

EVALUATION ROADMAP

Roadmaps aim to inform citizens and stakeholders about the Commission's work to allow them to provide feedback and to participate effectively in future consultation activities. Citizens and stakeholders are in particular invited to provide views on the Commission's understanding of the problem and possible solutions and to share any relevant information that they may have.

TITLE OF THE EVALUATION	Evaluation of the EU's external action support in the area of gender equality and women empowerment
LEAD DG – RESPONSIBLE UNIT	The evaluation will be co-led by DG NEAR A4 and DG DEVCO 04.
INDICATIVE PLANNING (PLANNED START DATE AND COMPLETION DATE)	Q2–2019 to Q3-2020
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/about/directorate-general_en https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sectors/human-rights-and-governance/gender_en

The Roadmap is provided for information purposes only. It does not prejudice the final decision of the Commission on whether this initiative will be pursued or on its final content. All elements of the initiative described by the document, including its timing, are subject to change.

A. Context, purpose and scope of the evaluation

Context

This evaluation is included in the multiannual strategic evaluation plan of DG NEAR — Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations — (covering the period 2018-2022) and in the provision contained in the EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (2016-2020)¹.

This evaluation is in line with the EU Better Regulation, which emphasises the need of systemic and timely evaluation of European Commission programmes, activities, instruments and non-spending activities in order to demonstrate accountability and to promote lesson learning to improve policy and practice.

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls are fundamental human rights enshrined in international conventions and commitments such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They are also among the founding values of the Treaty on European Union and the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

The EU has been increasingly active in promoting gender equality in its external action, including in its development cooperation and humanitarian aid.

Already in its Consensus on Development (2005), the EU recognised gender equality as a goal in its own right and identified it as one of the five essential principles of development cooperation.

In 2007, building on the Consensus, the European Commission adopted *the Communication on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) in Development Cooperation*².

In May 2007 *Council Conclusions on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Cooperation* called on the Commission, EEAS and the Member States to promote clear objectives and indicators on gender equality in all sectors. Such Conclusions set the first steps towards a coordinated European approach to promoting gender equality and empowering women through development cooperation.

In 2008, the EU adopted an *Agenda for Action on Millennium Development Goals (MDG)* to step up efforts to achieve the MDG targets by 2015 that contained a strong focus on gender equality. Moreover, in December 2008, the Council adopted the *EU Guidelines on Violence against Women and Girls and Combating All Forms of Discrimination against them*, which outline the criteria for intervention regarding women's rights and are the basis for EU intensified action to combat violence and discrimination against women and girls in the world.

¹ JSWD(2015)182 of 15.09.2015

² COM(2007)

This work is part of a broader EU policy on gender equality, as reflected in the *EU Strategy for Equal opportunities between Women and Men (2011-2015)*, which covered both internal and external EU policies, and aimed at improving coherence between the two.

Since 2010, the EU has adopted two successive *Action Plans on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in external actions (GAP I and GAP II)*, putting forward the EU's clear commitment towards Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in all its external actions^{3,4}.

In the New *European Consensus on Development (2017)*, EU and its Member States reconfirm their commitment to gender equality, defined "vital for achieving the SDGs and cuts across the whole 2030 Agenda". "The EU and its Member States will promote women's and girls' rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and their protection as a priority across all areas of action".

Purpose and scope

The generic purpose of this evaluation is to provide an independent assessment and evidence on the contribution of EU external action support in the policy area of gender equality and women empowerment (GEWE). In line with EU policy on evaluation, this evaluation seeks to be a lesson-learning and forward-looking exercise, as well as an accurate assessment of achieved results in line with the objectives of GAP II and other relevant overall policy frameworks for gender equality. The scope of the evaluation includes:

1. To assess in both qualitative and quantitative terms the relevance, conditions of implementation and performance of EU external action (provided by EU, External Action Service (EEAS) and EU Member States) to promote GEWE and its mainstreaming, particularly its efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and the EU added value. This assessment will include the EU external relations with partner countries, candidate countries and potential candidates, based on the overall objectives (amongst other on human rights) established in their strategic partnerships and political and policy dialogues with the EU (EU and its Member States).
2. To assess whether the EU's policy and operational response on GEWE in partner regions (EU Plans of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (2010-2015⁵ & 2016-2020)) have triggered new approaches and rendered EU external action support more effective, targeted, gender-responsive and efficient.
3. To assess: i) the coordination and complementarity of EU and EU Members States' external action, ii) the coordination and complementarity between EU external action support and other donors' and actors', iii) the coherence of gender EU external action with other relevant EU external policies, and iv) the coherence of EU external action support with international legal commitments in GEWE.
4. To provide to the Commission, the EEAS and EU Member States lessons learned (both positive and negative), best practices on GEWE results, including their contribution to transform social norms, and recommendations to improve current support in the area of GEWE in particular as regards:
 - i. the approaches and tools to gender mainstreaming;
 - ii. the use of political and policy dialogues in supporting GEWE;
 - iii. the potentials for improvements in supporting GEWE through different aid modalities, including budget support;
 - iv. the efficiency and effectiveness of the support to capacity development;
 - v. the EU external action actors as agents of change to support the achievement of GEWE;
 - vi. the EU external action actors' capacity to contextualise their approaches on GEWE to different

³ Note for the evaluation of FPI Actions: FPI manages interventions in the area of foreign policy, which go beyond the scope of development cooperation. For FPI, only GAP II is a relevant policy reference framework.

⁴ Note for the evaluation of DG NEAR Actions: Gender Equality is included as an objective in policy documents that guide the EU agreements with the Eastern Partnership (EaP) and the IPA countries; see for instance the 2016's 20 key deliverables for 2020 for the Eastern Partnership https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/near-eeas_joint_swd_2016467_0.pdf. The 2016 and 2018 Communications on EU Enlargement Policy underlined that further work is required to ensure equality between women and men, notably on the labour market and to tackle gender based violence.

The Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2015 includes a renewed focus on the importance of gender equality and the support to ENP partners in delivering achievements on gender equality and girls' and women's empowerment in line also with the universal 2030 Agenda.

⁵ The Evaluation of EU Support to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Partner Countries (Final Report, April 2015) covered partially the GAP I.

- types of country situations;
- vii. the explanatory factors that facilitate or hamper the contribution of EU external action support on GEWE.

The evaluation shall lead i) to the identification of a set of lessons learnt, ii) to conclusions based on objective, credible, reliable and valid findings and iii) shall provide the Commission, the EEAS and EU Member States with a set of strategic, operational, targeted and useful forward-looking recommendations.

The results of the evaluation will:

- serve as a source of information for the future development of the policy framework on: i) GEWE in the external action context (i.e. the successor of GAP II), and on ii) broader global and/or regional external relations' frameworks, indicating, among others, the challenges to be addressed;
- advice on improving strategies and tools (planning and design of interventions) of the EU external action actors;
- to the extent possible, contribute to improve the programming, monitoring, reporting and implementation of current action programmes in the concerned regions.
- To suggest priority areas to be tackled by the EU external gender policy and strategy within the next MFF.

The temporal scope is 2010-2018. The analysis will cover:

1. The entire period for candidate countries and potential candidates in terms of both the normative framework and the implementation of GEWE related support. IPA beneficiaries were not included in the previous GEWE evaluation that covered the period 2007-2013.
2. The period 2014-2018 for partner countries⁶.

The geographical scope includes Enlargement, Neighbourhood (South and East), Africa, Central Asia, South and South-East Asia & Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean regions. The list of countries in each region, to be selected based on specific criteria, will be defined during the inception phase for more detailed analyses during both the desk and the field phases.

In accordance with the EU Better Regulation, the assessment will be made against the following evaluation criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, coherence and EU added value. Furthermore, sustainability, coordination and complementarity will also be considered. The preliminary indicative list of evaluation questions, to be finalised later in the process, is:

1. To what extent have the **EU external policy framework and strategies** been, and are at present being, conducive for a gender responsive programming and implementation of EU external action in GEWE?
2. To what extent have **EU institutional external actors developed an institutional culture shift**, conducive for a gender responsive programming, timely and effective implementation, monitoring and reporting of EU external action, thus responding to EU accountability commitments on GEWE?
3. To what extent has the EU external action in the policy area of GEWE, ensured, and is at present ensuring, **gender mainstreaming** in EU external actors spending and non-spending actions?
4. To what extent has the EU GEWE policy in external relations been, and is at present, used to design and implement activities so as to maximize the **EU cooperation potential** and **the EU added value**?
5. To what extent has the EU GEWE external policy, ensured, and is at present ensuring, **partnership (through effective engagement, co-ordination and complementarity)** with other key stakeholders at local, regional, national and international level (incl. UN agencies and international organisations, strategic partners and civil society)?
6. To what extent have the various aid **modalities and financial instruments**, and their combinations, been, and are at present being, appropriate in view of promoting gender responsive interventions?
7. To what extent has EU external action contributed, and is at present contributing, **to ensure physical and psychological integrity of girls and women in the public and private spheres**?
8. To what extent has EU external action contributed, and is at present contributing, **to socially and economically empower women**, thus contributing redressing inequalities and improving gender balance in partner countries?
9. To what extent has EU external action contributed, and is at present contributing, **to ensure women's**

⁶ ENI countries where included in the Evaluation of EU Support to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Partner Countries, Final Report, April 2015 (that covered the period 2007-2013).

voice and participation at all levels of the political life, thus contributing redressing inequalities and improving gender balance in partner countries?

B. Better regulation

Consultation of citizens and stakeholders

Not being an evaluation in the sense of the Better Regulation guidelines and not referring to a major initiative, the present study will not develop an on-line open public consultation (OPC). Furthermore, this study not being linked to legislative and non-legislative initiatives, delegated acts or implementing measures, no impact assessment is required.

However, consultation activities will be undertaken to gather data, opinions and test hypotheses.

The main stakeholders to be consulted during the evaluation exercise from inception to final/reporting phase (either via interviews, workshops and/or surveys) are:

- National authorities and institutions in candidate countries, potential candidates and partner countries responsible for the design, implementation, monitoring and reporting of EU external action support, beneficiaries of EU external action support and other national stakeholders;
- EU stakeholders, including EU Delegations/EU Offices in candidate countries, potential candidates and partner countries, DG NEAR, DG DEVCO, the EC Secretariat General, DG MOVE, DG RTD, DG TRADE, DG ECHO, DG JUST, DG EMPL, DG HOME, DG JRC, the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), the EEAS, the European Institute for Gender Equality and EU Member States national authorities.
- International stakeholders, including: relevant UN agencies and other relevant international organisations, relevant civil society organisations and research institutions.

The list will be further defined during the Inception phase.

The progress of the evaluation will be followed closely by an Inter Service Steering Group (ISG) consisting of representatives of: EC Secretariat-General, DG NEAR, DG DEVCO, DG MOVE, DG RTD, DG ECHO, DG JUST, DG EMPL, DG HOME, DG JRC, the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), the EEAS, the European Institute for Gender Equality and a sample of EU Member States.

Data collection and methodology

The evaluation process will be carried out in four phases: an Inception Phase, a Desk Phase, a Field Phase, and a Synthesis Phase. In terms of methodology, the following key elements can be already pinpointed:

- A. Evaluation Questions. A draft set will be presented in the Terms of Reference and the evaluation team, in consultation with the Inter Service Steering Group, will finalise and complete it (with Judgement criteria (JC) and indicators for each JC and relevant data collection sources and tools) during the inception phase. When relevant, cross-cutting issues will be considered.

The indicators will need to allow cross-checking, triangulation and strengthening the evidence base on which the evaluation questions are answered. The information gathered for each indicator will be presented as an annex of the desk and final reports.

- B. Data collection tools. Several tools will be used for collecting, structuring, processing and/or analysing data throughout the evaluation process: Inventory of interventions, Literature review, Interviews, Case studies, Survey, Quantitative analysis. Up to 16 field visits are also foreseen.

Deliverables in the form of reports and/or slide presentations should be submitted by the evaluation team at the end of the corresponding phases.

Key sources of information already available are (this list will be further detailed once a set of case studies are defined):

1. EU policy and strategy documents towards partner regions;
2. Global and regional strategy documents between the EU and Enlargement and partner countries;
3. Enlargement and partner countries official documents;
4. EU support interventions related documents (incl. Results Oriented Monitoring reports);
5. Previous evaluations, studies, reports, etc.

The Terms of reference will provide a non-exhaustive list of documents.