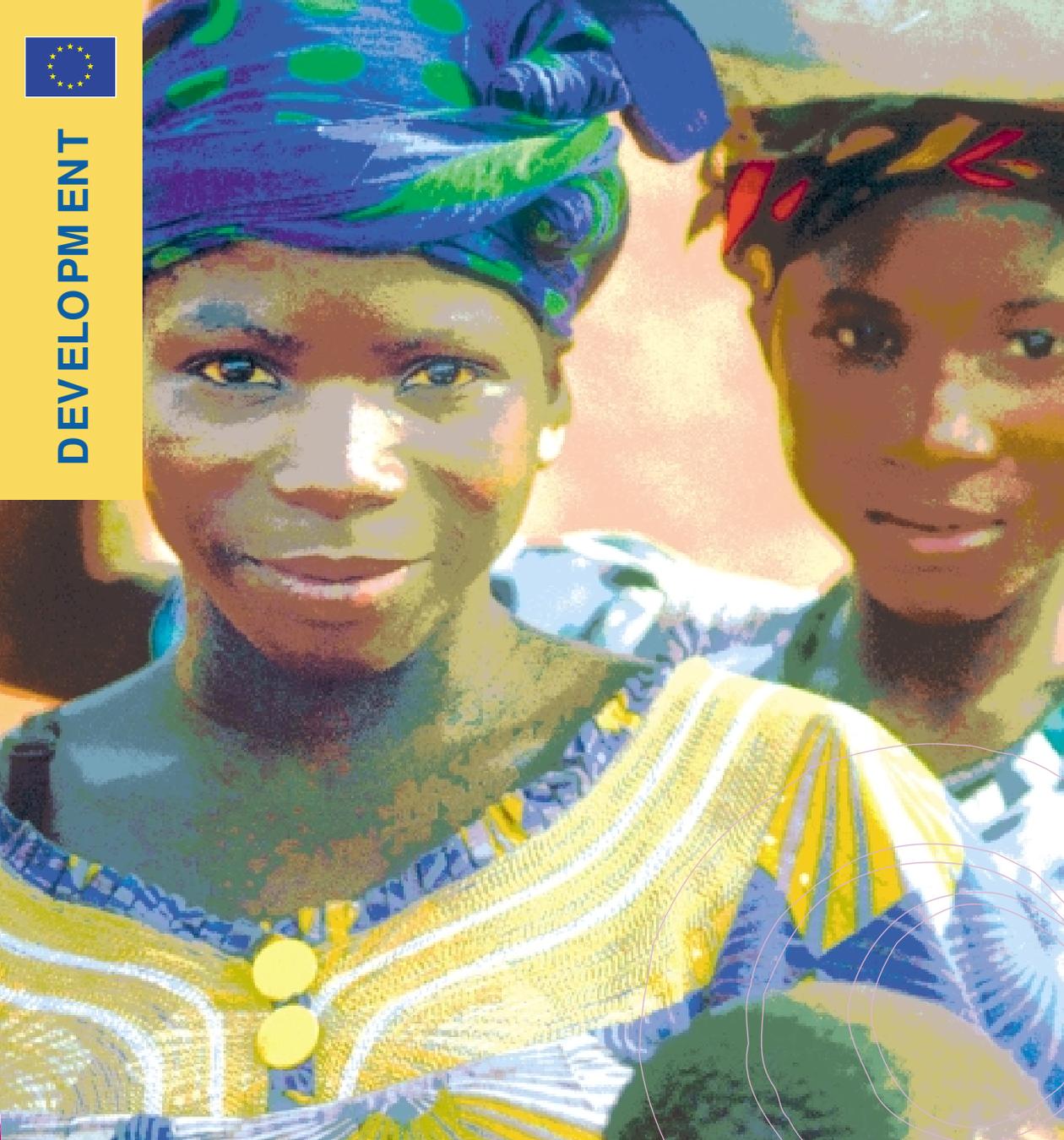




DEVELOPMENT



# Gender Equality

IN DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION

From Policy to Practice – The Role of the European Commission

EUROPEAN  
COMMISSION

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**A** disproportionate majority of the world's poor are women. Not only do too many women lack access to economic and social resources, but they are also too often denied basic human rights. Whichever way you look at it, gender inequality acts as a brake on progress in health and education. It also hinders the fight against poverty.

The goal of achieving gender equality is crucial for development in general. The strategy of gender mainstreaming to achieve this goal is a long-term step-by-step approach, based on integrating gender issues into both policy and practice. In the fight against poverty, the link between gender and poverty makes the promotion of gender equality in development co-operation a precondition of its success.

The European Union (EU) has a long-standing commitment to promoting gender equality and has played an active role on the international stage by advocating women's rights, notably at the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, where the EU was an active party in drafting the Platform of Action. Since then, the concept of gender mainstreaming has become an important strategy and tool to achieve the goal of gender equality.

This brochure outlines the European Commission's (EC) policy towards gender mainstreaming, illustrates what we are currently doing, highlights some examples of best practice, and reaffirms our commitment to bridging the gap between gender policy and practice.

I believe that by documenting, highlighting and disseminating good practice examples in an accessible format, it will encourage ongoing efforts to mainstream gender into operations and policy. It is also important that we highlight the challenges we face in mainstreaming gender.

I wish to devote some words to men. It is indeed easy to end up talking about women only and their disadvantages in comparison to men when the promotion of gender equality is on the agenda. However, the role and participation of men in achieving gender equality is coming under closer scrutiny, including in development organisations such as our own. Men and women need to work together to ensure that gender analysis underpins their work and leads to results in the improvement of both women's and men's lives in the partner countries that we support through European Commission development co-operation.



POUL NIELSON  
COMMISSIONER, FOR DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION AND HUMANITARIAN AID

*'The advancement of women and the achievement of equality between women and men are a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice and should not be seen in isolation as a women's issue. They are the only way to build a sustainable, just and developed society. Empowerment of women and gender equality are prerequisites for achieving political, social, economic, cultural and environmental security for all peoples.'*

*United Nation's  
Fourth World Conference  
on Women,  
Beijing, 1995*



## INTRODUCTION

**M**ainstreaming gender in development co-operation is a complex process. A clear, comprehensive strategy is the prerequisite for achieving the goal of gender equality. This brochure highlights the link between gender equality and the main political goal of Community development co-operation, the reduction of poverty. It also emphasises the strong relationship of this link with the UN Millennium Development Goals, particularly with the goal ‘to promote gender equality and empower women’.

To support the goal of promoting gender equality two complementary approaches are followed: gender mainstreaming and ‘specific measures’. Gender mainstreaming is the process that integrates priorities and needs of women and men of all ages in all the key development and co-operation policies. This process is reinforced by a set of specific measures to support the empowerment of women through their economic, social and environmental roles. The best practices collected here represent a good example of such measures.

The brochure also describes other important elements of the European Commission’s gender mainstreaming strategy, which is based on a broad consultation and co-ordination process with actors in development such as Member States, developing countries, international organisations and civil society.

## THE EU POLICY FRAMEWORK



**P**olicy statements on gender in development co-operation fit within a broader framework at European level. The European Community Treaty stipulates that in the sphere of development co-operation the ‘Community shall aim to eliminate inequalities, and to promote equality, between men and women’.

The Treaty of Amsterdam (1999) includes equality between men and women among the objectives of the EU. The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU (2000) sets out the principle of gender equality in all areas and includes a number of provisions whose aims are to promote equality between men and women.

The main EU regulations and agreements covering development co-operation include various gender issues in their provisions – the 2000 MEDA (Mediterranean and Middle East) regulation, 1992 ALA (Asia and Latin America) regulation with a new regulation to be adopted in 2003 and the 2000 Cotonou ACP<sup>(1)</sup> -EU Partnership Agreement. The Cotonou Agreement, however, goes a step further and explicitly calls for positive actions and the integration of gender concerns ‘at every level of development co-operation, including macroeconomic policies, strategies and operations’.

### Working towards gender equality in European Commission development co-operation

The first major policy statements on gender equality in development co-operation were adopted in 1995 in the wake of the Beijing conference. A 1995 Communication to the Council and the European Parliament on Integrating Gender Issues in Development Co-operation was followed by a 1998 Council Resolution on Integrating Gender Issues in Development Co-operation.

The Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2005) provides a framework for action within which all community activities must contribute to the goal of eliminating inequalities and promoting equality between women and men. In 2000, the European Community Development Policy established gender mainstreaming as a guiding principle for this policy, which focuses on six priority areas of development co-operation into which gender is to be mainstreamed:

- Support for macroeconomic policies including social sector programmes in health and education.
- Food security and sustainable rural development.
- Transport.
- Institutional capacity building, good governance and the rule of law.
- Trade and development.
- Regional integration and co-operation.

<sup>(1)</sup>  
*Africa/Caribbean/Pacific*



## The Programme of Action for mainstreaming gender equality into all policy and programmes includes:

- The systematic use of gender impact assessments.
- Mobilising all Commission services in support of gender mainstreaming.
- Anchoring responsibility for gender within the institution.
- Training and awareness raising among key personnel.
- Monitoring, benchmarking and breakdown of data and statistics by sex.
- Establishing co-ordination structures at various levels.

The 2001 Communication on a Programme of Action for the Mainstreaming of Gender Equality in Community Development Co-operation establishes a concrete strategy for integrating gender concerns in development policy. It commits the Commission to meeting the following objectives and to implementing, monitoring and reporting on a detailed series of actions:

- Integrate gender issues into the six priority areas of development co-operation.
- Mainstream gender within projects and programmes at country and regional level.
- Build gender capacity, including training.

A new Draft Regulation on Promoting Gender Equality in Development Co-operation (2004-2006) foresees two complementary actions to achieve the goal of gender equality: gender mainstreaming and specific measures for women. It is recognised that the strategy of gender mainstreaming is one approach to meet the goal but needs to be supported by various other strategies and actions to ensure that women benefit equally from development processes.

Within the Commission, the gender mainstreaming strategy is supported through institutional mechanisms of co-ordination and quality assurance, annual work programmes and monitoring in the form of annual reports. The progress is benchmarked through a Scoreboard on gender equality covering all services of the Commission and in the Annual Report on European Commission Development Policy.

A number of co-ordinating structures have been established, such as the Group of Commissioners on Equal Opportunities, the Inter-service Group on Gender Equality, the sub-group on gender in external relations and the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men.



## From Cairo and Beijing to the Millennium Development Goals

At international level, the EU and many of its partner countries are signatories to international agreements and declarations. In addition, it participates in initiatives that aim to reduce gender inequalities and promote women's rights, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979), the Cairo Programme of Action (1994), the Beijing Platform of Action (1995) and the Declaration of the Millennium Development Goals (2000).

Among the conferences setting the stage for major impacts on women's rights and well being, the Beijing conference was groundbreaking in that it shifted the parameters of the issue from women in development to gender in development and adopted the strategy of gender mainstreaming.

The principles outlined in the Platform for Action and the Beijing Declaration moved from addressing women's issues in isolation to a more complex context, recognising that to target the root causes of gender inequality, both women and men must be involved in the process. This was confirmed at the June 2000 Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Women (Beijing +5 Review).

In recent years the EU has played a key role in negotiations relating to women's human rights and in defending hard-won rights. Important occasions were the Children's Summit (+10) of 2002, the World Summit on Sustainable Development September 2002, and at regional level at the Asia-Pacific Population Conference, December 2002.



### European Commission funds Beijing +10 report

The European Commission is the main contributor to funding a Policy Report on Gender and Development: An UNRISD Contribution to Beijing +10. The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) has an ongoing programme of research on the gender dimension of development. One of the expected outcomes from this report is the strengthening of gender analysis in development policies, particularly in the areas of governance and social development, which is a key to effectively implement gender mainstreaming.

The report is also expected to bring fresh insights into policy debates on gender and development at a time when there is a need for informed discussion. It will also contribute to the debate on the assessment of progress achieved in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action, which will take place in 2005 at a meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women.



## Towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals

The two international conferences in Cairo and Beijing have proved to be important milestones on the way to achieving the UN Millennium Development Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in that they recognised reproductive rights and women's rights to equal access and full participation in power structures and decision-making. The Millennium Development Goals strongly emphasise the needs of women and children in areas of health and education.

The third goal is specifically directed towards the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women with the target to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and in all levels of education no later than 2015.

The United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Human Development Report 2003 suggests that if rich and poor countries work hand in hand, they can lift millions out of severe poverty and achieve other ambitious targets by 2015. However, the report acknowledges, 'unless women's capabilities are improved and gender equality increased, the other MDGs will not be achieved'.

This calls for strong actions by both the larger donor community such as the EU and by individual donors to contribute to the achievement of all the MDGs and to develop its partnership with developing countries as regards the third goal.

### The European Commission response

To follow up and monitor the progress towards the MDGs at country level by both donors and partner country authorities, the European Commission has worked closely with Member States to develop a set of core indicators. These Guidelines for the use of Indicators in Country Performance Assessment have been set up to monitor performance and progress in partner countries. Among seven outcome indicators drawn from the MDGs, three are directly relevant to gender equality.

Strategic partnerships, with funding from the European Commission, will be forged with five major south-based policy development and research institutes in developing countries for co-operation on strategic actions related to the third MDG. One critical objective is to assist in developing the effectiveness of nationally owned plans in their implementation to decrease gender disparities in education.



**Worldwide, 24% of girls of primary school age are still not attending school, compared with 16% of boys.**

**In the least developed countries, adult literacy rate for men is 61%; and 41% for women.**



The great importance given to education, both by setting the concrete goal of achieving universal primary education by 2015 and the target of elimination of gender disparity in all education levels with special focus on raising the enrolment rate for girls, has increased commitments on the part of the Commission towards ensuring universal primary education.

## Education a priority

Education brings broad social benefits – it raises family incomes and leads to improved sexual and reproductive health. Education can equally contribute to a greater participation in decision-making, awareness of environmental issues and improved social responsibility. The interrelation of education and other vital areas affecting women and men in their daily lives speaks for sustained and increased commitments to education.

To contribute to the achievement of universal and free primary education for all children with special emphasis on closing the gender gap between girls and boys has been a top priority of the European Commission during the last decade. This has been further emphasised with the introduction of the MDGs. Out of a total disbursement to education of €269 million during 2002<sup>(\*)</sup>, €110 million was channelled to primary and secondary education. Over the next five years allocations to education amount to approximately €1.3 billion with a steady trend in spending aimed at achieving universal primary education by 2015.

Sri Lanka, despite its political instability, has a net primary enrolment rate of girls at 97% compared to 70% for the region. Similarly, its female youth illiteracy rate was only 7% compared to 42% for South Asia. This is attributed to the introduction of free education for all, which has encouraged families to send not only their boys but also their girls to school.

## Abolition of school fees liberates the lives of millions of children

One of the key promises made by Mwai Kibaki during his recent election campaign for Kenyan president was the abolition of fees for primary schools.

Stephen Lewis, UN Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa reports:

**‘The implications are stunning. One million two hundred thousand children who had not been in school turned up for school. Kenya has an estimated one million two hundred thousand children orphaned by AIDS. Are they identical cohorts? Of course not. Is there a significant overlap? Everyone agrees that the overlap is large.**

**If the experience of Kenya proves anything, it proves that those who have argued for the abolition of fees as a way of liberating millions of children were right. In the view of the Minister of Education, the policy is driven by the guarantees contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the internationally agreed principles of Education for All.’**

(\*)  
European Commission  
Annual Report 2002

## WORKING WITH OTHERS



*'Study after study has shown that there is no effective development strategy in which women do not play a central role. When women are fully involved, the benefits can be seen immediately: families are healthier and better fed; their income, savings and reinvestment go up. And what is true of families is also true of communities and, in the long run, of whole countries.'*

*KOFI ANNAN,  
UN Secretary-General  
International Women's  
Day, March 8, 2003*

The United Nations has consistently been the main driver in ensuring that gender equality is on the global agenda. The United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Human Development Report of 1995 on Gender and Development was unique in that it was the first report to systematically analyse the progress in reducing gender disparities. As such it has played an important role in establishing a base line for information on the issue of gender and development for donors and development partners.

The Human Development Report 2003 focusing on the Millennium Development Goals and their potential to be achieved within the set time frame is also a great source of information. It helps clarify the reality of gender equality and the need for more comprehensive targets and indicators to assess performance and outcomes.

Through its delegations to the United Nations, the Commission participates in debates and decision-making procedures in close collaboration with the Member States in the sessions of different organisations such as the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Committee of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).

Several of the UN organisations, such as United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA)<sup>(9)</sup> and United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) have agreed to framework agreements with the European Commission designed to implement development activities in areas of reproductive health and gender responsive budgets.

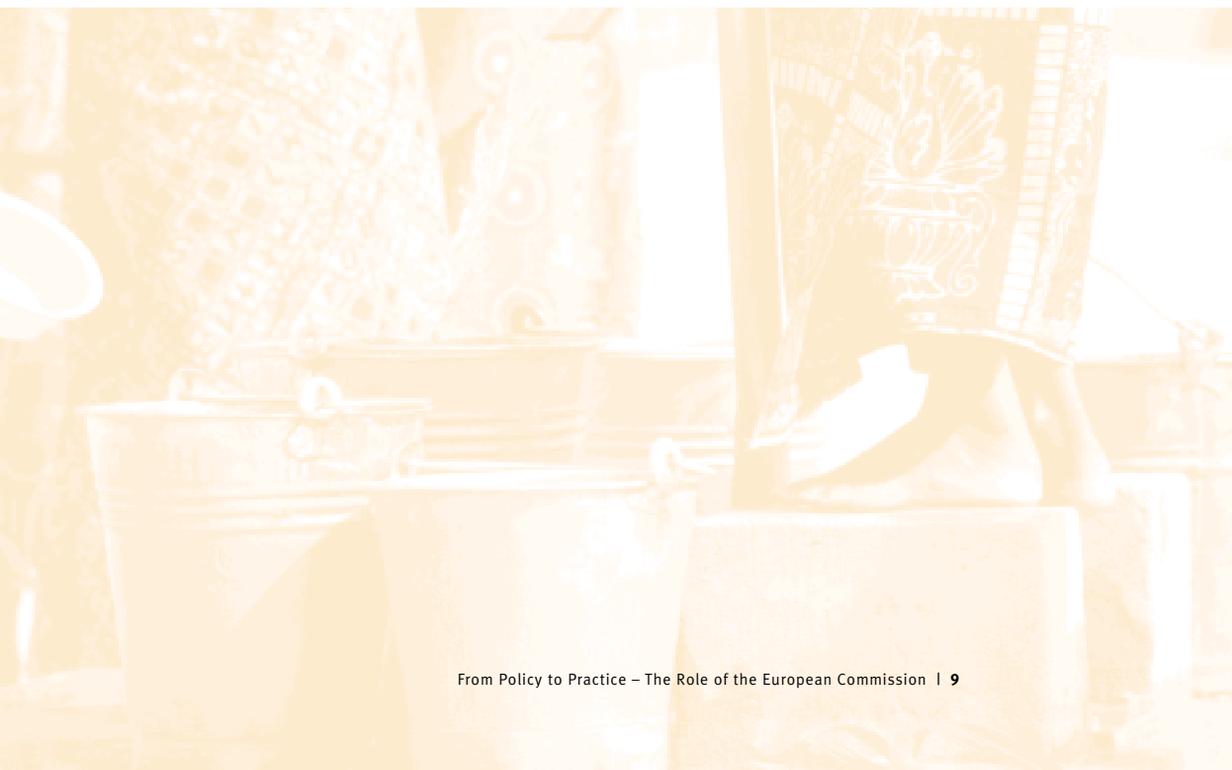
<sup>(9)</sup>  
*When the US government cancelled its contributions to UNFPA in 2001, the Commission immediately pledged to help fill the financial gap. The European Commission has recently funded two multi-annual programmes with UNFPA worth a total of €38 million.*



In 1996, the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Development and Co-operation (OECD) identified several quantifiable objectives for eradicating poverty by setting the International Development Targets (IDTs). The IDT for gender equality to ‘empower women and eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005’, was later incorporated into the education MDG to be achieved by 2015.

This was followed by DAC Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Development Co-operation in 1998, which provide guidance on policy and good practice in mainstreaming gender in the management of development co-operation.

The Commission, as a full member of the OECD/DAC participates in the Network on Gender Equality, which provides a forum for exchange of information, best practice and policy as part of the broader objective of further increasing aid effectiveness. The 2003 work programme is focused on collaboration among members to maximise contributions to the MDGs and to mainstream gender in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs).



# GENDER EQUALITY AND DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION IN PRACTICE



*'The ultimate responsibility for the setting of priorities and implementation of nationally and internationally agreed gender policies lies with developing countries. The EU has the responsibility to make its gender strategies and policies clear to all partners through political dialogue and through effectively planned and monitored interventions that take both women and men into account. Joint policy instruments such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), Country and Regional Strategy Papers (CSPs) should be effective tools in contributing to reduced poverty and gender equality. International commitments, good intentions and good strategies are fine, but it is delivery that counts.'*

COMMISSIONER  
POUL NIELSON

## Institutional achievements

The Thematic Evaluation of the Integration of Gender in European Commission Development Co-operation with Third Countries (1995-2001) carried out by an independent assessor sums up experiences and results and is an important contribution to the understanding of how gender equality is promoted in European Commission development co-operation. The overall impression given by this evaluation is that whatever has been done in the past has not yet resulted in any long-term, sustainable effects. This has sparked a renewed discussion and demand for measures from within the European Commission to deliver concrete outcomes.

Tools to assist in applying gender mainstreaming have been developed over the years, including training materials adapted to various situations, gender disaggregated outcome indicators for monitoring, gender assessments forms, and sector guidelines. Where applicable, they have been harmonised with the OECD's Guidelines on Gender Equality in Development Co-operation. Revising, adapting and fine-tuning these tools is an ongoing process.

A concise manual is being prepared that will guide and clarify to all concerned how to address gender mainstreaming during the preparation and reassessment phases of PRSPs, CSPs as well as right through the Programming and Project Cycle. Because Commission Delegation staff act as catalysts in support of gender mainstreaming at national or regional level, their capacity is being reinforced through training as well as through in-country technical assistance provided by consultants and research.



## Moving the agenda forward through deeper collaboration with Member States

The EU Member States Gender Expert Group, comprised of Commission officials and Member States' government representatives, discusses and debates policy development in relation to gender and development in the context of EU and international fora on an annual basis. Seminars and meetings are held to discuss best practice and address challenges in implementing gender mainstreaming.

At its 2002 gender expert meeting the European Commission re-established the network for collaboration within the framework of the Programme of Action and identified several areas for future collaboration, including:

- Creating a website for information exchanges with Member States.
- Collaborating with Member States and other partners in sharing best practices in gender mainstreaming, such as the joint European Commission-Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (SIDA) gender seminar.
- Setting up specific working groups to address themes about gender equality. Each working group will be composed of a core team of gender experts with specific experience in the selected area. One example is in the area of capacity building and training, where sharing best practices is essential.
- In the long run, such working groups are expected to ensure the EU has a stronger collective voice at international conferences and events.

## Preparing for training in gender and environment mainstreaming

A February 2003 brainstorming meeting in Brussels – Gender and Environment Mainstreaming in Development Programmes – brought together Member States' representatives and their experts. Its aim was to better identify training needs and define the most appropriate approach for the planned 2003 European Commission extensive gender-training programme. The meeting discussed target audiences, assessing training needs, training objectives, contents, duration, methodologies, materials, and follow up.

The purpose of the meeting was to gain insights into past experiences and make recommendations for future training as well as to learn more about the specific needs and opinions of Commission staff regarding the training. The European Commission programme intends to target staff at headquarters, Delegations and representatives of national administrations of partner countries with a view to move from theory to practice in implementing European Commission's environment and gender policies.





## Dialogue with civil society

The European Commission works in partnership with and supports women's organisations, NGOs and civil society groups that are advocating and lobbying for gender equality at international, national and regional level, including APRODEV<sup>(4)</sup>, One World Action<sup>(5)</sup>, Bridge and WIDE network.

### Co-operation with WIDE

The Commission co-operates closely with WIDE<sup>(6)</sup>, notably in the areas of advocacy and funding of various initiatives and projects. WIDE is calling upon the European Commission to produce a policy that spells out its gender mainstreaming strategy in reference to 'hard' areas of external relations, such as trade, economic co-operation, political dialogue, and humanitarian aid.

WIDE's awareness raising, lobbying and advocacy focus on several areas, including EU trade and development policies, EU-Latin America trade negotiations, EU-ACP development co-operation, and enlargement.

Several consultations have been organised by WIDE between the European Parliament and the European Commission to provide a forum for critical reflection and debate on issues of trade and recently the EU enlargement process from a gender perspective.

<sup>(4)</sup> APRODEV is the association of the 17 major ecumenical development and humanitarian aid organisations in Europe.

<sup>(5)</sup> One World Action is a UK based NGO committed to strengthening the democratic process and improving people's lives in poor and developing countries.

<sup>(6)</sup> WIDE (Women in Development Europe), a Brussels-based European network of gender specialists, women active in non-governmental development organisations and human rights activists, was formed in 1985.

<sup>(7)</sup> *Everywhere and Nowhere: Assessing Gender Mainstreaming in European Community Development Co-operation.*

### Closing the gap

*'Given the importance of gender equality and equity in the fight against poverty and the achievement of full human rights for all, the slow progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and the reality that so many women and men, girls and boys are denied their human rights, the EU cannot afford to wait any longer in closing the gap between its gender policies and its practice.'* ONE WORLD ACTION/APRODEV, OCTOBER 2002 <sup>(7)</sup>

In March 2003, European Commission commissioned One World Action to compile available information on recent research done in the area of bridging the gap between gender policy and practice. The report, Closing the Gender Policy-Practice Gap, recognises that the 'implementation of the European Commission's gender policy commitment will make a huge difference to the lives of millions of women'.

The report recommends the need for: clear concepts, organisational structures that reflect policy priorities, gender analysis, systems for clear designation of responsibilities and accountability, financial and human resources, training, monitoring and evaluation and dialogue, partnership and networking.



## European Commission funded projects contribute to gender equality

### Bridging the digital divide

Information and Communication Technologies have a vast potential to contribute to gender equality goals in development organisations and programming, yet the move towards creating more online spaces for gender and development is a slow one.

BRIDGE, based at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) in the UK, is an innovative gender specialist organisation seeking to open up more online spaces while also supporting practitioners without Internet access.

BRIDGE is coming to the end of a three-year Gender Knowledge Programme. In October 2003 the new three-year programme, which has been supported by the European Commission and some Member States, will start. The BRIDGE programme has two key elements that provide concrete help on mainstreaming gender in various development sectors and themes.

The unique gender and development Internet gateway Siyanda is a searchable database containing a wide range of practical resources generated and financed by development agencies including case studies, guidelines, policy documents and examples of best practice. Siyanda is designed to ensure that those without the latest software and hardware, and those with poor or expensive Internet connections, can also benefit from this resource. BRIDGE also actively seeks information from southern-based users to feature in Siyanda as a way of sharing knowledge and lessons between the north and the south.

The second element in the programme is a series of Cutting Edge Packs available online and in paper format with topical gender information on key themes such as Gender and HIV/AIDS and Gender and Budgets. Responding to user demand, in its new programme BRIDGE will translate the packs into French and Spanish; all packs will be accompanied by online discussions.

BRIDGE information is used by gender desks in many Member States in their day-to-day work on gender mainstreaming. This information helps to create visibility, to facilitate organisational capacity building and to work towards achieving greater equality between women and men.



### **Mama Africa !**

There is still prejudice and ignorance about African women. The stereotypes are seen the world over: the strong salt-of-the-earth mother or all too often the victim of poverty and violence. The truth is subtler and more complex. Under the surface, African women laugh, love and hate, plan and plot, pursue and achieve excellence. This is seldom visible.

The film initiative of bringing to the world six stories of African women by six of Africa's most skilful and imaginative women filmmakers is something of a unique experience. It is a project that 'dreams are made of' according to the producer of the series.

European Commission funding of €284,000 went to produce the story *Riches* about a Zimbabwean woman who believes in her own ideas and in doing so loses her job as a teacher and faces opposition from the community. She fights back and in the end not only wins her job back, but finds riches in a new understanding of the goodness in the community as she connects with the core and soul of the people.

The project has been a success attracting international and continental audience as the films have been travelling around the world to festivals such as Cannes, Milan, Cape Town and Venice where *Riches* received the City of Venice prize.

The outcomes of the film initiative are that several women directors are now much better known to an international public and the concept of African Women Directors was introduced.



## Democratic, human, political and economic rights for women

### Empowering women in Jordan

The project, Women in Parliament, ran from December 2001 to June 2003, with a budget from the Commission of €630,500. The overall objectives were to increase awareness of the role of women in decision-making and to have women candidates succeed. The aims were to create a more enabling environment for women as candidates and voters by working with media and decision-makers to change traditional stereotypes. The project also addressed the issue of sustainability by involving university students in the debate on democracy and the importance of women's participation.

A National Conference organised in April 2002 addressed gender disparities in political and legal spheres as well as the need for more collaboration between NGOs, and between NGOs and government. Additionally, each NGO organised approximately 20 workshops of between 30 to 40 participants. Men and women engaged in discussion and debate on democracy, human rights, and the legal status of women and men. Organisers and beneficiaries said the project had positive effects:

- Participation at meetings organised around their concerns enhanced women's self-confidence and sense of self-worth; they felt they were capable of action in the public domain.
- This activity changed men's perceptions of the capacities and role of women.
- Male candidates became increasingly aware of women as a constituency and of the need to address their concerns to win votes.
- Women became aware of the need to be informed of specific gender disparity issues, as well as broader social, economic, and political issues if they wished to stand for election or even to enhance their role in the community; it was no longer enough simply to be a woman candidate.
- This enhanced self-confidence of women began to have an impact at the domestic level in terms of shared decision-making in household and family issues.
- Both men and women became more literate with respect to their rights in terms of labour laws and social security, as well as having a greater understanding of the electoral and broader political process.

Partner NGOs became aware of the European Commission's policy commitments in areas of human rights and gender equality as some of them had participated in the European Commission funded UNDP/UNIFEM post Beijing follow up operation (1996-2002).



**In 1999 women held only 12.7% of the world's parliamentary seats and only 8.7% of those in the least developed countries.**

There were some observations made in terms of constraints on women's participation as voters and as candidates:

- Women candidates lacked experience in political life.
- The traditional view of what women's role in society does not include a political role.
- Women were unable to manage their own election campaigns.

A Royal Decree issued February 2003 created six new parliamentary seats for women through a quota system. Specific skills relative to campaigning were imparted to female candidates following the announcement of the election date in June 2003.

Both the general policy commitments, and the specific commitments reflected in the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) Programme were operationalised through this project, particularly with respect to addressing both women-specific and gender mainstreaming actions. It is considered a success although changes in voter behaviour are still being assessed in the wake of the election.

### **Equal property rights and security for women in Bangladesh**

The Adarsha Gram project is a rural resettlement and poverty alleviation initiative set up and funded by the government of Bangladesh in 1988 and co-financed since 1991 by the European Commission.

Currently in its second planning phase, the project is addressing the needs of very poor people. Its activities include the distribution of government land to peasant families and the provision of physical infrastructure such as dwellings, latrines, ponds for keeping ducks, or fish farming. The total European Commission contribution for phase two is €30 million.

The project was not specifically aiming at reducing gender inequality, but gender became an issue as demonstrated through property rights – the title deeds to houses built under the programme are now drawn up in the names of both husband and wife on equal terms.

In addition, women feature prominently in the beneficiary group, which consists of widows, single-parent families and women-headed households, as well as destitute women. This has resulted in equal property rights for women who would otherwise have no possibility of owning property.





Another gender dimension of the project is that women have been given opportunities to become engaged in poultry rearing and brick making, which is a positive move for them to be visible and productive outside the home. Anecdotal evidence holds that this has increased women's decision-making powers and respect in the household, thereby shifting gender relations.

### **Equal opportunities for women in Panama**

This 1996 programme is a good example of a specific action designed by and for women in the wake of Beijing in close collaboration with the indigenous and human rights organisations, trade unions, media and government. The objective was to support the government of Panama in promoting equal opportunities for women and men and to implement gender public policies at a national level.

With a population of fewer than three million people, it was possible to run the programme on a national scale with technical advice to a wide range of governmental institutions and NGOs provided by European Commission and national experts. The activities involved:

- Education and professional training for women, including literacy for adults and bilingual education, curriculum development of non-sexist education material for public primary and secondary schools, economic management, legal and civil rights training, and gender studies at university level.
- Institution building and strengthening of participation and negotiation skills of women's organisations in public decision making processes.
- Sensibilisation and gender training of staff of governmental and non-governmental institutions for teachers and journalists and developing instruments on how to implement gender policies.

Some of the more sustainable outcomes of the programme include the establishment of the Ministry for Human Development and Women and the passing of the Equal Opportunities law by Congress in 1999. In addition, a National Women's Commission was established as an advisory board to the official women's offices or ministries with 12 members, half of them of civil society organisations. Several sector ministries have created special women's offices responsible for implementation of gender issues.

The European Commission and the Panamanian government shared the budget of €13 million (€8 and €5 respectively over five years (1998-2002).

**Women perform 53% of all economic activity in developing countries, but only about 1/3 of their work is currently measured and recognised in national accounts, compared to 3/4 of men's work.**



### **Women benefit in ASAL communities**

The Agriculture/Livestock Research Support Programme (ARSP), Phase II, is a €8.3 million five-year European Commission supported programme under the Kenyan National Agricultural Research Project launched in 1998. ARSP's goal is to enhance the economic integration of rural communities, particularly in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL), with the rest of the country's economy. Preliminary results show that food security and sustainable incomes – particularly for women – have increased for these communities.

The programme has aimed at ensuring that private and public sector ASAL field workers, as well as community based organisations, make more effective use of research recommendations to offer cattle farmers and others sound and socially acceptable technologies and concepts. It has resulted in a more efficient agricultural research capacity, particularly in the Kenyan ASAL. Adaptive and applied research programmes focus on soil and water management, as well as livestock and natural resource management topics in the mostly arid rangelands.

The programme has also aimed at providing sustainable solutions using a community based and gender sensitive approach, with strong collaboration with NGOs and government field workers. Collaborative agreements with community based organisations and NGOs on promoting recommended technologies and training during their introduction enhance adaptation and adoption on a wider scale.

Three small-scale dairy units have been set up at strategic centres in the northern Kenyan rangelands supplying about 50,000 people with hygienic fresh and processed cow and camel milk products. With improved tillage and drainage technology about 2.4 million hectares of poorly drained heavy soils (vertisols) can now be used for timely agricultural production. An early planting tool was simultaneously developed to increase farmers' chances of a healthy crop in the semi-arid areas.



## Holistic approach to reproductive health in Nepal

Women and infants are dying needlessly in Nepal as there is lack of affordable and accessible reproductive health care coupled with a general lack of knowledge about reproductive health and rights.

However, with funding from the European Commission, UNFPA's Reproductive Health Initiative for Asia and technical assistance from a local community based organisation of medical doctors and paramedics, a model health care and counselling centre was established in Kathmandu Valley.

In three years the clinics have registered more than 40,000 individual visits including counselling sessions: 27,000 women and men use the services provided by the project.



**Today, every minute of every day a woman dies due to pregnancy related complications.**

## Capacity building through training

### The Africa Gender Training Programme (AGTP)

The pilot activities evolved into a two-year full-fledged training programme during 1997-1998. AGTP involved three regional Training of Trainers' workshops in Mozambique, Senegal and Zambia for gender trainers and consultants followed by 10 national courses involving 260 participants in Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea Conakry, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia.

The courses covered three language areas – anglophone, francophone and lusophone – and training materials were adapted and translated into French and Portuguese. The objective was to increase sustained capacity (at the level of know-how, skills and commitment) of integrating gender issues in development interventions. The results were:

- Increased and sustained capacity on gender issues in 10 ACP countries for about 20 key people in each country, related to European Commission development activities.
- Increased local capacity in at least 10 ACP countries to provide appropriate training and advice on gender issues to European Commission development interventions.

The training process included planning workshops by the European trainers, training of trainers' workshops, national training courses, follow-up workshops at country level, and a final assessment workshop in Europe.



**There are 130 million women who have undergone female genital mutilation and the number is increasing by two million a year.**



### **Gender and Development Inter-projects Group (GIGED) – developing a blueprint**

The Gender and Development Inter-projects Group Initiative in Madagascar is a good example of best practice in building capacity, skills and knowledge at country level and could well serve as a blueprint for other projects. The objective was to integrate gender issues into development co-operation in conformity with the European Commission and national policies.

The GIGED network included a permanent team of two to three national consultants and a number of resource people working at various levels and across several sectors – Programmes and Projects National Officers and the Delegation.

The strategy was to support and strengthen capacities and skills through technical support on how to best integrate gender into country strategies, projects and programmes throughout their cycles. This is done through gender training programmes, including gender integrated PCM (project cycle management), a website, publications, gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation tools.

An example of a successful gender-training course is the residential five-day training course in gender-integrated PCM organised for programme and project managers of European Commission co-operation in Madagascar in July 2000. This well-targeted course was developed in response to an identified need and demand by partners and by the project, and was based on a solid training needs assessment undertaken by FORMFED, which commissioned and co-ordinated the training. FORMFED was created by the European Commission's Delegation in Madagascar and the European Development Fund (EDF) to monitor funded training projects.

The investment in preparing the training, in adapting the training materials to the specific context of European Commission-Madagascar co-operation and in evaluating and following-up the training was substantial and appears to have paid off in view of the results of the evaluation. Follow-up training was provided in 2002, organised as part of the project. Pilot training courses in gender-integrated PCM, were also organised in 1998-1999 in Guinea Conakry, Ethiopia and Brussels, which included European Commission staff.



The GIGED project is one example where the gender budget line funds were used as a catalyst in providing start-up support. During the implementation and completion phases it was financed out of mainstream EDF proceeds from the country allocation for Madagascar.

For ownership and institutional purposes, this project represents the type of approach the European Commission would like to see pursued for long-term and sustainable impacts.

### **MEDATEAM focuses on gender**

Between 1998-2001, European Commission funded gender training courses ran in MEDA countries to support reform of economic and social structures in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. Run by the former technical assistance MEDATEAM 8 based in Brussels, the team included a highly qualified gender expert with international experience.

The MEDATEAM technical assistance budget financed this initiative, which involved 17 training courses for 350 participants from Commission headquarters, delegations, partner countries' governments and NGOs. Training programmes took place in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia, as well as in Brussels.

Some of the topics included discussions on gender and audit, media, trade, transport, health/nutrition/population/HIV/AIDS, education and vocational training, gender budgeting and the European Commission's policy framework on gender equality in development co-operation. Sessions were tailored to the needs and interests of the delegation through a questionnaire survey to assess the trainee profile. European Commission programmes in each country were used as a basis for case studies and national gender experts acted as resource persons and trainers.

This initiative has laid the groundwork for the major training programme on gender that will be undertaken by the Commission in 2004 onwards. Furthermore, it created demand for renewed training from some of the delegations and set standards in acknowledging the need to use local trainers as both resource persons and trainers.



**Globally, one in every three women has experienced violence in an intimate relationship.**



### **Training at the delegation in Pretoria – best practice**

To meet the commitment made in South Africa's Country Strategy Paper (CSP) to build gender into all levels of the project cycle, an intensive one-day training workshop in March 2003 took place at the Delegation in Pretoria. Nineteen staff members, including the Ambassador, participated.

Local consultants were recruited to design and deliver the workshop in close co-operation with Delegation staff. A concrete outcome is that a resource team of gender professionals is recruited to assist the Delegation for two years to improve their work on how to mainstream gender. This initiative could serve as a good example for other Delegations.

### **Out of the poverty trap through microfinance**

Microfinance is a powerful tool in the fight against poverty because it provides the poorest, particularly women, with the means to become independent. Beyond financial support, microcredit enables them to realise aspirations to be self-sufficient and to retain their dignity by supporting themselves and each other.

The microfinance industry began in 1976 with the establishment of the Grameen Bank (GB) in Bangladesh. GB has reversed conventional banking practice by removing the need for collateral and created a banking system based on mutual trust, accountability, participation and creativity. It provides credit to the poorest of the poor in rural Bangladesh, without any collateral.

Professor Muhammad Yunus, the founder of GB and its Managing Director, reasoned that if financial resources can be made available to the poor people on terms and conditions that are appropriate and reasonable, 'these millions of small people with their millions of small pursuits can add up to create the biggest development wonder'.

As of September, 2002, it had 2.4 million borrowers, 95% of whom are women. With 1,175 branches, GB provides services in 41,000 villages, covering more than 60% of the total villages in Bangladesh.

Today, microfinance is a worldwide movement involving thousands of specialist banks, credit unions, co-operatives, village credit societies, NGOs and charities in developing as well as developed countries. Microcredit is working – the worldwide average default rate is less than 2%.



A World Bank survey carried out in rural Bangladesh in 1998-1999 confirms the view that women's participation in microcredit programmes helps to increase their empowerment. Credit programme participation leads to women taking a greater role in household decision-making, having greater access to financial and economic resources, having greater social networks, greater bargaining power and greater freedom of mobility. Female credit also tended to increase spousal communications in general about family planning and parenting concerns.

### **European Commission supports microfinance**

The European Commission is supporting several microfinance projects through development co-operation several partner countries, including Bangladesh, Zimbabwe, the Philippines, Togo, Vietnam, and Ghana.

A project in Zimbabwe involved a partnership with Dondolo Modonzvo Credit Scheme Trust. The European Commission contribution of €571,056 was targeted at helping poor women by giving them access to credit and other technical assistance, including confidence building and marketing skills, that enabled them to set up viable small businesses.

Capacity building included preparing them for a 'bank culture' by providing training (in bookkeeping, leadership skills, project planning and management), loans and other services. The intent was also to prepare them for gaining access to bank facilities.

# GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGET ANALYSIS AND INITIATIVES



*'If you want to see which way a country is headed, look at the country's budget and how it allocates resources for women and children.'*

*Pregs Govender,  
Former MP,  
South Africa*

South Africa pioneered gender responsive budgeting soon after the Beijing conference in 1995. In most countries in Africa where gender budgeting has been experimented with since then, it is viewed in the context of political and economic liberalisation and as a reflection of the transition to more open, participatory and responsive systems of governance.

South Africa's initiative was launched following the first democratic elections of 1994 and Rwanda's initiative is occurring as a new post-genocide government attempts to reconstruct the country. There is an increasing interest in giving poor women and men a political voice and influencing allocation of public resources in favour of these groups.

It is recognised that the budget is the most important economic policy instrument of government and reflects the choices it makes. The budget is the tool it uses to achieve its economic and development goals. Currently there is a worldwide interest in enabling women to participate in the budget-making process.

Applied gender responsive budget analysis is an effective tool to achieve good economic governance as it builds on participatory approaches involving civil society, including women's organisations, and can also be used to measure accountability and transparency. As such, it can be a tool to combat corruption.

The analysis is heavily dependent on what data exist, however, in general, statistical data on developing countries is characterised by a lack of availability and reliability. Data have to be routinely sex-disaggregated to achieve qualitative information needed for awareness raising, informing policy makers and analysing the impact of the gender mainstreaming activities.

There is an increased demand for proper analysis and availability of statistical data both from governments and from donors due to the implementation of the PRSP process, the evolution towards new aid instruments (macro-economic/budget support, sector support programs with joint financing) and the growing focus on monitoring outcomes and results orientation of policies on beneficiaries.



### **Bringing the work of gender responsive budgets to the local level**

Most gender budget responsive initiatives focus on national budgets, however, local level gender budget initiatives are becoming increasingly important as governments decentralise policymaking and resource allocation. This creates great potential for unleashing the energies and the resources of the people at local level.

Within its global programme the United Nations Development Funds for Women (UNIFEM) has for the last eight years promoted the strengthening of good governance by applying the use of gender responsive budget analysis in the process by which the government collect and spend public resources.

Their work covers some 13 countries including India, the Philippines, Morocco and Uganda. These four countries are funded by the European Commission for a period of three years to an amount of €700,000 to strengthen the gender budget analysis at local level. They have been selected because they are implementing various policies on decentralisation and already have experience in gender responsive analysis at the national level.

The programme intends to develop and apply gender analysis to some of the local level budgets in India, the Philippines, Morocco and Uganda with the purpose of transforming economic governance and leadership at those levels into a more gender responsive governance. The implementation will be done by UNIFEM together with local government authorities, women's organisations, research institutes north and south and community groups.

Previous experience tells us that without the participation and advocacy of civil society, particularly the women's movement or organisations, implementation would have been much weaker. Governments with a background of engagement in struggles for freedom or justice are much more open to initiatives where the right of minorities to participate is already well accepted.

# TRADE AND GENDER

**T**he feminisation of the labour market – proof in itself of the vital contribution of women to the world economy – has been accompanied by an alarming feminisation of poverty. As more and more women join the labour market, they also are the first to suffer the negative effects of globalisation.

Women are often victims of unemployment or confined to the least skilled jobs. Equal work is not compensated by equal pay. In some developing countries many work in the informal sector and export processing zones, suffering deplorable working conditions and violations of their human rights. Others are confined to home working.

Trade is identified as one of the six priority areas for development policy and one where gender dimensions are considered a crosscutting issue. The European Commission's 2002 policy paper, Trade and Development, assisting developing countries to benefit from trade, confirms the European Commission's position that trade fosters growth and poverty reduction. The paper identifies the following as pivotal if trade and development strategies are to contribute to economic growth and sustainable development:

- Sound macroeconomic policies, effective economic and social governance, and human capital development.
- Better market access and balanced trade rules to underpin domestic reform.
- Trade related assistance (TRA) and capacity building are needed to help developing countries with these tasks and with integration of trade into their national poverty reduction strategies.

TRA and capacity building are two priorities shared by DG Trade and DG Development. A substantial amount of development assistance is dedicated to the integration of developing countries in the international trading system. During 1996-2000, the European Commission dedicated about €700 million to TRA. Early 2003, the portfolio of trade related projects funded covered more than 200 projects for a total more than €1.5 billion. More than €1 billion will be allocated over the next three to five years.

Since 1999, the European Commission has been committed to conducting Sustainability Impact Assessments (SIAs) as part of its trade policymaking process. It is widely recognised that the outcomes of SIAs on those poor women and men who will ultimately be effected by future trade agreements will depend on how effectively they have participated in the SIA process.



The European Commission also supports development priorities in several arenas including the Doha Development Agenda and assistance for partner countries in WTO accession. It also supports regional integration, for example through negotiations with ACP countries to set up Economic Partnership Agreements, as provided for in the Cotonou Agreement.

### **WIDE contributes to EU-Latin America trade policy**

Trade relations between the EU and Latin America have undergone tremendous changes. Between 1995 and 1997, three Framework Co-operation Agreements were signed between the EU and Mercosur (Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay), Mexico and Chile. The objective of the agreements is to enhance economic co-operation. Each includes a clause for respect of democratic principles and fundamental human rights.

WIDE believes that a greater coherency between trade policy and development co-operation should be established and thus should contribute to the eradication of poverty in Latin America.

The European Commission funded project (€513.000) – A Gender Perspective in European Union/Latin American Trade Policy and Practice – aimed to contribute to the mainstreaming of gender into EU-Latin America trade co-operation and association agreements and practice. The project was viewed as a contribution to gearing economic trade activities towards overall sustainable human development and addressed the following issues:

- The lack of gender perspective in the EU-Latin America Agreements.
- The lack of information and tools to measure the efforts of trade on gender relations. These tools must be accessible to key stakeholders, including trade and gender officials at the European Commission, European Commission Delegations and Latin American governments.
- The lack of women's participation in the decision making process.

Activities included analysing trade negotiations and agreements through a gender lens, the organisation of gender and trade expert meetings, and the development of gender and trade indicators.

The project outcome is a policy paper that covered the planned activities. Several formal and informal consultations between WIDE and its partners and the European Commission took place over the last years contributing to knowledge sharing and to review our way of working.

## THE WAY FORWARD



**I**n recent years we see an increased awareness and a growing appreciation among our partners in the south about the importance of making public institutions more accountable to women's needs. To strengthen women's representation and participation in economic and political life contributes significantly to poverty reduction and development and creates more hope for a better future for the next generations.

Findings from evaluations and assessments of the impact of development demonstrate how gender equality is a key determinant of effective development. Changing our way of doing business and mainstreaming a major concern such as gender equality, confronts us with difficult challenges. In part because as an aid agency we are called upon to do business differently and in part because changes also relate to difficult social and political reforms and participation at country level.

As a result, it is important to maintain realistic expectations and to foster change from within through increased analysis, participation and dialogue. We at the European Commission and some of our partners in the south are a long way from significant analysis of public spending targeted at women and other relevant groups.

This kind of analysis could be a powerful instrument in showing the way forward. It could also contribute to reprioritisation of public spending related to child care, basic health and primary education, increase economic sustainability through microfinance, confront domestic violence and unemployment, as well as foster greater participation in governance and the democratic process.

## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

## RELATED WEBSITE LINKS

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific countries	<a href="http://www.campaignforeducation.org">http://www.campaignforeducation.org</a>
AGTP	Africa Gender Training Programme	<a href="http://www.eurosur.org/wide/">http://www.eurosur.org/wide/</a>
ALA	Asia and Latin America development co-operation programme	<a href="http://www.fao.org/gender">http://www.fao.org/gender</a>
ARSP	Agriculture/Livestock Research Support Programme	<a href="http://www.genderatwork.org">http://www.genderatwork.org</a>
ASAL	Arid and Semi-Arid Lands	<a href="http://www.gender-budgets.org">http://www.gender-budgets.org</a>
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women	<a href="http://www.globalfundatm.org/overview.html">http://www.globalfundatm.org/overview.html</a>
CSP	Country Strategy Paper	<a href="http://www.ids.ac.uk/bridge/">http://www.ids.ac.uk/bridge/</a>
CSW	Commission on the Status Women	<a href="http://www.ilo.org/gender">http://www.ilo.org/gender</a>
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)	<a href="http://www.oecd.org/dac/gender">http://www.oecd.org/dac/gender</a>
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)	<a href="http://www.oneworldaction.org">http://www.oneworldaction.org</a>
DG DEV	Directorate-General for Development	<a href="http://www.oxfam.org.uk">http://www.oxfam.org.uk</a>
EC	European Community	<a href="http://www.siyanda.org">http://www.siyanda.org</a>
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council	<a href="http://www.unifem.org">http://www.unifem.org</a>
EDF	European Development Fund	<a href="http://www.un-instraw.org">http://www.un-instraw.org</a>
EIDHR	European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights	<a href="http://www.undp.org/toppages/gender/genframe.htm">http://www.undp.org/toppages/gender/genframe.htm</a>
EU	European Union	<a href="http://www.undp.org">http://www.undp.org</a>
GIGED	Gender and Development Inter-projects Group Network	<a href="http://www.unesco.org">http://www.unesco.org</a>
IDTs	International Development Targets (OECD)	<a href="http://www.unhcr.ch">http://www.unhcr.ch</a>
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals	<a href="http://www.worldbank.org">http://www.worldbank.org</a>
MEDA	Mediterranean countries development co-operation programme	
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	
PARIS 21	Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	
PCM	Project Cycle Management	
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper	
SIAs	Sustainability Impact Assessments	
SIDA	Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency	
TRA	Trade-Related Assistance	
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme	
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund	
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women	
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development	
WTO	World Trade Organization	

European Commission | Directorate-General for Development | Information and Communication Unit

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