



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY  
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Action Plan

# Action Plan for Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation

(2007–2009) Extended for the period 2010–2013







## Action Plan

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## Foreword

The Government wants Norway to be a fearless champion of women's rights and gender equality. Accordingly, the rights, participation and influence of women will be at the core of Norway's development cooperation efforts. Our aim is to ensure the realisation of the rights of women that are set out in international human rights conventions. This is vital in order to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goal of eradicating extreme poverty.

This action plan is intended to boost efforts to promote women's rights and gender equality in the international community and among Norway's cooperation partners.

Norway will contribute to securing greater recognition and realisation of women's rights, their economic opportunities and their opportunities to influence social development. Not least, it will help to ensure that women have greater control over their own lives. The key issues are the right and opportunities of women to participate in national and local government on an equal footing, and their legal, economic and social independence.

Norway will concentrate on four thematic priority areas:

- women's political empowerment,
- women's economic empowerment,
- sexual and reproductive health and rights,
- violence against women.

Gender equality involves the redistribution of power, resources and care responsibilities between men and women. The most important force for change is women who organise and mobilise resources to challenge and

overcome discriminatory attitudes and structures in their societies. Norway will support such agents of change. At the same time, it will support the efforts of its development partners at government level to meet national development targets on women's rights and gender equality. International human rights instruments and action plans on women's rights and gender equality form a common basis for action.

Men can play an important role in promoting women's rights and gender equality. Men who take their share of the responsibility for housework and family care are paving the way for women to participate on equal terms with men in economic, political and social processes outside the home.

Norway will be a fearless champion of women's sexual and reproductive rights. The rights of women to control their own bodies and to freedom from violence and sexual abuse within and outside the family are not universally acknowledged or accepted. Neither is the right to sex education or the right of teenagers and adults of both sexes to contraception. Establishing the right to safe abortion on demand was a milestone in the fight of Norwegian women for economic and political participation on the same terms as men. Far too many women die each year because they lack access to safe abortion on demand. We will also fight all forms of discrimination and stigmatisation on the grounds of sexual orientation.

Norway will use relevant political channels and arenas to promote tolerance, equality and diversity in line with the thematic priority areas in this action plan. This will have an influence on both its foreign policy and its development cooperation efforts.

We will require our cooperation partners, whether they are governments, international institutions or NGOs, to demonstrate that they take women and gender equality seriously. If they do not, this will have consequences for cooperation in the long term.

Norway's policy on mainstreaming women's rights and gender equality in development cooperation has been based on good intentions, but efforts have not been sufficiently systematic. If we are to succeed in changing deep-seated imbalances of power, we will have to make use of a broad range of measures. We must utilise all of the key development cooperation channels and processes. Women's rights and gender equality must be explicitly and comprehensively incorporated into Norway's development cooperation efforts. Targeted activities and resource allocation will be supported by knowledge- and capacity-building, both in Norway and among cooperation partners. We will promote gender equality both as an integral dimension in other development sectors and as an independent target.

The Government has already launched action plans for priority areas that are of vital importance to gender equality and the rights of women and girls: the *Action Plan for the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security*, which was launched in 2006, and the *Plan of Action to Combat Human Trafficking (2006–2009)*. The Government will also follow up on the 2003 International *Action Plan for Combating Female Genital Mutilation*.

The Government has drawn up this action plan to highlight areas that so far have not been given proper attention, with a view to establish an integrated framework for addressing the entire spectrum of gender equality challenges and ensuring coordinated follow-up.



**Erik Solheim**  
*Minister of International Development*

# 1



# 1 • Introduction

The overarching aim of Norway's development cooperation is to contribute to poverty reduction,<sup>1</sup> in line with the UN Millennium Declaration. The fight against poverty must be based on the realisation of human rights for women and men. The contribution of both women and men to development must be acknowledged. Women must be able to take part in societal decision-making and welfare development on the same footing as men. This will require an active effort to strengthen women's rights, participation and influence.

This action plan sets targets and stakes out the course for the realisation of women's rights and gender equality both as a separate priority area and as an integral dimension in the Government's other development cooperation priority areas.<sup>2</sup> Priority will be given to the following thematic priority areas:

- women's political empowerment
- women's economic empowerment
- sexual and reproductive health and rights
- violence against women

## 1.1 Objective and purpose

Norway will play a proactive as well as supporting role in the fight against all forms of discrimination on the basis of gender, including in areas that are controversial. We will present a clear political message in international forums and make active use of the political dialogue between the Norwegian authorities and partner countries. In addition, Norway will support women's efforts to organise themselves and exert an influence on development in these countries.

Norway will coordinate its efforts with its partner countries' targets, plans and competence related to women's rights and gender equality. The human

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<sup>1</sup> Cf Report No. 35 (2003–2004) to the Norwegian Parliament (Storting), *Fighting Poverty Together*.

<sup>2</sup> The other priority areas are described in Chapter 3.



rights conventions,<sup>3</sup> especially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), form a common value base and departure point for dialogue and cooperation between Norway and its partner countries in the South. The main responsibility for implementing human rights standards lies with the country in question.

Norway will direct more attention to and promote greater acceptance of women's rights and gender equality, and will increase understanding of the importance of women's rights and gender equality for economic growth and sustainable development. The Norwegian experience is that it is in the interests of society as a whole to invest in health, education and certain types of infrastructure<sup>4</sup> that release more time, particularly for women, for value creation and societal and political participation.

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<sup>3</sup> The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

<sup>4</sup> For example access to piped water and electricity in the household, flour mills, transport to local markets, and care for children, the elderly, the ill and the disabled.

«My main message today (...) is that the greatest gains countries can achieve, economically as well politically, come with **empowering** women, **ensuring** equal opportunity, health care, and **increasing** the ratio of women's active participation in working life.»

*Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg  
in the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), 3 July 2006*

This action plan is binding for everyone who works with international development issues at all levels of the foreign service, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) and in the line ministries. It will be a clear signal to actors in our partner countries of the importance Norway attaches to realising women's rights and gender equality. It will be an inspiration to women's organisations and other agents of change in partner countries, indicating what can be expected of the authorities in the country in question and their Norwegian partners. This action plan will also set useful guidelines for NGOs, research centres and other institutions that receive funding via Norway's international development budget.

This action plan aims to correct the weaknesses that were identified in the evaluations<sup>5</sup> of the implementation of the *Strategy for Women and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation (1997–2005)*. Despite the political priorities that have been set in strategies and plans, gender concerns have tended to gradually vanish out of focus in implementation and reporting. Evaluations of other bilateral and multilateral donors show that this problem is not unique to Norway. The strategy of mainstreaming has in fact undermined responsibility and reduced focus on women as targets for and partners in development cooperation. We want to address this situation through targeted efforts, the allocation of sufficient resources, and a clearer and more explicit mainstreaming strategy. Experience shows that the single most important factor for success is strong leadership that demands results and seeks to keep women's rights at the top of the international development policy agenda.

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<sup>5</sup> The Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research 2006 and Riksrevisjonen (the Office of the Auditor General of Norway), both of which focused on bilateral cooperation.

- At the end of the action plan period, Norway will be evaluated on how it has utilised its position as a political and development cooperation actor to promote and help to realise women's rights and gender equality through targeted measures and mainstreaming of these issues in all development cooperation.

## 1.2 Concepts

This action plan focuses on **women's rights** and gender equality. It emphasises women's rights and targeted measures to increase women's control of their lives and to promote their right to participate in and exert an influence in all areas of society.

The term «women» is inclusive, encompassing girls and women of all ages.

**Gender equality** implies equal rights and opportunities regardless of gender. It involves changing how the sexes relate to each other and bringing about a redistribution of power, resources and caregiver responsibilities between men and women. It means mutual respect, and freedom from gender-based violence and harassment. Gender equality is contingent on the realisation of women's sexual and reproductive rights, including respect for women's freedom of choice and self-determination. Gender equality is based on respect for human rights and the inherent value of all individuals regardless of gender, social or ethnic background, including indigenous status, religion and belief, disability, age and sexual orientation.<sup>6</sup>

The Platform for Action from the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing 1995 is still relevant. It identifies gender equality challenges and sets out measures for implementation in a broad range of social arenas.

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<sup>6</sup> The concept sexual orientation includes lesbians, homosexuals and transsexuals, i.e. people who identify psychologically and socially with the opposite sex, i.e. opposite to their somatic sex.

To achieve the goal of gender equality, girls and women, and men and boys must all be mobilised. Applying the **gender perspective** involves taking socially and culturally determined gender roles into account. The gender perspective helps us to understand how social institutions, structures and systems, programmes, reforms and measures can affect men and women, and boys and girls differently. Gender mainstreaming means taking into account men and women's different power and resource situations, needs and priorities in the design and implementation of general development projects and programmes. It may be necessary to change or adapt programmes, structures and systems to ensure that both sexes benefit equally. Targeted measures are needed to correct unwanted imbalances and the results of earlier discrimination. Such measures must be designed to promote women's rights, participation and access to resources. Measures that are targeted towards poor women in urban and rural areas must be differentiated, taking into account, for example, the fact that slum dwellers are living in a monetised economy, while those living in rural communities will at best be on the edge of the monetised sector. Targeted measures towards men and boys must include efforts to change attitudes and behaviour and to mobilise them as allies in the fight for women's rights and gender equality.

**CEDAW** is a key instrument with regard to women's rights. It establishes the right of women to make free and independent choices without discrimination, including in questions relating to entering into marriage and its dissolution, education, health, and political and economic participation. Most of Norway's partner countries have acceded to the convention, and are obliged to report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee) every four years. Following its analysis of country reports and subsequent dialogue with the authorities, the Committee draws up concluding comments for each country, which provide a good starting point for government-to-government assistance.

# 2



## 2 • Thematic priority areas

This action plan focuses on four strategic priority areas for achieving a redistribution of power and resources between men and women. The follow-up of these priority areas will be differentiated and adapted to different national and international contexts, arenas and processes. Changing the male gender role is vital and is one of the goals of gender equality efforts. Men in positions of power must be challenged to take responsibility for promoting gender equality within their areas of responsibility.

### 2.1 Women's political empowerment

The increasing participation of women at all levels of political decision processes gives grounds for optimism. Since 2005, both Chile and Liberia have elected women heads of state. Quota schemes have increased women's political participation in politics at local level, particularly in Southern Asia. Nevertheless, women are seriously underrepresented in governing bodies and decision-making at all levels. Formal and informal barriers prevent women's participation. Scepticism is common about women's decision-making capacity, even among women themselves, because the social norm dictates that this is the domain of men. Education, awareness-raising and mobilisation will be key elements in any strategy to increase women's political participation.

Articles 7 and 8 of CEDAW require the States Parties to «take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country,» and «to ensure to women, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, the opportunity to represent their Governments at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations.»

Measures and processes that should be promoted and supported include:

- women's participation in political processes, including elections and other democratic processes, for example through support for voter registration, information on various quota systems, training and support for networks of women parliamentarians and election candidates;

- gender mainstreaming of reform programmes for good governance at local level;
- awareness raising campaigns and measures that highlight women's potential and ability as decision makers and political actors at all levels;
- political parties' and popularly elected bodies' own initiatives to increase the political influence and participation of women at all levels;
- networks between women in politics, administration and NGOs at local and national level;
- regional and interregional/international networks and cooperation between women in politics;
- mobilisation of men and boys in the promotion of gender equality, for example through knowledge generation and attitude campaigns on the benefits of gender equality, with the aim of changing patriarchal norms and gender role patterns;
- recognition of women as equal participants in all phases of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding, and involvement of women in these efforts in line with the *Norwegian Government's Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security*.

Political parties, popularly elected bodies, women's organisations, and central and local authorities, including gender equality mechanisms, are natural partners at country level. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with its mandate of promoting good governance, is a key multilateral cooperation partner in efforts to strengthen women's political participation, as is the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), which has defined gender equality in democratic governance as one of four strategic areas.

## **2.2 Women's economic empowerment**

Women account for the majority of the world's poor. Women have a greater burden of labour than men, because they tend to provide food for the household, either by growing it themselves or by earning the money to buy it. In many societies, women are the major food producers. In addition, women have the main responsibility for unpaid household work and care-related tasks.

Women often have few formal rights, for example they may not have property rights to their home or business, and traditional informal rules frequently disregard women as economic actors. It is important to ensure that formalisation of property rights takes the gender perspective into account in order to prevent greater economic marginalisation, for example through the privatisation of collective and user rights that women have traditionally benefited from. Women's productivity is limited by poor access to resources in the form of tools, new technology, credit, education and training, and markets. The failure to acknowledge the part played by women and their potential as economic actors is a barrier to economic development.

CEDAW requires the States Parties to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment (Article 11), and in other areas of economic and social life (Article 13), and to accord to women a legal capacity identical to that of men (Article 15), including equal rights to conclude contracts and administer property (Article 16h).

Measures and processes that should be promoted and supported include:

- gender impact assessments and measures targeting women in connection with the preparation, implementation and monitoring of national poverty reduction strategies, sector strategies and action plans;
- gender responsive budgeting to ensure that public resources management and services provision in both rural communities and poor urban communities meet the needs of both women and men;
- mainstreaming the gender perspective in economic policy, labour policy and public sector reform, including strengthening the training and employment of women in the public and private sectors;
- women's entrepreneurship, including the right to advisory and financial services, such as micro- and meso-financing, insurance, pensions and money transfers;
- women joining forces with a view to exerting an influence on business development, trade, and employer and employee organisations;
- women's trade union participation and strengthening workers' rights;
- measures to improve the range of jobs available to women, and the pay and working conditions, including adaptations for pregnant women and women who have recently given birth and are breastfeeding;



- development of parental leave schemes, childcare and other social welfare and social security schemes that can relieve women of caregiver tasks, increase security in old age and generate employment for women;
- mainstreaming the gender perspective in legal reform, including women's rights to inherit and own land, housing and other property regardless of marital status;
- analysis of women's interests in formalisation programmes, and efforts to ensure that these are taken into account and safeguarded with regard to inheritance, ownership, business interests, collective and user rights, and the opportunity for women to promote their rights through local courts and mediation mechanisms;
- support for NGOs/voluntary organisations and initiatives that promote and safeguard women's rights through informal mechanisms for conflict resolution and legal advice at local level;
- development of infrastructure that makes women's household and caregiver tasks easier and improves women's income opportunities and access to markets, for example piped water and electricity in the household, flour mills and local transport;
- analyses of the distribution of power, positions of authority and resources between women and men in society as a whole and within the household, with a view to increasing the visibility of women's value creation in the family, in society and in the informal economy, for example through time-use studies and satellite accounts to the core national accounts;<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> See Beijing Platform for Action, paragraph 206 f and g.

- compilation of sex-disaggregated labour and other economic statistics, and surveys of women's roles, opportunities and working conditions, and efforts to support the development of these in the formal and informal labour markets;
- surveys of and improvements to the working conditions for women labour migrants, including efforts to abolish all forms of child labour and reduce children's and young women's vulnerability to human trafficking, in line with the *Norwegian Government's Plan of Action to Combat Human Trafficking (2006–2009)*;
- implementation of measures and campaigns in the education system that challenge traditional male roles and give boys and men real opportunities to develop roles, attitudes and behaviour based on respect and equality between the sexes.

The central and local authorities, including the gender equality mechanisms; the social partners and the various private sector actors; NGOs, including women's networks and self-help organisations; research institutions and national bureaus of statistics are all important partners. Relevant multilateral partners include the International Labour Organization (ILO), with its agenda of decent work for all, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the World Bank, with its *Gender Equality as Smart Economics* plan, which was presented in 2006, and the regional development banks. UNDP has a broad mandate for fighting poverty. UNIFEM seeks to prevent the feminisation of poverty. The UN Commission on the Legal Empowerment of the Poor is also relevant in this context.

## **2.3 Sexual and reproductive health and rights**

Women's lack of control of their own sexuality and fertility is closely linked to a general lack of respect for women's rights. Young women are more vulnerable to HIV infection than young men, and in certain regions they are significantly overrepresented among the HIV infected. Poor antenatal and postnatal care and inadequate access to safe abortion on demand cause a significant health burden and increase pregnancy-related mortality. In most countries, abortion is allowed in certain cases and the treatment of complications from abortion is not illegal.

Paragraph 96 of the Beijing *Platform for Action*<sup>8</sup> sets out that: «The human rights of women include their right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence.» Article 12 of CEDAW requires the States Parties «to ensure, on the basis of equality of men and women, access to health care services, including those related to family planning,» and «appropriate services in connection with pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period, granting free services where necessary.» The *Maputo Plan of Action* of 2006 obliges the member states of the African Union (AU) to reduce unsafe abortions and increase access to safe abortions in accordance with national abortion legislation.

Sexuality is a controversial subject in many partner countries and in international forums, where strong forces are seeking to prevent openness in this field. This is impeding efforts to provide information on contraception, access to condoms, prevention of HIV/AIDS and efforts to stop unsafe abortions.

Norway will utilise international arenas, dialogue processes and programme support to raise controversial issues, and will advocate:

- the decriminalisation of abortion and of women who have had illegal abortions, so that they can safely seek treatment if complications arise;
- the decriminalisation of homosexuality and the fight to prevent all forms of discrimination and stigmatisation due to sexual orientation;<sup>9</sup>
- international acceptance for the concept of «sexual rights», including the right to safe abortion on demand, and equal treatment regardless of sexual orientation.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> UN Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995.

<sup>9</sup> The concept sexual orientation includes lesbians, homosexuals and transsexuals, i.e. people who feel psychological and social identification with the opposite sex, i.e. opposite to their somatic sex.

<sup>10</sup> The term «sexual rights» is not referred to specifically in CEDAW, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the platforms for action from the UN International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994 or the UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, but this concept is in line with the intention of these instruments.

Measures and processes that should be supported and promoted include:

- follow-up and implementation of national, regional and international targets and plans for realising sexual and reproductive health and rights;
- information and awareness-raising efforts via the education system, the health service, workplaces and other suitable channels that promote respect for women's sexual and reproductive health and rights in accordance with the intention of international and regional human rights instruments;<sup>11</sup>
- advice on family planning and contraception targeted to both women and men that takes the particular needs of young women and men into account, including the need for confidentiality;
- efforts to promote responsible sexual behaviour and mutual respect between sexual partners, with particular emphasis on changing men's attitudes and behaviour;
- building of knowledge and competence in relation to reproductive rights and health among health personnel, including awareness of the detrimental effects of female genital mutilation;
- development and improvement of reproductive health services, including investment in equipment for the whole range of reproductive health services, including contraception;
- measures to make safe abortion available to poor women in both rural and urban areas, including improving the availability of drug-induced abortion and the treatment of complications;
- advocacy to decriminalise abortion, including research on and surveys of the incidence of abortion and related problems and exchange of information and experience between countries and regions;
- support for organisations and efforts seeking to abolish legal and other discrimination and stigmatisation due to sexual orientation;
- information on and measures to promote rights, protection, rehabilitation and alternative income opportunities for women and men in prostitution, or at risk of being drawn into prostitution or falling victim to human trafficking;
- information campaigns and projects that make men more aware of the consequences of purchasing sexual services, for example being party to the sexual exploitation of women and children through human trafficking and increasing the spread of HIV/AIDS.

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<sup>11</sup> See footnote 9, and in addition the African Union's Maputo Plan of Action for Sexual and Reproductive Health, adopted by health ministers in Mozambique on 22 September 2006.

Important partners include the public authorities, health personnel, NGOs and other civil society actors. International NGOs play a particularly important role in promoting women's sexual and reproductive health and rights. The World Health Organization (WHO) is at the core of the UN's efforts to promote women's sexual and reproductive health and rights. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is a key actor at country level in the promotion of women's sexual and reproductive rights, family planning, and information measures on health and sexuality.

## **2.4 Violence against women**

Gender-based violence and the use of force, including harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation, are to a large extent a question of control and failure to respect and safeguard women's human rights. Gender-based violence is linked to rigid gender roles, and differences in expectations, opportunities and limitations between women and men, and between boys and girls. Gender-based violence prevents women from living full lives and taking part in society throughout their life cycle. It reinforces discrimination of women in education, prevents them from participating in political, cultural and social arenas, and from gaining control over economic resources. Violence against women may be based on local beliefs, culture and tradition, and in many cases is tolerated and sanctioned. Both women and men may contribute to gender discrimination being upheld. Female genital mutilation is, for example, perpetrated by women.

Measures and processes that should be supported and promoted include:

- mainstreaming the gender perspective in law reform and reform of the justice sector, with a view to realising women's rights in both urban and rural areas, protecting women from violence and sexual abuse within and outside the family, and prosecuting the perpetrators of violence;
- publicly and privately initiated awareness-raising and education campaigns to combat all forms of gender-based violence, including measures to mobilise boys and men in the fight against violence;
- efforts that promote women's rights in the interface between state law and religious and customary law and practices, including advocacy and low-threshold services for poor women in rural and urban areas;
- measures implemented by government or non-governmental organisations

The CEDAW Committee recommends that the States Parties report on legislation, the establishment of women's refuges and other measures to protect women against all forms of violence, sexual abuse and harassment in the family, the workplace, etc., with the inclusion of data documenting the extent of all forms of violence against women.<sup>12</sup>

tions to promote changes in attitudes and the abolishment of harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation, forced marriage, child marriage, honour-related and dowry-related violence, etc., with particular emphasis on follow-up of the *Norwegian Government's International Action Plan for Combating Female Genital Mutilation* of 2003;

- measures to change attitudes and establish alternative livelihoods for practitioners of female genital mutilation;
- hotlines and women's refuges offering advice, protection and assistance to women who have been subject to violence and sexual abuse within or outside the family, including protection, follow-up and rehabilitation services for women who have been victims of human trafficking, in accordance with the *Norwegian Government's Plan of Action to Combat Human Trafficking (2006–2009)*;
- treatment for men who perpetrate violence in their close relationships;
- women's initiatives to organise and mobilise public opinion at country level, and build expertise and capacity in civil society and the media, with a view to enhancing its ability to provide support, set demands, and hold the country's authorities responsible for fulfilling international obligations and national targets relating to women's rights and gender equality.

Partners include the public authorities, women's organisations, human rights organisations and other civil society actors working for women's rights, conducting awareness-raising campaigns or offering relevant services at grassroots level. UNIFEM, UNFPA and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) are all important multilateral partners.

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<sup>12</sup> Violence against women is not dealt with directly in CEDAW, but the CEDAW Committee has drawn up two statements that set out why violence against women is in contravention of the Convention.

# 3



WOMEN'S CLINIC



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# **3 • Mainstreaming the gender perspective into all development cooperation**

A coherent international development policy is dependent on women's rights and gender equality being promoted along more than one track. Women's rights and gender equality must be mainstreamed in a concrete, measurable way in all development cooperation, with clear guidelines for how they are to be promoted in sectors that have other primary goals. This chapter focuses on gender mainstreaming in the four other priority areas the Government has identified.<sup>13</sup> Development cooperation in the fields of education and health is also discussed in this chapter. Seeing the priority areas in relation to one another will enable us to learn from experience and realise synergy effects. Norway will thus be able to take a coherent and integrated approach to development cooperation and the total achievement of results will be strengthened.

## **3.1 Peacebuilding, human rights and humanitarian assistance**

In war and conflict situations, women are often totally marginalised, unable to take part in or influence decision-making. At the same time the daily lives of women and children are brutalised through the lawlessness that characterises conflict situations and many post-conflict situations. Rape and the kidnapping of children as child soldiers and sex slaves are widespread in many conflict areas. The *Norwegian Government's Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security* will set the course for all Norwegian conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts. Norway will seek to achieve a good gender balance in its own delegations and negotiation teams in peace and reconciliation efforts.

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<sup>13</sup> Women's rights and gender equality make up one of a total of five priority areas for development cooperation.

In its conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts, Norway will ensure that:

- the gender perspective is mainstreamed in the planning, implementation and evaluation of Norway's conflict prevention, peace and reconciliation efforts;
- women's peace and reconciliation initiatives are acknowledged and acted upon;
- women's interests are taken into account and safeguarded in situations of armed conflict and in humanitarian crises;
- women participate in peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts, and are included in needs analyses in connection with reconstruction;
- women's needs are met in connection with disarmament and reintegration of persons who have been involved with the armed forces, including child soldiers;
- extensive measures are implemented to stop violence in the family and the local community;
- humanitarian organisations and other NGOs, church networks and other faith-based organisations that receive support from Norway are required to make active and focused efforts to safeguard the rights of women and children in war, conflict and post-conflict areas.

### ***Human rights***

Promoting women's rights and gender equality is an important part of Norway's human rights efforts. Norway will protect and promote women's rights as political actors, members of society, private individuals and family members. It is important to take into account the fact that women and men are to some extent subject to different types of violations of human rights. While men are more likely to be persecuted directly by the state, women tend to suffer violations of human rights in the private sphere due to the authorities' inability or lack of will to protect them. In its efforts to safeguard human rights, Norway will:

- support actors, initiatives and processes at country level that seek to realise women's right to equality and to combat all forms of gender discrimination in accordance with CEDAW, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;



- utilise suitable international forums, such as the UN Human Rights Council, to promote women's human rights, including considerations relating to gender-based and honour-related violence, rape within and outside marriage/partnerships and sexual abuse/crimes in peacetime, wartime and conflict and post-conflict situations;
- encourage partner countries to safeguard women's rights and gender equality in accordance with their own human rights obligations, and to include women's rights and gender equality issues in poverty analyses, development plans, national budgets and poverty reduction strategies;
- emphasise women's full and equal rights in the dialogue with partner countries, with emphasis on issues that relate to this action plan's thematic priority areas. Such issues include freedom of movement, education and occupational opportunities, parenthood and custody, marriage and divorce, control of sexuality and reproduction, individual and equal rights to inheritance and to own land, housing and other property regardless of marital status;

- raise concrete issues in connection with women's rights and gender equality at all stages of our human rights dialogues with China, Indonesia and Vietnam.

### ***Humanitarian assistance***

Women are particularly vulnerable to violence and sexual abuse in crisis or emergency situations, whether caused by human activity or natural disasters. The distribution of food and other emergency assistance supplies, the need to fetch water and fuel outside the camp area, and poor sanitary conditions can entail critical situations. In all its humanitarian efforts, Norway will ensure that:

- gender imbalances and the particular vulnerability of women and children in crises are analysed and systematically dealt with;
- both women and men take part at all levels of planning, organisation and the general management of refugee camps, humanitarian camps and emergency operations;
- women are systematically registered and treated as individuals rather than solely as members of a man's family;
- targeted measures are implemented to prevent violence and sexual abuse of women and children in connection with humanitarian interventions;
- camps are organised so that single women and single men are quartered in separate parts of the camp;
- sanitary conditions, health services, and access to food, water and fuel are organised with a view to protecting women from sexual abuse, and that the camps are well lit and protection is provided both day and night;
- education, training and occupational opportunities are equally available for both sexes.

### **3.2 Good governance, institution building and the fight against corruption**

Good governance requires a country's political leadership and authorities to govern in accordance with the will, interests and rights of the people. This means that there must be a good framework for open and democratic social development. In its efforts to promote good governance and institution building, Norway will:

- seek to strengthen women's rights and participation at all levels of society as an integral part of democratic reforms, strengthening the free media and developing legal institutions and judicial reform;
- mainstream the gender perspective in institution building, administration and service provision in the public and private sectors, by ensuring equal participation of women and men at all levels of political and economic decision-making, and ensuring that public services equally benefit and are tailored to the needs of both sexes;
- actively seek to inform both women and men about democracy and election processes, which may involve establishing forums and meeting places specifically for women;
- contribute to and support capacity- and competence-building through the compilation, analysis and use of sex-disaggregated statistics in social planning, the government budget and national auditing;
- seek to increase understanding of and interest in a good gender balance at all levels and an equitable distribution of public resources between women and men as key criteria for good governance.

### ***Fight against corruption***

Corruption is an obstacle to all social development and tends to keep both women and men in poverty. The fight against corruption must include all levels of public and private services and administration. Norway will:

- ensure that the fight against corruption includes the interface between poor women and men and the public authorities;
- ensure that the fight against corruption includes measures to abolish bribery in the public services that are important for women, including health, education, the police and the judiciary, and the registering of property and businesses;
- acknowledge that the extortion of sexual services is a form of corruption and abuse that particularly affects women and must be combated.

### **3.3 The environment and sustainable development**

Women in many developing countries have extensive knowledge about local natural resources, food security and strategies for preventing and reducing vulnerability to drought, flooding, landslides, etc. Women are often

particularly hard hit by environmental degradation, because they have the main responsibility for the family's food production through subsistence farming, and for providing water and fuel for cooking, heating and hygiene. Good sanitary conditions are decisive for women's health and for reducing infant mortality. It is particularly important for women and girls to have satisfactory sanitary arrangements at schools, workplaces and the home because they are vulnerable to violence and abuse. This is also important in order to prevent girls leaving school when they reach puberty. In its environmental cooperation, Norway will:

- seek to ensure that both women and men are secured active participation in the management of local natural resources, particularly water resources and forest resources that are used for fuel, food and medicines;
- seek to ensure that women's local knowledge is fully acknowledged and put into practice in cooperation on reducing vulnerability and developing strategies in relation to natural disasters and climate change;
- seek to ensure that women are secured property and user rights to agricultural land along the same lines as men in connection with agricultural production and harvesting food resources;
- promote the right to food and water for both women and men, which is closely linked to equitable and sustainable development of the agricultural sector and other sectors that are dependent on natural resources;
- be at the forefront of efforts to meet the sanitation targets set at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002, with emphasis on meeting the needs of women as a vital factor in achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on health, education, gender equality and the environment.

### **3.4 Oil and energy**

Oil production has great potential for stimulating employment and knowledge generation, and for financing welfare development. Energy is important for women's health, work and education and for reducing the time women spend on household tasks. Indoor air pollution due to the use of open fires for cooking and polluting sources of light cause considerable health damage to women and children. In its oil and energy cooperation, Norway will:



- seek to ensure the participation and safeguard interests of both women and men in connection with the implementation of the *Oil for Development* programme;
- be at the forefront of efforts to ensure that both women and men participate at all levels in the management of natural resources in partner countries;
- take a proactive role in promoting the responsible and equitable distribution of revenues from oil and energy production so that these resources benefit all population groups, and both women's and men's needs and priorities are taken into consideration in the management of these revenues;
- contribute to the creation of jobs and livelihoods for both women and men in connection with the oil industry and in the production and distribution of clean energy;
- support sustainable, safe energy solutions that ease women's burden of work and improve their access to health services and education;

- support the development and use of clean energy solutions, such as solar energy, that reduce indoor air pollution;
- promote the active participation of women in decision-making and implementation processes relating to the supply of water and energy to workplaces and households.

### **3.5 Education and health**

Development of the education and health sectors is very important for the realisation of women's rights and gender equality. These sectors have been given high priority in Norway's development cooperation and considerable progress has been made. However, much remains to be done.

*Article 10 of CEDAW sets out that States Parties are to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure the same conditions for career and vocational guidance, for access to studies and for the achievement of diplomas.*

*Article 12 sets out that States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, access to health care services, including those related to family planning, and ensure to women appropriate services in connection with pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period, granting free services where necessary, as well as adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation.*

In its development cooperation within education and health, Norway will:

- mainstream women's rights and gender equality into its cooperation efforts in these sectors;
- support key UN organisations and initiatives that seek to realise the right of girls to complete primary, secondary and tertiary education, give

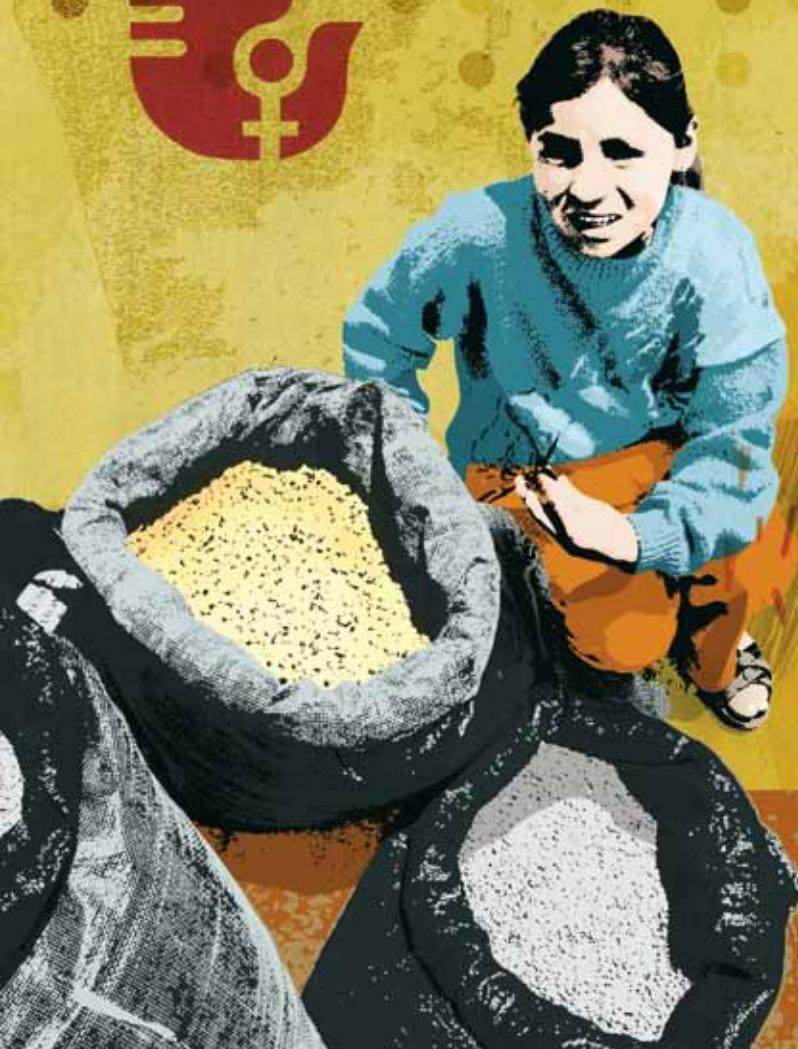
women access to opportunities to learn to read and write, and promote training and good working conditions for women teachers at all levels;

- seek to abolish school fees, promote incentives for sending children, particularly girls, to school, promote security and protection against abuse and support the development of gender-sensitive teaching materials;
- emphasise the need to address the gender dimension and promote women's participation in knowledge generation in development studies in its development cooperation on higher education and research;
- direct particular attention to access to water and sanitation in the education sector, with emphasis on women's needs;
- support and promote the development of primary and district health services, that are of particular importance to women;
- be at the forefront of efforts to ensure that safe abortion and treatment of any complications are given priority and followed up in sector programmes and health sector reforms;
- support the introduction of social security schemes that take both women's and men's needs into account.

Multilateral organisations are important partners, in addition to the authorities, NGOs and other civil society actors. UNICEF, the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Education for All initiative are all key actors in the education sector. WHO, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), and UNFPA are seeking to ensure that women and men have equal access to general health services and to safeguard women's particular needs in relation to pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period.



# 4



## **4 • The main channels for Norway's development assistance**

There are two main channels for Norway's development assistance: multilateral and bilateral. *Multilateral* assistance includes general contributions to the multilateral organisations (approximately 29% of Norway's total development assistance in 2005). In addition, Norway provides earmarked funds for what is known as multi-bilateral assistance. Our multi-bilateral assistance is increasing, and in 2005 amounted to nearly 25% of our total development assistance. *Bilateral* assistance accounted for 44% in 2005. A large proportion of our bilateral assistance is channelled through NGOs and other civil society actors. The embassies<sup>14</sup> administer just under half our bilateral development assistance, i.e. just under 20% of the total development assistance budget. Most of these funds are for government-to-government cooperation.

### **4.1 Norway's policy vis-à-vis the multilateral organisations**

The UN system, the World Bank and the regional development banks are important partners in our international development cooperation. UNIFEM is the only organisation in the UN system that focuses solely on women's rights and gender equality at global, regional and national level. UNIFEM's mandate is to play an innovative and catalytic role in efforts to promote the rights of women and gender equality at country level and vis-à-vis the rest of the UN system. Norway is to be a major contributor to UNIFEM and to the new, stronger, independent UN agency that the UN High-Level Panel on Reform has recommended be established to promote women's rights and gender equality. Other key multilateral partners for Norway are UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF. UNDP is the leading UN actor in the fight against poverty and efforts to promote good governance, and is responsible for the coordination of the UN country teams. UNFPA's mandate includes a strong

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<sup>14</sup> Embassies here refer to embassies with responsibility for development cooperation.

focus on promoting women's rights and gender equality, with emphasis on family planning and sexual and reproductive health and rights. UNICEF is a key actor in the education and health sectors. In addition to its efforts to promote children's rights, it seeks to improve the situation of women.

Norway will give priority to cooperation within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) forum GENDERNET. In this cooperation priority will be given to developing a good international system for identifying and measuring the effect of development assistance aimed at promoting women's rights and gender equality.

Norway wishes to direct attention to the position of women in the emerging democracies in Europe and to promote strong engagement by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in Central Asia and the Caucasus. In this connection, Norway will give priority to the efforts of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) to ensure that women participate to a greater extent in the current democratisation processes. Norway will furthermore seek to ensure that OSCE's structures mainstream the gender perspective in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict reconstruction, see UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Norway will also help to develop strategies for increasing the proportion of women in the organisation, particularly in top positions.

Norway will advocate gender mainstreaming in the core activities of all the UN organisations and the multilateral finance institutions. Norway will give priority to cooperation with multilateral organisations that develop and implement clear and concrete targets and tools for promoting women's rights and gender equality.

Norway will seek to cooperate with like-minded countries and actors in both the North and the South with a view to ensuring that standpoints and initiatives we consider important have the greatest possible impact. Norway will advocate and support:

- the establishment of a strong, independent normative and operational UN entity for women's rights and gender equality, which could involve a merger of UNIFEM, the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI) and the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), in line with the recommendations of the UN High-Level Panel on Reform;
- UN country teams incorporating an explicit gender equality profile and supporting the national authorities and civil society in their efforts to promote women's rights and gender equality;
- Norway's cooperation partners in the UN system implementing gender mainstreaming, including the setting of explicit targets within their core areas of operation and mandates;
- the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the regional banks allocating more resources for concrete interventions in key areas such as water, energy, sanitation, roads, health, education and other infrastructure that will improve women's access to markets and services, employment in the formal labour market and public welfare services.

The UN organisations and the multilateral finance institutions have committed themselves to the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Norway will hold the multilateral organisations accountable for progress with particular focus on MDG 3 on gender equality and the empowerment of women, MDG 4 on reducing child mortality, and MDG 5 on improving maternal health. Norway will also follow the progress made on women's rights and gender equality in relation to the other MDGs.

Norway will cooperate with the multilateral organisations on promoting women's rights and gender equality at country level. Norway will utilise the opportunities it has through representation on boards and letters of allocation and other allocation documents to set demands for systematic activities, monitoring and evaluations. The purpose is to ensure gender mainstreaming at all levels of activity internally and externally.

Norway will require the organisations it supports to:

- document the allocation of both economic and human resources for both targeted action and mainstreaming of the gender perspective;
- present their gender-related policy commitments, results areas and targets, and how they will report and evaluate them;
- ensure that their leadership shows explicit commitment to gender equality and demands results from all levels of staff;
- present the measures and mechanisms that are in place to ensure gender-sensitive implementation of their activities in the field;
- present the targets and mechanisms for promoting gender balance at all levels of the organisation, with emphasis on recruiting women from developing countries;
- report results in terms of the gender-specific indicators for the MDGs, with particular emphasis on MDGs 3, 4 and 5.

## **4.2 Norway's policy vis-à-vis partner countries**

Norway will push the gender perspective higher up on the development agenda through targeted use of the relevant forums and channels for policy dialogue and the allocation of funds. We will utilise our opportunities to exert an influence, including in situations where women's rights and gender equality are not an explicit priority for our partners.

### ***The principle of ownership***

The promotion of gender equality must be linked up to the partner countries' own development targets and international commitments, and tailored to local challenges and opportunities for change.

Most of Norway's partner countries have acceded to CEDAW, and are required to report every four years to the CEDAW Committee. After its analysis of the report and subsequent dialogue with the authorities, the Committee draws up concluding comments with recommendations for follow-up in the country in question. These concluding comments form a good basis for cooperation on the target country's own terms and should be used actively in development cooperation. Various regional bodies have

adopted declarations on women's rights, for example the AU has drawn up the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, which member countries have undertaken to follow up and report on. Norway interprets ownership to the development process in broad terms, encompassing both women and men, and the prioritisation of national targets and strategies for promoting women's rights and gender equality.

### ***Tailoring to the country context***

There is a need to identify the main challenges in terms of women's rights and gender equality, as well as the local actors that embassies and other Norwegian development cooperation actors can work with and channel support through. It is important to identify and utilise the opportunities, forums and channels where Norwegian actors are already active, have gained credibility and developed good relations. Relevant issues to address include participation, access to and control over resources, and the impact of policies and programmes – for both women and men. Account must be taken of groups that can be vulnerable to double or multiple discrimination due to the combination of gender and other axes of discrimination. These include factors such as ethnicity/race, including belonging to an indigenous population, sexual orientation, and disability. Women's rights and gender equality must be prioritised in the day-to-day activities, through dialogue and support for the country's own agents of change at government level, in publicly elected bodies and in civil society. Even in situations where the framework conditions seem non-conducive, and where it can be difficult to achieve concrete results in the short term, efforts must be made in line with the intention of this action plan.

### ***Sensitive issues***

With regard to sensitive issues, such as abortion and homosexuality, which are prohibited in many countries, Norway can provide moral and economic support to organisations and projects that promote rights in these areas. Norway can also use its policy dialogues with national authorities to express concern about a country's reactions to prohibited activities, for example by questioning the use of the death penalty and other severe penalties for homosexuality, abortion or adultery, where relevant. Norway's efforts with



regard to sensitive and culturally rooted discrimination against women are frequently channelled through local agents for change. Examples are efforts to combat female genital mutilation and the general promotion of women's rights in the interface between state law and religious and customary law and practices. State law safeguards women's formal rights in many cases, but the national authorities may not be able to enforce these laws at the local level.

Norway will promote women's rights and gender equality by:

- making active use of the policy dialogue and other cooperation processes with the country's authorities, including its gender equality mechanisms;
- utilising the country's own expertise and local agents of change;
- supporting the implementation of national development targets for women's rights and gender equality in poverty reduction strategies, action plans, sector strategies, reform processes, etc., and requesting gender-specific results data;

- systematically requesting gender relevant targets and results for the allocation of public resources, in its cooperation and dialogue on budget support, poverty reduction strategies, sector plans, etc.;
- supporting gender mainstreaming in the public sector, including capacity- and competence-building for gender equality mechanisms, and the compilation of sex-disaggregated statistics, and gender equality targets and indicators;
- promoting and supporting initiatives to mainstream the gender perspective in the preparation of the national budget (gender budgeting), and supporting the development of good control and auditing routines for the national budget and national accounts, with the objective of ensuring that public resources are administered in the best possible way for both women and men;
- supporting the authorities' and others' efforts to comply with CEDAW and report to the CEDAW Committee, including follow-up of the Committee's country-specific comments and recommendations, in addition to obligations under regional declarations, charters etc.
- encouraging countries that have not done so to ratify CEDAW, and encouraging governments to withdraw any reservations that they may have made;
- supporting knowledge generation and cooperation relating to developments and experience gained in the field of women's rights and gender equality, in regional, national and international research institutions and networks;
- supporting local actors' efforts to improve women's rights and gender equality through the media, information and educational activities, lobbying and services provided at grassroots level;
- taking initiatives in and contributing to broad arenas of cooperation and contact between the authorities, donors and civil society from different parts of the country.

Norway will promote women's rights and gender equality in multi-donor cooperation, for example by:

- taking the lead in relation to gender equality in multi-donor cooperation;
- seeking cooperation with other donors and local actors on organising courses, seminars and networks on women's rights and gender equality that are tailored to the national context;

- cooperating with Norwegian NGOs, the UN system, the authorities and local actors on identifying qualified NGOs and other civil society actors for participation in relevant forums for dialogue, processes and arenas for contact and cooperation.

Partners at country level encompass a wide range of actors, including the national authorities, bilateral and multilateral actors, national, Norwegian and international NGOs, special interest organisations such as the social partners, faith-based organisations, research centres, publicly elected bodies, the media and the private sector. Norway will ensure that cooperation includes both women and men.

### **4.3 Civil society**

In Norway, civil society has played an important role in shaping democratic development, including the position of women and the realisation of women's rights. The establishment of women's networks and interest groups and the participation of women in organisations in general have influenced the national agenda. Norwegian organisations have acquired experience and knowledge of women's rights and gender equality, which constitutes important added value for Norway's international development efforts.

Civil society includes NGOs, formal interest organisations such as trade unions and informal interest groups, networks and organisations such as local self-help groups and religious communities. The concept can be expanded to include the media and political parties.

Norway will support an active civil society in the South, which can play an advocacy role and promote accountability vis-à-vis national authorities. It can make important contributions to promoting women's rights and gender equality. Measures to strengthen the competence and capacity of civil society to play such a role will be given high priority. Women's organisations and networks in developing countries will be supported directly through Norwegian embassies, national and regional umbrella organisations and trust funds.

Norwegian NGOs will also be key partners. A basic condition for allocation of funds via Norwegian organisations is that they must provide added value. The objective of such allocations must also be increased participation of women in decision-making and improvements to women's lives.

Through its allocations to Norwegian and international NGOs for international development efforts, Norway will:

- provide a framework for exchange of experience and dialogue between NGOs and their local partners on women's rights and gender equality;
- request reports on the results achieved in cooperation efforts to promote women's rights and gender equality;
- underline the responsibility of NGOs to also align their activities with the action plans on women, peace and security, human trafficking, and female genital mutilation;
- support competence- and capacity-building in Norwegian NGOs and their partner organisations with regard to women's rights and gender equality;
- ensure active participation of Norwegian NGOs in gender equality advocacy vis-à-vis the UN system and the development banks;
- give priority to NGO efforts that support the thematic priority areas set out in this action plan and the rights of women to education and health;
- provide a framework to enable women to participate in and exert influence on the leadership of local organisations on equal terms with men.

# 5



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# **5 • Accountability and knowledge**

The foreign service will give priority to women's rights and gender equality both as an independent target and as an integral part of all development cooperation. Organisation, leadership, knowledge and competence will be strengthened with this in view.

## **5.1 The development cooperation administration**

Norway will strive to be a role model with regard to gender balance vis-à-vis our partner countries. This will require intensified efforts to achieve a good gender balance at all levels of the foreign service. Strong political and administrative leadership is needed to meet this requirement.

Efforts in this area will include:

- heads of departments, sections and project units that have a development cooperation portfolio in the Ministry, and heads of units in Norad must ensure that they have sufficient competence and capacity to promote women's rights and gender equality within their own areas of responsibility;
- the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' part of the government budget proposition (Proposition No. 1 to the Storting) will be drawn up in line with the Ministry of Children and Equality's guidelines for gender equality analysis in ministry budget propositions, with a view to ensuring explicit and measurable results of the Government's commitment to promoting women's rights and gender equality in international development cooperation;
- plans and reports from the embassies will be used as tools for monitoring the implementation of this action plan and to evaluate the need for follow-up measures;
- the letters of allocation to the embassies are to state clearly that the requirements and expectations of this action plan must be met;
- the letters of allocation to Norad, Norfund and FK Norway (Fredskorpset) and agreements with institutions that receive development funds must

- include requirements on the development of a system for reporting on women's rights and gender equality;
- the letters of allocation to multilateral cooperation partners must include requirements for activities related to women's rights and gender equality;
  - the statistical coding of projects that have been coded with OECD DAC policy marker «Gender equality» are currently being assessed. Norway cooperates with the OECD DAC network GENDERNET on improvements of the system;
  - the gender perspective must be mainstreamed in the framework agreements with Norwegian agencies;
  - in its cooperation with the multilateral system, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will consult with the relevant line ministries and utilise their expertise.

### ***Section for Global Initiatives and Gender Equality***

The Section for Global Initiatives and Gender Equality is a centre of expertise providing advice on women's rights and gender equality to other units in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It will ensure that Norway is kept up-to-date in this field and participates actively in a broad range of gender equality networks and forums in Norway, in the Nordic region and at the international level. The section will provide advice and act as a watchdog with a view to ensuring that women's rights and gender equality are explicitly and systematically taken on board in Norway's international development policy. The section will work closely with the other units in the Ministry that have an independent responsibility to mainstream the gender perspective in their areas of responsibility. Norad will provide technical advice on women's rights and gender equality to the embassies and the units in the Ministry that are responsible for international development.

### ***The embassies***

Heads of mission must ensure that:

- the whole of the embassy's international development portfolio is reviewed to ensure that the gender perspective is being taken into account in a concrete way in the follow-up of measures and reporting of results;
- the embassy has sufficient capacity and expertise to deal with women's rights and gender equality in connection with its international develop-

- ment portfolio. It may be expedient to cooperate with local actors and other donors on developing a training programme that is tailored to the local context;
- an analysis is made of thematic challenges and opportunities relating to follow-up of this action plan in the country in question. It may be appropriate to seek external technical support, possibly in cooperation with other donors. The analysis should examine the partner country's own competence, targets and plans relating to women's rights and gender equality, and identify strategic partners and agents of change among the authorities, in civil society, and among other development cooperation partners.

The analysis will be used to prepare a plan or strategy for each embassy's efforts to promote women's rights and gender equality in line with the thematic priority areas set out in this action plan. The plan or strategy will take a dual approach through targeted measures and mainstreaming the gender perspective in the rest of the development cooperation portfolio. It is recommended that efforts are concentrated on one or two of the thematic priority areas, see Chapter 2. The analysis should also identify indicators for measuring results. The scope of the efforts will be decided according to the capacity of the embassy in question. It is possible to apply for additional resources to hire external local gender expertise in connection with the analysis or follow-up of particular efforts, see Chapter 6.

## **5.2 Knowledge generation**

Research and knowledge generation on gender and development in both partner countries and Norwegian centres of expertise are vital for competence- and capacity-building, and for increasing understanding of how women contribute to development and what measures are most effective. The gender perspective must be explicitly mainstreamed in the Ministry's allocation of funds for research, competence-raising and evaluation. Gender training will be provided for foreign service employees by the Ministry's Foreign Service Institute. Norad's role as advice and support centre on women's rights and gender equality in development cooperation will be strengthened. The ability to mainstream the gender perspective in all other fields of development cooperation must also be strengthened.



- *Research and knowledge generation* on gender and development will be stimulated, with emphasis on knowledge generation and competence building in partner countries and cooperation with Norwegian centres of expertise.
- *Analyses and fact sheets* will be prepared on the priority areas covered by this action plan, including on gender mainstreaming in the fight against poverty and corruption, and efforts to promote economic growth, good governance and human rights, sustainable development, efforts relating to petroleum, energy and trade, and humanitarian efforts, etc.
- The guidelines for budget support will take the gender perspective into account.
- *Evaluations* carried out or commissioned by the development cooperation administration will be gender sensitive, in accordance with the

new standard requirements for gender disaggregated information and explicit mainstreaming of the gender perspective.

- *Seminars* to increase focus on and knowledge of gender issues among development cooperation actors in Norway will be arranged in cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norad and external organisations. These will concentrate on the thematic priority areas set out in Chapter 2.
- *Regional seminars* on women's rights and gender equality will be arranged for embassies. The aim is that two regional seminars will be held each year.
- Regional resource persons on women's rights and gender equality, and women, peace and security will be identified with a view to forming centres of expertise for initiatives in the region.
- We will seek to establish a *virtual network* and discussion forum on women's rights and gender equality in development cooperation.
- The establishment of *arenas for exchange of experience with NGOs* on women's rights and gender equality is being considered.

### ***Training***

- The gender perspective will be explicitly mainstreamed in courses provided by the Ministry's Foreign Service Institute.
- In-depth training on women's rights and gender equality in development cooperation will be provided, as well as more specialised courses on women, peace and security and the follow-up of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Other courses may be offered according to need. The interest in electronic courses and other training programmes in this field designed for employees at foreign service missions is being considered.
- Where relevant, the Ministry's Foreign Service Institute's courses will include training in coding information for statistical purposes in accordance with OECD DAC policy marker «Gender equality».

# 6



## 6 • Results

The most important factor for good results is the explicit commitment of leadership at both political and administrative level. Strong, catalytic mechanisms in the Ministry and Norad will ensure quality, continuity and momentum throughout the development process. This will require sufficient human and financial resources.

The budget will be a tool for measuring results. Chapter 10 of the budget proposal for the Ministry for 2006–2007 quantifies the amounts that can be tracked to expenditure for gender equality as either the principal or a significant objective in bilateral and multilateral development efforts. The percentage of funding that can be defined as being targeted towards women has varied between 17% and 22% in the 2002–2005 period. The aim is to see a steady increase during the period covered by this action plan (2007–2009).

A new budget item chapter 168 /70 for women's rights and gender equality has been added under the international development budget. The funds are channelled in part through the embassies. The remaining amount is channelled through multilateral and international organisations to innovative and catalytic efforts to promote women's rights and gender equality.

The new budget item does not replace but comes in addition to a greater emphasis on gender equality in other budget items in the international development budget.

The embassies must plan for and report on the follow-up of this action plan in their annual planning and reporting processes vis-à-vis the Ministry. Reports must include concrete results and examples of targeted activities, as well as information on more long-term efforts to exert an influence through the policy dialogue, and in multi-donor cooperation, etc. The evaluation will be based on both quantitative and qualitative factors and will examine process as well as results. The embassies will be evaluated on the extent to which they have raised and gained acceptance for gender equality issues in their policy dialogues. Consideration is to be taken of the short time frame – three years – of this action plan.

In the long term, it will be possible to measure the results of Norway's efforts using country-specific indicators, where these have been developed. Other important indicators are those for MDG 3 on gender equality, MDG 4 on reducing child mortality and MDG 5 on improving maternal health, and the gender-specific indicators for the other MDGs.

The allocation of extra resources may be considered to improve results in certain partner countries, including for large-scale implementation of well-tested measures, and testing and learning from more innovative measures. Such efforts may link up to relevant international processes, such as UN reform and the «one UN at country level» concept, the High-level Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor and the World Bank's Action Plan *Gender Equality as Smart Economics*. Efforts will be developed in cooperation with the relevant embassies and responsible sections in the Ministry.

### ***Monitoring***

A progress plan will be drawn up, and a midterm report will be submitted to the Minister of International Development. The Section for Global Initiatives and Gender Equality will be responsible for coordinating the follow-up. In order to facilitate the implementation of this action plan, a milestone meeting will be held with internal and external experts and centres of expertise in connection with drawing up the status report.

External expertise will be used to identify indicators for measuring results. A baseline study will be carried out, and the implementation of this action plan will be examined. At the end of the action plan period, a qualitative and quantitative evaluation of results will be made with recommendations for future policy and action on women's rights and gender equality in development cooperation.

### ***Coordination with other action plans and strategies***

Norway has developed action plans for particularly important and complex areas relating to women's rights and gender equality in the interface between international development policy and foreign policy. The *Norwegian Government's Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security*, which was launched



on 8 March 2006, provides guidelines for safeguarding women's rights in war and conflict situations, involving both women and men as participants, and mainstreaming the gender perspective in Norway's conflict-prevention and peacebuilding efforts. The *Norwegian Government's Plan of Action to Combat Human Trafficking (2006–2009)* entails increased efforts to empower women and reduce their vulnerability to recruitment to and abuse in today's slave trade. Most of the victims are women and children, both girls and boys, who are trafficked across borders for sexual exploitation through prostitution, forced labour or the illegal organ trade. The *Norwegian Government's International Action Plan for Combating Female Genital Mutilation* was adopted in 2003, and is still in operation.

Further details of Norway's efforts to fight the severe oppression, exploitation and abuse of women in these areas can be found in the respective plans.

The results of all these action plans will be examined in connection with the overall evaluation of women's rights and gender equality in development cooperation.

Other strategies and action plans relating to development cooperation also take women and girls into account. Of particular relevance are:

*Position Paper on Norway's HIV/AIDS Policy in Development Cooperation* of November 2006, *Norwegian Action Plan for Environment in Development Cooperation* of 2006, and *Norway's Development Strategy for Children and Young People in the South*, which was launched in 2005. Other relevant strategies and plans are described in the *Development Cooperation Manual*.

Emphasis will be given to identifying the results of these strategies for women and gender equality in the overall evaluation of gender mainstreaming in all development cooperation.

## **Annex 1: Acronyms and abbreviations**

AU	African Union
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
<b>CEDAW Committee</b>	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DAW	Division for the Advancement of Women in the UN Secretariat
ECOSOC	UN Economic and Social Council
IFC	International Finance Corporation
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
Norfund	Norwegian Investment Fund for Developing Countries
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE)
OECD DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Co-operation Directorate
OSAGI	Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues (UN)
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
SADC	South African Development Community
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
WHO	World Health Organization

## **Annex 2: Key reference documents**

**Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**  
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/cedaw.htm>

**Convention on the Rights of the Child**  
<http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/6/crc/treaties/crc.htm>

**International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination**  
<http://www.ohchr.org/english/law/cedr.htm>

**International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**  
<http://www.ohchr.org/english/law/cescr.htm>

**International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**  
<http://www.ohchr.org/english/law/ccpr.htm>

**Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995, Platform for Action**  
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/index.html>

**UN Millennium Development Goals**  
<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

**International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo 1994**  
<http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/populatin/icpd.htm>

**Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action**  
<http://www.ohchr.org/english/law/vienna.htm>

**ILO Convention no. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples**  
<http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/convde.pl?C169>

**ECOSOC agreed conclusions on gender mainstreaming**  
<http://www.un.org/documents/ecosoc/docs/1997/e1997-66.htm>

**UNSC Resolution 1325**  
<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf?OpenElement>

**UN Human Rights Council statement on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity of December 2006**

**Fighting Poverty Together, Report No. 35 (2003–2004) to the Storting**

<http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/ud/dok/regpubl/stmeld/20032004/Stmeld-nr-35-2003-2004-.html?id=404767>

**Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness – Ownership, Harmonisation, Alignment, Results and Mutual Accountability**

<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/11/41/34428351.pdf>

**Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003)**

[http://www.achpr.org/english/\\_info/women\\_en.html](http://www.achpr.org/english/_info/women_en.html)

<http://www.pambazuka.org/en/petition/1/protocol.pdf>

[http://www.africa-union.org/Official\\_documents/Treaties\\_%20Conventions\\_%20Protocols/Protocol%20on%20the%20Rights%20of%20Women.pdf](http://www.africa-union.org/Official_documents/Treaties_%20Conventions_%20Protocols/Protocol%20on%20the%20Rights%20of%20Women.pdf)

**AU Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (2004)**

<http://www.peacewomen.org/resources/1325/AfricaSolemnDec04.pdf>

**SADC Declaration on Gender and Development**

[http://www.sardc.net/widsaa/sgm/1999/sgm\\_genderdec.html](http://www.sardc.net/widsaa/sgm/1999/sgm_genderdec.html)

**Addendum Eradication of Violence against Women and Children (1997)**

[http://www.sardc.net/widsaa/sgm/1999/sgm\\_eradviol.html](http://www.sardc.net/widsaa/sgm/1999/sgm_eradviol.html)

[http://www.sadc.int/index.php?action=a1001&page\\_id=declarations\\_gender](http://www.sadc.int/index.php?action=a1001&page_id=declarations_gender)

[http://www.sardc.net/widsaa/sgm/1999/sgm\\_eraviol.html](http://www.sardc.net/widsaa/sgm/1999/sgm_eraviol.html)  
<http://databases.sardc.net/books/Gmonitor/view.php?bname=Gmonitor&id=31>

**SADC Charter for Fundamental and Social Rights**

[http://www.sadc.int/index.php?action=a1001&page\\_id=charters\\_social\\_rights](http://www.sadc.int/index.php?action=a1001&page_id=charters_social_rights)

**Maputo Plan of Action for the Operationalisation of the Continental Policy Framework for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (2007–2010)**

[http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/Conferences/Past/2006/September/SA/Maputo/doc/en/Working\\_en/SRHR\\_%20Plan\\_of\\_Action\\_2007\\_Final.pdf](http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/Conferences/Past/2006/September/SA/Maputo/doc/en/Working_en/SRHR_%20Plan_of_Action_2007_Final.pdf)

**The Pacific Platform for Action**

<http://www.spc.int/women/ppa.html>

**Development Studies Network, Women, Gender and Development  
in the Pacific (December 2005)**

<http://devnet.anu.edu.au:80/GenderPacific/index.html>

**Pacific Report to the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women  
(Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD)  
regional consultations)**

– APWLD Regional Consultations

<http://www.fijiwomen.com/index.php?id=1620>

**Law for Pacific Women: a Legal Rights Handbook, P. Imrana Jalal, Fiji  
Women's Rights Movement (FWRM), 1998, 674pp.**

**Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)**

**Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment  
and Eradication of Violence against Women «Belem do Para»**

<http://www.undp.org/rblac/gender/osavio.htm>

**Report of the Ninth Session of the Regional Conference on Women  
in Latin America and the Caribbean /Mexico City Consensus**

<http://www.cepal.cl/publicaciones/xml/1/15201/lcl2256i.pdf>

## **Annex 3: Toolbox**

### **Norad's Handbook in gender and empowerment assessment<sup>15</sup>**

#### **Introduction**

Gender and empowerment assessment is a means of bringing to the fore the connections between gender and the causes of inequality and poverty, and the importance of women's empowerment and gender equality in development cooperation. Drawing upon women's knowledge and resources is cost-effective and rational. It enhances the realisation of equal rights and the opportunities for women and men, and girls and boys to benefit from development programmes.

CEDAW, the Beijing Platform for Action and the MDGs provides a common framework that Norway and the international community have committed themselves to. Some programmes target women (or men) specifically, others mainstream the gender perspective in other sectors. The specific sector or programme focus will determine the level and extent of the gender and empowerment assessment.

#### **Preparatory phase**

##### **Platform for dialogue**

*It is important to clarify the gender perspective when assessing the sustainability of a development programme. An initial screening with regard to gender and potential impacts on women and men and gender equality should be carried out in the preparatory phase to determine whether more information and documentation are needed.*

The following questions should be considered when undertaking an initial gender and empowerment screening.

- Will both women and men be involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the project?
- Will the programme affect women and men differently? Who will benefit and who could be affected by any adverse effects of the proposed interventions and activities?
- Has the programme incorporated specific activities and mechanisms to ensure the equal participation of women and men? What are the potential barriers to participation of both women and men?

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<sup>15</sup> supplement to Norad's *Manual for Programme and Project Cycle Management*

If the initial screening shows that there is not sufficient information, the issue of gender must be discussed with the development partner to determine how it may be included in the programme document and whether a full gender impact assessment should be undertaken.

### ***Appraisal***

*The appraisal assesses the relevance, feasibility, potential risks and sustainability of a development programme. If the gender perspective has been identified as a sustainability factor, the appraisal must ascertain whether all the relevant aspects have been assessed, and if necessary, provide additional information or recommend that more information is acquired. In addition to a summary of the findings, the appraisal document is to include specific recommendations for amendments to the programme, where relevant. A revised programme document incorporating these amendments should be drawn up if possible.*

The following questions should be considered:

- Is the programme in line with national gender equality policies and priorities?
- Does the programme document contain sex-disaggregated baseline data and indicators that can be used to ensure that implementation, monitoring and reporting take proper account of women and men's empowerment?
- Is both women and men's knowledge and experience included and utilised in the programme, so as to ensure equal influence on decision-making?
- Does the programme include specific budget allocations and earmarked resources for activities targeting women/men and gender equality issues?

The following questions should also be considered where relevant:

- Does the programme promote equal access for women and men to technology, health, education etc?
- Does the programme take into account how women and men are affected differently by conflict and war, and their different requirements in connection with protection, justice and reconstruction?
- Does the programme describe the risks and impact of HIV/Aids for women and men respectively?

### ***Appropriation document***

*The appropriation document should refer to the recommendations made in the appraisal and the subsequent dialogue with the partner. The appropriation document should set out the gender risks that have been identified and the measures that have been taken to manage these risks, including follow-up mechanisms. These should be reflected in the goal hierarchy and major risk factors are to be highlighted in the agreed programme summary (Annex 1 to the agreement).*

## **Follow-up phase**

### ***Reports and reviews***

*In the follow-up phase, formal meetings, reports and reviews are important mechanisms for monitoring the progress of the programme. Among issues to be discussed are the risk factors identified in the appraisal and included in the agreement, including risks relating to the gender perspective.*

The review team should have expertise in gender equality issues, and reports should address the following questions:

- Have any new gender equality issues or negative impacts on women and/or men arisen during the implementation of the programme?
- Can any change in the situation of women or men be observed as a result of the programme implementation?
- Have both women and men's potential been utilised in the programme implementation phase?
- Have resources been distributed equitably between women and men?

## **Completion phase**

*Final reports and reviews should include assessments of relevant sustainability elements. The findings should be referred to in the completion document.*

## **Other tools**

Several tools have been developed that provide guidelines for promoting women's rights and facilitate the mainstreaming of the gender perspective in development cooperation. The gender impact assessment guidelines have been designed to take relevant considerations into account in the various phases, from planning to implementation.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the embassies with development responsibility and Norad refer in particular to the following documents:

Development Cooperation Manual: Gender is one of six sustainability elements that are to be considered in the initial screening of every programme. See Annex 1 Risk Management and Sustainability Elements.

**Handbook in Gender and Empowerment Assessment:** This describes the method for gender impact analysis in more detail.

**Statistical Classification Manual:** This describes the coding system for the policy marker «Gender Equality».

**Useful tools produced by other bilateral and multilateral development actors:**

- UNDP – Gender mainstreaming in practise – a handbook (including Sectoral approach to gender mainstreaming) [http://www.undp.org/women/docs/RBEC\\_GM\\_manual.pdf](http://www.undp.org/women/docs/RBEC_GM_manual.pdf)
- UNDP – tools – [www.undp.org/gender/tools.htm](http://www.undp.org/gender/tools.htm)
- CIDA's framework for assessing gender equality results
  - <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/CIDAWEB/acdicida.nsf/En/EMA-2181431-QCF>
- UN/OSAGI Gender Checklist for Peace Support Operations
  - <http://www.peacewomen.org/resources/1325/GenderChecklist2003.pdf#search=%22gender%20checklist%20for%20peace%20support%20operations%22>
- UNFPA – useful websites:
  - [http://www.unfpa.org/publications/index.cfm?filterListType=5&filterSortBy=1&filterPub\\_Type=6](http://www.unfpa.org/publications/index.cfm?filterListType=5&filterSortBy=1&filterPub_Type=6)
  - [http://www.unfpa.org/publications/index.cfm?filterListType=1&filterID\\_Key\\_Issue=2&filterSortBy=2](http://www.unfpa.org/publications/index.cfm?filterListType=1&filterID_Key_Issue=2&filterSortBy=2)
  - [http://www.unfpa.org/publications/index.cfm?filterListType=1&filterSortBy=1&filterID\\_Key\\_Issue=5](http://www.unfpa.org/publications/index.cfm?filterListType=1&filterSortBy=1&filterID_Key_Issue=5)
- UNIFEM – useful websites:
  - <http://www.womenwarpeace.org/unifem.htm>
  - [http://www.rrrt.org/page.asp?active\\_page\\_id=82](http://www.rrrt.org/page.asp?active_page_id=82)

**Documents on gender budgeting:**

Council of Europe report on Gender Budgeting:

[http://www.coe.int/t/e/human\\_rights/equality/02.\\_gender\\_mainstreaming/092\\_EG-S-GB\(2004\)RAPFIN.asp#TopOfPage](http://www.coe.int/t/e/human_rights/equality/02._gender_mainstreaming/092_EG-S-GB(2004)RAPFIN.asp#TopOfPage)

The Nordic Council of Ministers gender budget project:

<http://www.nmr.dk/gender/grb/projektinfo/sk/index.asp?lang=>

IDRC/Gender responsive budget initiatives:

[http://www.gender-budgets.org/en/ev-64152-201-1-DO\\_TOPIC.html](http://www.gender-budgets.org/en/ev-64152-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html)

## **Annex 4: Contributors to the action plan**

### **Political parties**

Oslo Labour Party International Forum

Socialist Left Party parliamentary group

Centre Party parliamentary group

### **Resource persons**

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### **NGOs**

Ammehjelpen (Breastfeeding help)

CARE

Forum for Women and Development secretariat

Norsk kvinne og familieforbund (Norwegian women and family association)

Norwegian Academic Women

Norwegian Church Aid

Norwegian Missions in Development

Norwegian People's Aid

Norwegian Students' and Academics' International Assistance Fund

Soroptimists

Strømme Foundation

### **The social partners**

Federation of Norwegian Commercial and Service Enterprises

Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise

Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions

Confederation of Unions for Professionals, Norway

## **Ministries**

Ministry of Children and Equality  
Ministry of Government Administration and Reform  
Ministry of Health and Care Services  
Ministry of Education and Research  
Ministry of Agriculture and Food  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including 18 embassies

## **Government agencies**

Fredskorpset  
Equality and Anti-discrimination Ombud  
Norad  
Statistics Norway

## **UN system**

OSAGI  
DAW  
UNFPA  
UNIFEM  
UNDP  
ILO

Aruna Rao, Director, Gender at Work, a Washington based network with special expertise on the UN and the World Bank Group

## ***Working group***

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