crucial opportunity to influence the post-2015 agenda and link it directly to the goals of the Platform for Action, as the lack of convergence between the MDGs and the Beijing Platform for Action are among the main criticisms of the previous framework. Building coherence between both agenda's means that gender equality and women's rights must be reaffirmed as essential ends in themselves and means for achieving peace and security, human rights, and sustainable development. Explicitly connecting the post-2015 agenda with the UN Platform for Action will strengthen the case for a transformative goal on gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment, and call for gender mainstreaming across all other goals and targets (UN Women 2014).

These interconnected processes provide a once in-a-generation opportunity to position gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment at the heart of the EU's global agenda. The EU should capitalize on its unique historical role as a gender equality promoter and seize this opportunity to strengthen its commitments in this area.

2. WOMEN AS RECEIVERS OF SUPPORT FROM THE EU AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMES

KEY FINDINGS

- Aid flows in support of gender equality and women's empowerment have risen significantly over the past years in the international and EU context.
- Most of this aid went to the education and health sector.
- There are no global data on the integration of gender equality indicators and objectives in budget support.

According to a 2014 report of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)' Development Assistance Committee members, **aid flows in support of gender equality and women's empowerment** have tripled since 2002 as measured by the OECD gender equality policy marker² or G-marker. Annual aid volumes have risen from 8 USD billion in 2002 to 24 USD billion in 2012 on average (currently representing around 30 per cent of total bilateral aid, budget support excluded). In line with the promotion of the global MDG-framework, most of this aid went to the **education and health** sector. In contrast, donor investments in women's economic empowerment, peace and security, women's participation and leadership have remained low and unchanged (OECD 2014a). Furthermore, despite major investments in reproductive health (in line with MDG5 to improve maternal health), these financial commitments have been insufficient to arrest the unacceptably high rates of maternal mortality in the world. Maternal deaths thus remain among the unfinished business of the MDG-agenda and a

² The gender equality policy marker is a policy indicator developed by the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD used to track resource allocations of donors to promoting gender equality. There are 3 G-Marker Scores: G-0: When gender equality is not targeted, G-1: When gender equality is a significant objective, G-2: When gender equality is a principle objective.

renewed commitment to investing in women's sexual and reproductive health and rights will be necessary to accelerate progress in this area beyond 2015 (OECD 2014a).

As regards **EU aid flows**, in 2012, 28 per cent of new EU proposals marked gender as principle or significant objective (general budget support excluded) as measured by the OECD gender equality policy marker. Although this figure represents an improvement compared to 20 per cent in 2011 and 14 per cent in 2010, this score remains very low according to the Commission's objective of 75 per cent of projects scoring at least G-1 according to the OECD G-marker (European Commission 2010a). Also, the percentage of EU aid in which gender is marked as a principle objective (score G-2) has been consistently low over the past decades, never accounting for more than 1.4 per cent (186 USD million) of screened aid flows (OECD 2014b).

Still, all in all, looking at the global reporting on the **OECD gender equality policy marker** it appears that funding for gender equality is quite impressive as aid amounts for gender equality have risen significantly over the past years in the international and EU context. However, the extent to which a donor activity has actually contributed to achieving gender equality objectives is not always clear as the G-marker measures how gender equality objectives are included in the programming of aid (the identification phase of projects and programmes) and does not measure actual outcomes for gender equality afterwards. Also, it is important to keep in mind that the G-marker is a relatively subjective tool as it depends on the judgment of the staff member filling in the assessment. Due to a lack of expertise or commitment there is the risk of staff merely 'ticking the box' and in the past misrepresentations have in fact occurred.³ In addition it has to be noted that data on the integration of **gender equality indicators and objectives in budget support** do not exist, which represents a significant percentage of aid that is of the gender equality policy marker's radar.

3. ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

KEY FINDINGS

- Women's lack of economic and political empowerment remains among the unfinished business of the MDG agenda.
- The EU should develop and use a detailed set of indicators that measure women's control over, and access to, assets and decent work, as well as their political participation at international, national and community levels.

Despite the MDG's uneven progress, investments in education and health the last 15 years have had its effect on the lives of women and girls in developing countries. Due to better **access to health services**, female life expectancy at birth has increased dramatically in the developing world. Furthermore, sustained investments in closing gender gaps in education have had effect at primary, secondary and tertiary schooling levels. Even in regions with the largest remaining gender gaps, such as South Asia and West Africa, there have been substantial gains. Fostered by the rise in **education** levels, expanding economic opportunities, as well as an unprecedented reduction in fertility, women's participation in

³ See <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/public-gender/document/gender-equality-policy-marker>

paid labour has risen in most of the developing world. Nevertheless, despite their massive entrance to the **labour market**, women's increased participation has not translated into equal earnings or equal employment opportunities. In agriculture, women operate smaller plots and less remunerative crops and as entrepreneurs they tend to be concentrated in less profitable sectors and manage smaller firms (World Bank 2011). These **economic inequalities** do not disappear with economic development and growth as they can be attributed to women's overrepresentation in low-paid and gender-stereotyped jobs such as domestic and care work, a lack of integration into the formal economy, the unequal burden of unpaid care work and insufficient measures to reconcile paid work and care responsibilities, unequal access to full and productive employment and decent work, the persistence of discriminatory attitudes, norms, stereotypes and legal frameworks, insufficient social protection and insurance coverage for women and unequal access to resources and assets (UN 2014). This uneven playing field imposes a significant cost to women's welfare and opportunities.

Furthermore, women continue to have **less input than men in decision-making** globally: only one-fifth of the world's parliamentarians are woman, only 13 out of 193 heads of government are female and women hold only 17 per cent of the world's ministerial positions. At this pace, women will not be equally represented in parliament until 2065, and will not make up half of the world's leaders until 2134 (VSO 2013). Furthermore, women are largely absent from senior positions in judicial systems, the executive branches of governments and the civil service (Kabeer and Woodroffe 2014). The lack of power that women have to influence decision-making can be considered as one of 'the deepest and most persistent fault lines of poverty and inequality in the world today' (VSO 2013: 3).

However, in the framework of the MDGs, donors have generally focussed on women's access to education and health. Although these aspects are crucial for transformation towards a gender-equal society, on their own they are limited in scope. It is crucial for the **EU's post-2015 agenda** to look beyond equal access to education and health and tackle women's lack of economic empowerment, autonomy and independence as well as the unequal participation and representation of women at all levels of decision-making, including in national parliaments and other governance structures.

In the margins of the UN General Assembly in September, the EU, together with twelve co-founding members, launched the **Equal Futures Partnership**, which will promote women's political participation and economic empowerment. As a founding member, the **EU has committed to practical initiatives for women's political participation and economic empowerment**. In this framework, the EU should develop and incorporate a detailed set of indicators that measure women's control over, and access to, assets and decent work, as well as their effective participation and influence at international, national and community levels (Kabeer and Woodroffe 2014).

4. WOMEN IN EU PEACE KEEPING AND PEACEFUL CONFLICT RESOLUTION

KEY FINDINGS

- The EU has committed to the full implementation of the global women, peace and security agenda and reports on progress regularly.
- While high-level reporting is indispensable to raise awareness and build momentum, it should move beyond being a bureaucratic exercise.

The EU is committed to contribute to the full implementation of the women, peace and security agenda set in the UNSCR 1325 and 1820 and has a specific policy in place. In December 2008, the Council adopted the '**EU Comprehensive Approach on UNSCR 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security**' (Comprehensive Approach) that covers the whole spectrum of EU's external action instruments throughout the conflict continuum, from conflict prevention to crisis management, peace-building, reconstruction and development cooperation. In parallel, the Council adopted a revised operational paper on the implementation of these resolutions specifically within the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). This document, together with the Comprehensive Approach, jointly form the two main pillars of the EU's women, peace and security policy.

In the framework of the Comprehensive Approach, an informal **EU Women, Peace and Security Task Force** on UNSCR 1325 was created to increase inter-institutional coordination and promote a coherent approach to gender-related issues. The Task Force is composed of staff working on gender equality and security issues across the relevant Council Secretariat, the EEAS and the Commission services, and is open to EU Member State participation. It meets approximately two times a year.

In July 2010, the Council adopted a **set of 17 indicators to follow up progress** regarding the protection and empowerment of women in conflict settings and post-conflict situations, as stipulated by the Comprehensive Approach. A report should be compiled at least every two years by the services in charge, with the support of the informal EU Women, Peace and Security Task Force, and presented to the Council's Political and Security Committee. The first report was adopted in May 2011 and a second one in January 2014. The 2014 report on the EU-indicators for the Comprehensive Approach showed some positive developments, indicating for example that 9 out of 14 CSDP Missions and Operations have appointed a gender advisor. Furthermore, the EU and its Member States are active on the issue of women, peace and security in more than 70 countries. Up to 25 EU Delegations indicated that they support a total of 467 projects related to women, peace and security (predominantly human rights and civil society projects). The report also contains several concrete examples of fruitful cooperation with international and regional organisations, including the UN, the NATO, the African Union and the ASEAN. Nevertheless the report also shows that the inclusion of UNSCR 1325 issues in human rights dialogues remains insufficient and admits that the 17 indicators are often vaguely formulated and do not allow for comparison between the first and second implementation reports. A precise picture of progress is thus not always possible.

Also the **EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development 2010-2015**, contains a specific objective on 'fully implementing UNSCR 1325 and 1820, 1888 and 1889' as well as two corresponding actions and indicators. A report on the implementation of these actions and indicators has been compiled every year since 2011. The 2013 Report indicated that only 3 EU Delegations had developed a strategy to implement the Comprehensive Approach and did not report specifically on the amount of annual support for the UNSCR 1325 and 1820 (although indicator 9.2.1 indicates that the level of funding should be annually monitored and reported upon). The goal of an annual increase in EU support for the UNSCR 1325 and 1820 could thus not be evaluated. While the reporting on the Comprehensive Approach and the women, peace and security aspects of the EU Plan of Action are indispensable to raise awareness and build momentum at a high level, it is equally crucial that the reports move beyond being merely bureaucratic exercises. In the post-2015 framework indicators should become more result-oriented and comparable over time.

5. GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE EU'S EXTERNAL POLICY

KEY FINDINGS

- The EU stands out internationally in its commitment to mainstream gender across all areas of its policies.
- Competency in gender analysis and receptiveness to gender mainstreaming vary across the respective external policy area.
- While the Commission's DG for Development and Cooperation – Europeaid - has taken the lead on the promotion of gender equality, the DG for Trade has not given much attention to the matter. Other EU external policy services, including the DG for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection, the DG for Enlargement and the European External Action Service, have recently begun to take important steps towards a systematically gender mainstreamed policy.

Among international organizations, the **EU stands out in its support for the goal of gender equality**. The Lisbon Reform Treaty considers 'equality between women and men' among its values and objectives and, since 1997, the EU has committed to mainstreaming gender considerations into all aspects of its operations and policies, stating that 'in all the activities [...] the Community shall aim to eliminate inequalities and to promote equality between men and women' (EU 1997 Article 2). Accordingly, the EU has adopted a range of high-level policy documents confirming that gender has to be mainstreamed in all areas of external policy and into all programmes and projects at regional and country levels.

The **Brussels-based Headquarters**, including the EEAS, the European Commission's Directorate-General Development and Cooperation-EuropeAid (DG DEVCO), the Directorate-General for Trade, the Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection and the Directorate-General for Enlargement are responsible for outlining the EU's external policy and its implementation guidelines. Approximately **140 EU Delegations** and offices around the world are responsible for the implementation of external assistance, serving as the main entry points for integrating gender equality norms

within the practice of European external aid. Among the EU's external policy agencies, competency in gender policy analysis and receptiveness to gender mainstreaming vary across the respective policy areas. While DG DEVCO seems to have taken the lead on the matter, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Trade, has not given much attention to gender inequalities. Other external policy agencies have more recently begun to take important steps towards a systematically gender mainstreamed policy.

5.1 Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection

Over the past years, the Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO) has taken major steps towards the design and systematic implementation of a gender mainstreaming strategy. In line with the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid and following recommendations from a 2009 Gender Review, DG ECHO has outlined its approach to gender and gender-based violence in the 2013 Staff Working Document '**Gender in Humanitarian Aid: Different Needs, Adapted Assistance**'. With this high-level policy document, DG ECHO aims to improve the quality of humanitarian assistance through gender integration, participation and protection, following a three-track approach including mainstreaming, targeted actions and capacity-building.

In order to support policy implementation and coherence, a **gender-age marker** was designed to foster and track gender- and age-sensitive programming which will be applied to all funded actions as from 2014. DG ECHO uses the marker's results to monitor its partner's and own performance in integrating gender and age (examining for example if the share of funded actions with a high gender-age marker score is increasing, or if the integration of gender and age improves over the implementation period of projects). The use of the marker is seen by DG ECHO as a joint learning exercise and an organizational change process that takes time and therefore DG ECHO does not link its funding decisions to the gender-age marker in the beginning. When data on the performance on gender sensitivity are systematically being measured and baseline data are available the gender-age marker might become a conditionality for funding.

It is important to note that these crucial policy developments at DG ECHO have become possible due to the indispensable **support of senior staff as well the Commissioner**. In its 2013 Staff Working Paper, DG ECHO has committed to ensure the implementation of this policy approach through an adequate resource allocation, leadership commitment and monitoring of results. Additionally, with a view to reinforcing institutional knowledge and capacity, DG ECHO will make appropriate guidance and training opportunities available.

Key challenges that have been identified to the strategy are a **limited institutional capacity and lack of accountability**. Interviews have also shown that there is resistance among staff members who perceive gender as another cross-cutting issue that should be mainstreamed as staff already faces **competing priorities**. In this respect, efforts to build staff capacity and commitment, combined with a concrete action plan, clear assignments and strong leadership are critical for delivering results. In the post-2015 period it is crucial that these high-level commitments are systematically pursued and followed up. Up to now, DG ECHO has not yet outlined specific targets or performance indicators to meet after 2015. A detailed internal work plan including targets, timelines and performance indicators could be an important asset in this respect and could feed into the new European Strategy for Equality between Men and Women 2016-2020.

As regards **staff capacity**, DG ECHO has appointed a Policy Officer for Gender and Children (since 2010) and recently (2014) recruited a Gender Advisor to support the missions. Furthermore, DG ECHO has organised two-day Gender-Age Marker Trainings in Brussels (2 in 2014) as well as in Dakar (2014) and Nairobi (2013) to increase the capacity of staff and partners to act in accordance with the new gender policy and apply the gender-age marker. These trainings are voluntary. General trainings on the integration of gender in humanitarian aid are not available to DG ECHO's staff.

5.2 Directorate-General for Enlargement

Enlargement policy contributes to gender equality in the world in the sense that it leads candidate and potential candidate countries to align themselves with the EU's *acquis communautaire* - including European standards on gender equality. In accordance with this, the **Strategy for Equality between Men and Women** has among its key actions the commitment to 'monitor and support adherence to the Copenhagen criteria for accession to the EU in the field of equal treatment between women and men, and assist Western Balkans countries and Turkey with the transposition and enforcement of legislation' (European Commission 2010b). In the 2013 Mid-term review of the Strategy, it was reported that yearly Progress Reports on (potential) candidate countries cover gender inequality under the political criteria as well as under chapters 19 'social policy and employment' and 23 'judiciary and fundamental rights'. Also it was mentioned that some opinions (Albania and Montenegro), monitoring tables (Croatia) and screening meetings (Iceland) have covered gender equality issues.

Each year, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Enlargement (DG ENLARG) adopts an '**Enlargement Package**' – which is a set of documents explaining its overall policy and reporting on progress achieved in each country. These country-specific progress reports indeed systematically contain an assessment of the countries' alignment with and implementation of the legal *acquis* in the field of gender equality. Importantly, the Enlargement Package also includes the annual Enlargement Strategy Paper which sets out the way forward and takes stock of the last twelve months. In the latest annual Enlargement Package which was adopted in October 2013, DG Enlargement admits that 'more needs to be done to improve the position of women and ensure gender equality' in EU enlargement policy (European Commission 2013: 9). Although good gender analyses are made under chapters 19 and 23, the gender dimension could be more systematically mainstreamed across the other chapters of the *acquis*. Also it is important for DG ENLARG to go beyond analysing. One of the **challenges** DG ENLARG encounters in this respect is the translation of its analyses on gender inequality in the Progress Reports to **meaningful interventions** during negotiations, programs, training and support to candidate countries. More systematic support of partner countries and the systematic inclusion in policy dialogue are necessary. At present, however, there is no specific gender training available to the staff of DG Enlargement, which can make it difficult for officials responsible for negotiations and support in sub-committees and technical and screening meetings to include a gender perspective.

DG Enlargement has recently started to act upon its wish to **install a more systematic gender mainstreaming approach** in its policy and has appointed a full-time gender advisor in June 2014 (Seconded National Expert with a 2 year posting). In carrying out this endeavour, DG Enlargement could build upon the good practices taking place in DG ECHO and DG DEVCO (see below). In particular the formal instalment of a network of gender focal persons in the EU Delegations in the (potential) candidate countries could provide a

valuable tool. Also the development of a Staff Working Document outlining a systematic approach to gender mainstream EU enlargement policy (in line with DG ECHO's or DEVCO's Action Plan) could provide useful.

5.3 Directorate-General for Trade

As stipulated in the **European Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015**, the EU should integrate 'gender equality into its trade policy as part of a wider framework of sustainable development' and encourage 'the effective application of the ILO's core labour standards and its Decent Work Agenda, including in relation to non-discrimination, in its preferential trade agreements' (European Commission 2010b). However, trade policy is not mentioned among the Strategy's key actions and – in contrast to all other external DGs as well as the EEAS - DG Trade is notably absent in the strategy's division of labour. Indeed, the little research that has been conducted on the EU's gender and trade policy indicates that DG Trade is among the poorest compliers with the EU requirement to gender mainstreaming. While in principle gender equality should be addressed in the **Sustainability Impact Assessments**⁴ (SIAs) to help guide negotiators in trade discussions, there is little evidence of gender being systematically included in SIAs, nor of gender considerations being actually used by trade negotiators. If SIAs would systematically assess the likely impact of proposed trade agreements, this would constitute an important first step in gender mainstreaming EU trade policies. The SIAs handbook does not include a strong gender component and stays noncommittal, leaving significant room for the external evaluator's preference whether or not to look at trade policy's gender aspects. An update of the SIA handbook would provide a useful first entry point to integrate gender issues more strongly in DG trade's policy.

While DG Trade does have a staff member who formally has gender issues in her portfolio (among other things), there is **little proof of the inclusion of gender equality issues in the work of DG Trade**. Also, there are no gender trainings available within DG Trade. A systematic approach to gender mainstream trade policy still has to be built from scratch. In carrying out this endeavour, DG Trade can build upon good practices taking place in other external policy DGs. For example DG ECHO's recent development of a Staff Working Document outlining the promotion of gender equality, could provide a useful example to install a systematic approach to gender mainstream trade policy. Also, the use of a gender equality policy marker (in line with DG ECHO's gender-age marker, or the OECD's G-marker used by DG DEVCO) could provide an inspiration in this sense.

5.4 Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid

The Commission's DG DEVCO (previously DG Development and DG AIDCO) has been viewed as the **most gender-friendly DG** focused on external policy, as it has been intensely involved in Gender and Development debates since the early 1980s and has issued a string of relevant policy statements, resolutions and communications since the Beijing conference. Notably in 2001, the Commission issued its Programme of Action for the

⁴ Trade Sustainability Impact Assessments are independent studies conducted by external consultants studying the likely impacts of trade liberalisation in areas such as income, employment, capital investment, equity and poverty, health and education, gender inequality, environmental quality of air, water and land, biological diversity and other natural resource stocks.

Mainstreaming of Gender Equality in Community Development Cooperation stipulating a twin-track strategy which implies 'the EC is committed to including gender equality goals in the mainstream of EC development co-operation policies, programmes and projects', while 'concrete actions targeting women (specific actions)' reinforce these processes (European Commission 2001: 8-13). In 2006, the Council, the Parliament and the Commission, jointly agreed upon the **European Consensus on Development** and included forceful language on gender equality intended to guide the actions of both the EU and its Member States. Inspired by this momentum, in 2007, DG DEVCO issued a 'Communication on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Cooperation' aimed at increasing the efficiency of gender mainstreaming and refocusing specific actions for women's empowerment, providing 41 concrete suggestions in the areas of governance, employment, education, health and domestic violence. Requested by the European Development Council, the EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development 2010-2015 was released by the Commission in 2010. This **Gender Action Plan (GAP)** is a high-level staff working document that implements the 2007 Communication and replaces the twin-track strategy with a 'three-pronged approach' consisting of gender mainstreaming, specific actions, and political and policy dialogue to put gender equality more systematically on the agenda of the dialogue with partner countries. The GAP contains 9 objectives, 37 actions and 53 indicators, to which DG DEVCO, the EEAS, the Member States and the EU Delegations have committed and report on annually. Each year this information is gathered in Brussels, formalised and sent to the Council for approval.

In November 2013, the third report on **the implementation of the GAP** was published. It concludes that while progress is on-going, it is extremely slow and needs to be accelerated. In 2013, only 79 EU Delegations submitted a report (which is a decrease from 93 Delegations in 2012), as well as 16 Member States. Positive achievements in the period 2012-2013 included the number of sectors using sex-disaggregated indicators going up from 5 to 18 as well as the elaboration of Gender Country Profiles in 12 EU Delegations (planned in 13 others). Despite this progress, significant challenges were reported, such as the **lack of technical capacities and knowledge** at country level or the relatively high number of countries where gender equality is not raised in political dialogue. Indeed, integrating gender equality issues in political dialogue can be challenging for senior officials who are not equipped or committed to the topic. Also, further progress is required to achieve the ambitious goal to ensure that 75 per cent of aid contributes principally or significantly to gender equality and women's empowerment (currently 28 per cent of new EU proposals mark gender as a principal or significant objective). The next implementation report is due in the winter of 2014.

External reviews of the GAP indicate **uneven progress across objectives and policy actors**. Although interviews indicate that the GAP and its annual reporting are crucial for awareness-raising and changing staff mind-set, the effects on the ground vary from Delegation to Delegation and much depends on the involvement of the Heads of Mission and of Cooperation. In general, external reviews point out a variable to weak buy-in from EU Heads of Delegations and Member State Ambassadors translating into low performance of senior officials and low financial and human resources allocated to implementation. While some case-studies showed committed Heads of Delegation and Cooperation, pushing staff to integrate gender issues in their work, in other Delegations there is an indifference or apathy towards gender mainstreaming. In general, aside from those working specifically on gender issues, it seems that gender mainstreaming and the GAP are not yet widely understood within the Commission, the Delegations, the EEAS and the Member States. Furthermore, with the exception of specific objectives on MDG3 (promote gender equality and empower women), MDG5 (improve maternal mortality), gender-based violence and the

UNSCR 1325 - the GAP does not directly address **important thematic areas** such as women's economic empowerment and political participation (ODI 2013).

Another challenge can be encountered in the **reporting**. As is the case with the reporting on the EU-indicators for the Comprehensive Approach (see chapter 4), the reporting on the GAP often uses a narrative approach which does not always provide sufficient information for comparison and analysis. For example the reporting on the inclusion of gender equality issues in the Delegation's political dialogue provides little detail on what issues were raised with whom, when and with what results (ODI 2013). Also clear reporting on gender mainstreaming in EU general and sector budget support is lacking – which leaves a considerable amount of EU aid untracked.

On the positive side, as regards expertise and capacity-building, DG DEVCO is at the forefront of EU external services. DG DEVCO is the only external policy agency that has a **full-fledged unit working on gender issues**. Within the unit 'Governance, Democracy, Gender and Human Rights', DG DEVCO has created 5 positions dealing with gender issues, including 1 permanent official, 2 national seconded expert and 2 contract agents. Four positions deal exclusively with gender equality, while one position also focuses on children's rights, LGBTI issues and non-discrimination. The Unit has a significant workload regarding gender equality matters, including policy development and follow-up, the design of tools and support to the Delegations, but also analysing all EU development projects submitted to the different Office Quality Support Groups (oQSGs)⁵ and ensuring the integration of a gender perspective in their design. The work in the oQSG is a crucial aspect of gender mainstreaming EU development policy, although the Unit has insufficient staff to carry out this task thoroughly.

In 2007, DG DEVCO invited all EU Delegations to appoint a Gender Focal Person (GFP)⁶ and (re-)established its **expertise-sharing network consisting of GFPs** in the Delegations as well as representatives from all DGs dealing with gender and external relations. In theory, all Delegations have now formally appointed a GFP, although the degree to which gender equality issues are promoted depends on the support from the hierarchy as well as on the commitment and educational background of the staff member.

Furthermore, since 2004, DG DEVCO has initiated a process of **systematic technical assistance and capacity-building on gender mainstreaming** in development cooperation.⁷ Since then, over 2000 persons working on development related matters have received training, which is quite an impressive number. However, taking into account the hierarchical position of these staff members, it comes to the fore that participants have been mostly female contract agents with temporary assignments (as opposed to permanent officials) in non-decision-making positions while the EU's permanent officials seem more interested in other training opportunities. Parts of the trained EU staff have thus left the EU institutions resulting in consequent losses of continuity and institutional memory. Also, the relatively lower status of staff trained in gender matters can limit their ability to influence decision-making (ODI 2013).

⁵ The oQSGs perform peer reviews of the EU's external assistance activities at the identification and formulation stage. Five oQSGs are currently operating, one for each geographic region, and one dealing with measures funded through thematic budget lines. Each oQSG is composed of DEVCO staff based in Brussels and the Delegations. They are responsible for the geographical aspects, quality from a thematic perspective and conformity with contractual and financial rules and practices. See: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/ensure-aid-effectiveness/quality-support-groups_en.htm

⁶ A GFP is defined as a member who is responsible for facilitating the promotion of women's empowerment and gender equality issues in the activities of the Delegation.

⁷ Web-based training as well as tailor made face-to-face training in the EU Delegations have been made available annually.

5.5 European External Action Service

Since the Directorate-General for External Relations was merged into the EEAS in 2010, headed by HR/VP Catherine Ashton, gender equality in external relations has gotten a more prominent position and several initiatives have taken place. The role of the EEAS as regards the implementation of the GAP has been concerned with actions around **UNSCR 1325** (see chapter 4). Furthermore, responsibility rests with the EEAS for a number of training-related indicators (for example providing gender training for EEAS staff pre-posting and for Heads of Mission). In this respect the EEAS has **increased the availability of gender trainings** for its staff: it organised a gender training in 2012 for Delegations' human rights focal points, EEAS headquarters, Commission as well as the Parliament. Also gender and human rights are routinely included in the foundation courses on CSDP and were included as a topic in the first EU senior mission leaders' course (held in October 2013). Although the first important steps for institutional capacity-building at EEAS have been taken, these effort needs to be sustained to ensure the systematic and structural training of all EEAS staff.

Another important role is connected to the implementation of the **2012 EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy**, which comprises 'the protection of the rights of women and against gender-based violence' among its goals and includes five gender-related actions for which the EEAS is responsible. Reporting is taking place annually, using a narrative approach citing actions and events. Within the framework of the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan, in April 2012, the EEAS has appointed a full-time Gender Adviser to its Director on Human Rights and Democracy (permanent official at senior level), cooperating in an informal EEAS gender policy network containing staff from various EEAS departments who have gender equality issues in their portfolio.

The last few years, gender equality in external relations has been high on the agenda and is supported at a high level as demonstrated by **regular statements by the HR/VP for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy** as well as by other senior EEAS officials. This has created an important momentum at EEAS and has helped to raise the profile and importance of efforts on gender equality and the rights of women and girls (ODI 2013). Furthermore, the EEAS has made efforts to tackle the underrepresentation of women in EU external relations services and **promote gender balance at all levels of appointments**, in Headquarters and Delegations. For example an informal women's network for EEAS staff was set up, organising trainings and internal events to raise awareness at senior level and at the human resources department. As a result the EEAS Human Resources Department has taken a certain number of incentives such as ensuring an adequate gender balance in all selection panels or giving preference to a female candidate in cases where two applicants for a post display equal merit.

However, according to an external evaluation carried out by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) 'there is **no evidence of systematic gender mainstreaming across the EEAS in its political affairs and geographical departments**' nor of gender analysis and gender equality issues being systematically mainstreamed in political dialogue (ODI 2013: 11). Conducting gender analysis and ensuring gender equality issues are integrated in political dialogue with partner countries and in policy programming, should however be an EEAS priority.

One difficulty in this respect can be attributed to an **unclear division of labour and responsibility between the EEAS and DG DEVCO**, 'whereby EEAS leads on programming and DEVCO on policy' (ODI 2013: 12). This hampers the implementation of

the GAP as well as the Strategy for Equality between Women and Men. Also none of the three GAP implementation reports contain a specific chapter on the work and role of the EEAS (while it does contain chapters on the Commission, the EU Delegations and the Member States). **Coordination** between foreign policy and development policy needs to be improved to fulfil the political commitments on gender equality, particularly in the Delegations (for example as regards political dialogue and the reporting on this dialogue by Heads of Mission). Nevertheless, all in all the EEAS has taken important steps towards a gender mainstreamed external policy under HR/VP Ashton's leadership, which should be sustained in the next hierarchy.

6. ANALYSIS OF STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

6.1 Build on Strengths, Eliminate Weaknesses

STRENGTHS

- Strong EU policy framework on the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment in external policy in place.
- Annual/Biennial reporting at a high policy level creating important momentum and awareness-raising.
- DG DEVCO has invested significantly in institutional expertise and capacity-building. The EEAS and DG ECHO have more recently taken important steps to systematically institutionalize expertise and capacity-building.

The EU has a **strong policy framework** in place covering most aspects of the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment in external policy, comprising the Comprehensive Approach to the EU Implementation of the UNSCR 1325 and 1820 on Women, Peace and Security; the European Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015 (including the promotion of gender equality beyond the EU among its five priority areas); the EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development 2010-2015 and the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (including the protection of the rights of women, and protection against gender-based violence among its goals). Most of these strategies include actions, indicators and the responsible actors (the EEAS, the Commission DGs, the EU Delegations and/or the Member States). Each of these strategic frameworks involve annual (in case of the GAP, the Strategy for Equality between Women and Men and the Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy) or biennial reporting (in case of the EU-Indicators for the Comprehensive Approach). Guided by these significant political commitments and **high-level reporting tools**, the external services of the EU institutionalize gender mainstreaming methodologies and gender equality principles across their policy and operational work.

WEAKNESSES

- Policy development and follow-up are uneven across policy areas.
- Effective implementation of EU policy framework remains unclear.
- Institution-wide gender-competence is insufficient, situated at the lower levels of the hierarchy and leaking away.

Nevertheless, although in principle all EU external services as well as all staff members share the responsibility for gender mainstreaming, in practice, **policy development and follow-up are uneven across policy areas** and the **effective implementation remains highly dependent on the skill, commitment and time invested by individual staff members** who have gender issues in their portfolio. Not all DGs have a systematic gender policy in place. Trade policy is not included in the Strategy for Equality between Women and Men nor does it have an internal policy framework on the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. DG Enlargement has only recently taken the first steps towards this endeavour. Also the EEAS might benefit from an internal action plan bringing together its dispersed efforts.

Furthermore, **one of the key institutional challenges is the availability of gender expertise** in the Commission's external policy agencies. DG DEVCO is the only external policy agency that has a full-fledged unit working on gender issues, while the EEAS and DG ECHO have recently begun to invest in institutional expertise and capacity-building. In the other external policy agencies the picture varies: while all DGs have a person responsible for gender equality issues/mainstreaming, this is often not a full-time function as the administrator is also responsible for other issue areas. The person in charge for gender is also mostly a temporary agent which might hamper institutional memory and continuity. In general, staff members working on gender equality policy are highly committed, but insufficiently resourced and supported by the hierarchy.

Although it could be expected that a considerable body of institutional knowledge and experience have been build up over the past decades given the investments in gender training and capacity-building for development staff since 2004, most trained staff members have been temporary contract agents at the lower levels of the hierarchy, so a loss of institutional expertise has occurred. Interviews with experts also indicate a low understanding of the importance to mainstream gender with overall staff (for example with staff managing sector and budget support programmes) and stress the need for continued efforts to invest in gender trainings accustomed to the specific work in the different DGs. Also, the EU's low score on the OECD G-marker indicates a need for a stronger and more sustained support to the EU Delegations.

Lastly, while high-level reporting creates important awareness raising and momentum, **clear result indicators measuring actual performance are often lacking** (an exception being the 75 per cent target on the G-marker in the GAP). In the post-2015 period, actions and indicators should be made more concrete and data more systematically collected and analysed, otherwise reporting risks being a bureaucratic exercise resulting in a merely formal compliance to the goals of gender equality.

6.2 Exploit Opportunities, Mitigate Threats

OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

- Opportunity: Clear consensus among donors that gender-equality should be central in the post-2015 agenda.
- Threat: Insufficient resources and priority overload in a context of crisis.
- Opportunity/Threat: Global shift towards the use of budget support.

The international process to develop a post-2015 development framework to replace the MDGs provides a **significant momentum to push the agenda for gender equality** further, as there seems to be a clear consensus among most international actors that gender equality should be a centre-piece in the new framework with a stand-alone goal and a broadening of the current targets (Kabeer and Woodroffe 2014). This historic moment provides an opportunity to broaden and deepen the gender equality agenda and move beyond the predominant focus on gender issues in education and health. However, donors increasingly operate in a **context of priority overload** where gender equality is a cross-cutting issue to be mainstreamed among a range of other issues including the environment, human rights, and HIV/AIDS. The danger exists that gender equality is being 'mainstreamed out' as it is subsumed into wider discussions about inequality reduction. A key challenge for donors is thus to ensure that gender is, and remains, a development priority (UNU-WIDER 2012). This is a particularly timely task as so far the world's resources for gender equality have been inadequate to the task of improving women's position in society for effective equality between men and women. More specifically, at the Fifty-eighth session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in March 2014 on the 'challenges and achievements in the implementation of the MDGs for women and girls', the CSW has stressed that 'significant underinvestment in gender equality ... continue to limit progress on the Millennium Development Goals for girls and women of all ages, their families and communities' (UN 2014: 9). Especially in the context of the **global economic crisis**, shifts to austerity measures with a reduction in investment in social sectors taken by some countries have impacted women and girls negatively (UN 2014). Development resources, including official development assistance, in support of gender equality and women's empowerment thus remain essential.

Furthermore donors have been operating in a **context of changing aid modalities** which have led to a decline of support by traditional donors to projects and programmes, and a shift towards budget support, policy dialogue, and giving aid through multilateral institutions. Budget support is one of the aid modalities enforced by the EU and its Members States after the Paris Declaration and constitutes a shift away from project-toward programme-based assistance directly into the partner country government budget. Gender advocates see **potential** in budget support as it can help to ensure that the focus is on the results aid has and on how the government budget advances gender equality (WIDE 2007). Another advantage is that budget support – as opposed to projects and programmes – gives donors high-level access to partner countries' policy dialogue which can be an important entry point for discussing gender equality with partner governments and introducing gender equality principles in public sector reforms.

However, budget support is also a **controversial** aid modality and gender advocates have expressed fears it equals a deprioritization of gender equality (WIDE 2007). The picture

that emerges from the limited literature examining the implications of the new aid environment for gender equality and women's rights shows that its potential to significantly advance gender equality has not been realised. Whilst there are examples of successful gender budgeting⁸, gender issues are generally not well addressed in budget support and women's organisations have been marginalized in aid programmes and silenced in policy debates (Gender and Development Network 2008). Nevertheless, in 2011, the EU has reaffirmed and strengthened its commitment to the use of budget support. In this renewed policy, gender equality objectives have not explicitly been brought to the fore.⁹

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The European Parliament should call upon the Commission, the EEAS and the Council to develop a **strong position** on gender equality and women's rights in foreign affairs and development cooperation, so the EU can take a leadership role in promoting the gender equality and women's rights agenda globally after 2015. More specifically, the Parliament should urge the Commission, the EEAS and the Council to have a coherent gender equality policy across all aspects of external relations, broaden and deepen the EU's gender policy in its external relations and development cooperation, sustain and strengthen political leadership and accountability and further invest in institution-wide expertise and capacity-building.

1. Greater policy coherence in promoting gender equality in all areas of EU external action without exception. A more integrated approach to gender mainstreaming and gender equality policy is needed which ensures the full involvement and commitment of all EU institutions across all aspects of external policy.

- The Commission and the EEAS should 'ensure that policy in [all external policy] areas is coherent with the objectives of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment'. This includes CDSP, climate change policy, development cooperation, enlargement policy, humanitarian aid, human rights, trade, and neighbourhood policy.
- The Commission should propose for the new Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2016-2020 concrete and ambitious actions and targets for the EEAS as well as for each external policy DG (DEVCO, ECHO, ENLARG and TRADE). A clear division of labour with targets and responsibilities for each external policy service, without exception, as well as instructions for staff on their role in implementing the EU's gender equality policy should be set up.
- Building on the good practices in other external policy services, DG Trade, DG Enlargement and the EEAS should start with the development of an Action Plan outlining how to systematically mainstream gender in all their policies. The use of a gender marker as well as the formal instalment of a gender focal persons' network should be examined.

⁸ See for example the three-year European Commission-UNIFEM programme launched in 2008, 'Integrating gender responsive budgeting into the aid effectiveness agenda' supporting gender budgeting initiatives in 10 pilot countries, providing evidence on how budget support can advance gender equality in practice.

⁹ To the contrary, while the 2007 guidelines contain a complete section discussing gender equality, the 2012 guidelines only contain two brief references to 'the poor, women and children'.

2. Broaden and deepen EU gender policy in external relations and development cooperation.

- The EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development, the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy and the European Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015 will all be updated in 2015. The Commission should use this opportunity to put forward clear goals, connected to financial commitments. The performance indicators in the existing reporting structures need to be revamped so that they become results-oriented and allow to track progress as well as annual comparison. The Commission should make sure that narrative reporting styles are replaced with a systematic reporting on indicators measuring tangible results.
- The European Commission should ensure the availability of methodical collection and use of sex-disaggregated data which is necessary to support the switch from a narrative to a result-oriented reporting approach.
- The European Commission should broaden the gender equality agenda and explicitly include women's economic empowerment and political participation in the new strategies for the post-2015 framework (including the new EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development, the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy and the European Strategy for Equality between Women and Men). To support this endeavour, the European Commission will have to develop and use a detailed set of indicators measuring women's control over and access to assets and decent work, as well as their effective participation in decision-making.
- Given that the EU is an international frontrunner on both budget support as well as the promotion of gender equality, the European Commission and the budgetary authority should make sure this aid modality includes a gender dimension and guarantees a female ownership. This endeavour starts with creating a base line and measuring the amount of EU sector and general budget support that includes gender indicators and objectives (gender budgeting). In this respect, the European Commission could also propose to experiment with sector budget support to Ministries of Women's Affairs and Gender Equality instead of investing in more established Ministries such as Ministries of Transport or Education which are often already better funded.
- The European Commission and the budgetary authority should reiterate financial commitment to gender equality in EU external policy by providing increased financing for gender mainstreaming as well as specific projects on gender equality and women's rights. This includes an increase in resources for local, national, regional and international women's organisations who, as evidence shows, have proven to be key actors in advancing women's rights by acting as policy watchdogs and norm catalysts in society.
- In this respect, the European Commission and the EEAS should systematically track financial allocations to gender equality (gender mainstreaming, specific actions and support to women's organisations) and include this data in the DGs' annual reporting (for example in DEVCO's 'Annual Report on the European Community's Development and External Assistance Policies and their Implementation').

3. Sustain and strengthen political leadership and senior management support for gender equality in EU external relations at Headquarters and Delegation level.

- As a key EU value and political objective, EU political leaders and senior managers from EEAS, the European Commission and the EU delegations should be encouraged to put gender issues high on the political agenda and continue to speak out publicly on persistent gender inequalities and women's rights violations whenever and wherever they occur.
- The European Commission and the EEAS should ensure that competence on gender equality issues is incorporated in the job descriptions, work plans and performance assessments of senior management in the EU Headquarters and Delegations (for example for the Head of Delegation and Head of Cooperation). This should be accompanied by mandatory training (of at least four hours).
- The European Parliament should monitor regularly whether gender equality became a mandatory agenda item for political dialogue with third countries on matters regarding human rights, development, trade and accession policy. The budgetary authority should make sure that EU representatives will be equipped with the necessary training and briefing.
- The European Commission and the EEAS should create accountability at higher levels of the hierarchy by including gender equality targets linked to the post-2015 framework in work plans and performance assessments of senior and middle management in both Headquarters and Delegations.

4. Further investments in institution-wide expertise and capacity-building in both EU Headquarters as well as the Delegations.

- The European Commission and the EEAS should build in-house capacity on gender equality issues by integrating a gender perspective in *all* EU training programmes for *all* external DGs as well as the EEAS. Training is now focussed on EU development staff, but policy-specific gender mainstreaming trainings in other Directorates-Generals are necessary.
- In this respect, the European Commission and the EEAS should make sure that gender training of at least four hours is mandatory for staff managing sectorial programmes, general and sector budget support and political and policy dialogue in third countries.
- All EU institutions should make sure that, in application of a key value of the EU, job descriptions and performance assessments explicitly involve gender competence, especially when hiring staff members for policy, research and operational positions.
- All EU institutions should also ensure that gender focal persons in the Headquarters and the Delegations are allowed to work on gender matters full-time as gender mainstreaming is not a low-cost or no-cost exercise. Furthermore, it is crucial to recruit additional full-time gender advisors and experts at senior levels where they can influence decision-making.

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DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR INTERNAL POLICIES

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