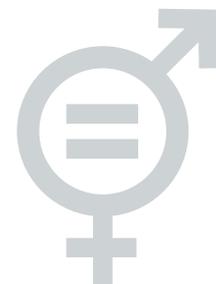




# Gender Equality

## Mainstreaming gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment

Gender equality is a human right, a prerequisite and driver for poverty reduction and sustainable development. Gender equality is achieved when women and men, girls and boys, have equal rights, life prospects and opportunities and power to shape their own lives and contribute to society. Sida recognise that not all people are binary and works for human rights for all. As one of the main thematic priorities for Swedish development cooperation, a gender equality perspective shall permeate all of Sida's work.



### MAIN AREAS OF SUPPORT

Sweden has a longstanding commitment to gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment in development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. This commitment has been strengthened through the Government's Policy Framework (2016); the Feminist Foreign Policy (2014) and Sida's action plan for gender equality (2020–2023).

Sida uses a three-pronged approach for gender mainstreaming with targeted support to gender equality interventions, by integrating a gender perspective in all programs and by highlighting gender equality and women's rights in the dialogue with partner organizations and other stakeholders.

Swedish development cooperation carried out through 45 bilateral, regional and global strategies that defines the objectives for expected results and funding allocated for the implementation of the strategy. Gender equality is featured in most of Sida's strategies covering areas such as women's and girls' human rights, women's economic and political participation, ending gender-based violence and harmful practices, promoting girls' education, sexual and reproductive health and rights, women, peace and security and integrating gender equality in development programmes and humanitarian assistance.

A strategy for global gender equality and women's and girls' rights (2018–2022) was adopted in 2018. The strategy complements the comprehensive work for gender equality that Sida is supporting through bilateral, regional and other

global strategies by supporting global catalytic and innovative efforts.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are based on 17 goals including a standalone goal on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (SDG 5). Empowering women, challenging stereotypes and unequal power relations and promoting gender equality is crucial to accelerating sustainable development.

Ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls is not only a basic human right, but it also has a multiplier effect across all other development areas.

### DEVELOPMENT IN THE WORLD

The effects of the ongoing socio economic crisis from the pandemic COVID-19 is reversing progress on gender equality and women's and girls' rights and empowerment as it exacerbates existing gender inequalities.<sup>1</sup> As a consequence of lock-downs women's unpaid care work and domestic violence against women and children has increased.<sup>2</sup> While child-marriage of girls has increased in many regions<sup>3</sup>, we see also how boys are more likely to be

1 World Economic Forum (2020), <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/09/covid-19-gender-inequality-jobs-economy/>, downloaded 27 May 2021

2 UN Women (2020), <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/in-focus-gender-equality-in-covid-19-response/violence-against-women-during-covid-19>, down loaded 27 May 2021

3 UNICEF (2021), <https://data.unicef.org/resources/covid-19-a-threat-to-progress-against-child-marriage/>, down loaded 27 May 2021

### THE GLOBAL GOALS

The Global Goals for Sustainable Development include everyone – and we can all contribute. The goals are interdependent and therefore indivisible. Sida's main contribution is to implement development cooperation, thereby reducing poverty and saving lives. Together we can build a better future where no one is left behind.



## Results

recruited to child labour.<sup>4</sup> In 2020, UN Women launched the [Generation Equality campaign](#) to accelerate gender equality actions and mark the 25th anniversary of the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#). However, many of the activities such as the global forum in Mexico and Paris were postponed to 2021 as a consequence of the pandemic.

We are also witnessing increased polarisation, conservative values and a pushback for advancing gender equality, in particular sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and LBTQI rights. These trends as well as a shrinking space for civil society organisations are affecting women's rights organisations and women's human rights defenders, among others.<sup>5</sup>

### SIDA'S SUPPORT

Sida has strengthened its work on gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment in the past decade. Support where gender equality is the principal objective has increased from 9 percent in 2010 to 19 percent of total disbursements in 2020 (or SEK 5 billion 2020).<sup>6</sup> The proportion of support where gender equality is significant but not the main objective is 68 percent, while the share of support not targeted to gender equality is 13 percent. In 2010 20 percent of the total disbursements were not targeted gender equality. In 2020, 46 percent of this support goes to Africa, 21 percent to Asia and 20 percent to global programs.

As a response to the COVID-19 pandemic many partner organisations have increased their support to address gender-based violence and others have provided capacity building in digital security to be able to avoid violence and harassment online. Several campaigns have also been initiated to reach men online with messages for engaging men in fatherhood and for taking a stand against gender based violence.

Sida's recognises the influential role of women's rights organisations as leading actors for long-term changes in normative frameworks and legislation, and has during the previous years raised the financial support to women's right organisations. In 2020, around 2 percent of Sida's contributions were targeted towards women's rights organisations and movements, and government institutions. In Sida's action plan for gender equality (2020–2023), increasing support to women's rights organisations is a priority.

<sup>4</sup> UNICEF (2020), <https://www.unicef.org/reports/covid-19-and-child-labour-2020>, down loaded 27 May 2021

<sup>5</sup> Kvinna till Kvinna (2020), *The Fierce and the Furious; Feminist Insights into the anti- gender narratives and movements*, The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation

<sup>6</sup> The OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker measure the percentage of aid allocated in support towards gender equality

Gender equality requires the engagement of men and boys as well as an intersectional approach, as gender intersect with other variables such as gender identity and gender expression, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity and religion or other beliefs. This approach is essential for Sida in order to reach the most marginalised populations.

Also, collaboration and dialogue on gender equality with financial institutions and development banks has become more central to enable mobilising of resources, such as through catalytic financing, and to strengthen their work on gender equality and women's economic empowerment.

Examples of results 2020 which Sida has contributed towards include:

- A national strategy to address violence against women has been developed in Iraq. 70 000 women and girls have also received health service, psycho-social and legal support through mobile teams and safe-houses spread around the country.
- In Ukraine, 24 administration units are now engaged in gender responsive budgeting and more than 300 budgets have been analysed to support decision making.
- In Guatemala, the time for legal processing by the Authority of public prosecution has been minimized by up to 90 percent for girls and boys who experienced sexual violence.
- During the year Sudan has criminalized female genital mutilation, and the civil interim Government has started to develop a plan of action for its implementation.

### STORY OF CHANGE

Research suggests that women and girls with disabilities are more likely to experience domestic violence, emotional abuse, and sexual assault than those without disabilities. They may also feel more isolated, unable to report the abuse, or be dependent on the abuser for their care. Like most women who experience gender based violence, women with disabilities are usually abused by someone they know, such as a partner or family member. Through the Cambodia Women's Crisis Centre, women with disabilities living in remote areas got support through 85 village volunteers and leaders of women-led disabled persons' organizations.

"I live with more hope. I experience less violence and more respect" says Chann (not her real name), survivor of violence living with a disability in Cambodia, who received tailored services. Cambodia Women's Crisis center is one of the grantees from UN Trust Funds Global grant making mechanism.