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Status of Gender Equality in Tanzania in relation to selected EU Gender Action Plan Objectives

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1 Overview of Status of Gender Equality in Tanzania

While Tanzania has achieved certain progress towards gender equality under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)¹ since 2001, Tanzanian women and girls continue to suffer violence and discrimination in access to education, the right to political participation and representation, financial inclusion, employment and health services. This is reflected in the 2017 Gender Inequality Index, where Tanzania ranks 130 out of 155 countries with a rating of 0.5372, which represents a slow but steady improvement from 1995, when the rating was 0.6523. Some of the root causes for gender inequalities in Tanzania include historical and structural power imbalances between women and men, pervasive negative gender stereotypes, and harmful cultural practices.

The legislative and regulatory framework governing Tanzania's promotion of gender equality is based on the 1977 Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania (Articles 12 and 13) which guarantees equality between men and women and supports their full participation in social, economic and political spheres. The commitment to gender equality is also visible through other national strategies, plans and policies, such as the Tanzania Development Vision 2025, the National Five-Year Development Plan, the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGR) and the Women and Gender Development Policy of 2000. In addition to these national commitments, Tanzania has ratified key international and regional commitments to women's rights and gender equality.

The Council of the European Union has endorsed the Gender Action Plan (GAP) for the period 2016-2020. The Commission, the European External Action Service and Member States are expected to deliver against the GAP and report on progress, challenges and financing as set out in the GAP. The Delegation of the EU to Tanzania wishes to assess the current status of gender equality in Tanzania against the objectives outlined in the GAP. This document provides an overview of the status on gender equality in Tanzania in relation to the 5 GAP objectives selected for Tanzania. The analysis also covers relevant trends related to gender equality not currently captured by the 5 selected Objectives, identifies certain key challenges towards meeting the Objectives as well summarizing the main conclusions.

1.1 Objective 1: Girls and Women free from all forms of violence against them (VAWG) both in the public and the private sphere.

Violence against women remains one of the most significant barriers for Tanzanian women and girls to achieve true gender equality.

Tanzania has developed a Five-year National Plan of Action to End Violence against Women and Children (NPAVAWC 2017/18 – 2021/22). The objectives of the Plan are to improve coordination, delivery of quality services, implementation of prevention and response measures and application of innovative solutions to end all forms of violence against women and children. The plan reports that almost four in ten Tanzanian women have experienced physical violence, and one in five women report experiencing sexual violence in their lifetime (from the age of 15). Spousal abuse, both sexual and physical, is even higher (44%) for married women. According to the 2015-16 Demographic Health Survey (TDHS), 39 percent of women age 15-49 have ever experienced physical violence since age 15. More notably is that there has been no change in this statistic since the previous TDHS of 2010⁴. In terms of sexual violence, 17% of women age 15-49 have ever experienced sexual violence and 9% have experienced sexual violence in the past 12 months⁵.

¹ Gender, United Nations Tanzania Overview <http://www.tz.one.un.org/what-we-do/9-core-comittments/9-gender?showall=&start=0>

² United Nations Development Programme Human Development Reports, Gender Inequality Index, <http://www.hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GII>

³ Human Development Data (1990-2017), UNDP <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>

⁴ Tanzania Demographic Health Survey 2015-16

⁵ Tanzania Demographic Health Survey 2015-16

The Law of Marriage (LMA) is the main piece of legislation which governs all forms of matrimonial and intimate partner relationships in Tanzania. It has been in existence since 1971; but has never been amended to reflect the current socio-economic situation including new developments in human rights discourse brought about by the CEDAW, Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) of 1989, Maputo Protocol and other several instruments. Tanzania is therefore considered to have one of the weakest legal and policy frameworks in Africa addressing protection against gender-based violence, per the 2018 State of African Women report. Specifically, national laws are more permissive in issues relating to age for marriage, spousal beating, polygamy and marital rape⁶ than the established standards set out in international protocols. Furthermore, Tanzania does not address the criminalization of marital rape and also expressly exempts sexual intercourse with 'married girls' above the age of 15 years from the definition of rape, and it is the country with the weakest legal and policy frameworks regarding child marriage in the Eastern Africa⁷.

While intimate partner violence is well documented and acknowledged as a challenge facing women and girls in Tanzania, there has been less focus on violence in the public sphere. There is growing evidence that sextortion - extorting sexual favors in return for rendering public services - is becoming more common in workplaces⁸. Sextortion is found at all levels of education, also referred to as grades for sex; health centers; and public service offices. Such trends need to be closely monitored as this type of abuse not only affects women and girls' rights to live without violence, it also impacts their options in education, careers choice and access to dignified public services.

Another area where progress has been slow is in reducing child marriage and child pregnancy. Per a World Bank report⁹, while Tanzania has made some progress, at current rates of progress the country will not achieve the SDGs in this area. Almost one in three Tanzanian girls marries as a child and almost one in four have their first child before the age of 18¹⁰. The link between poor educational attainment, child marriage and early pregnancy has been documented and remains a critical challenge for development in Tanzania including achieving gender equality.

One positive development related to violence against women and girls in Tanzania is the decrease in female genital mutilation. Tanzania is the only country in Africa that has both legal provisions and a programmatic response to end FGM¹¹. Per the 2015–16 Tanzanian Demographic and Health Survey Report's data on gender-based violence, the numbers show a decrease over the past two decades, dropping from 18% among women age 15–49 in 1996 to 10% in 2015–16. However, the rates of FGM vary significantly across the country. FGM prevalence in rural areas is more than double that in urban areas. The highest percentages are in Manyara and Dodoma regions (58% and 47%, respectively)¹².

1.2 Objective 2: Equal access for girls and women to all levels of quality education and vocational education and training (VET) free from discrimination.

This objective is partially being met. Educational policies are guided primarily by the Education and Training Policy (ETP) and the Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP), through the Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP), Secondary Education Development Programme (SEDP), Higher Education Development Programme (HEDP), Folk Education Development Programme (FEDP), Adult and Non-formal Education Strategy (ANFES), Teacher Development and Management Strategy (TDMS), Vocational Education Act, the Technical Education and Training Policy, and Higher Education Policy¹³.

⁶ Review of Laws and Policies related to gender-based violence of Tanzania mainland, TAWLA, 2014

⁷ The State of African Women, IPPF 2018

⁸ Five-year National Plan of Action to End Violence Against Women and Children, 2017

⁹ The Power of Investing in Girls: Educating Girls and Ending Child Marriage in Tanzania, World Bank, 2019

¹⁰ The Power of Investing in Girls: Educating Girls and Ending Child Marriage in Tanzania, World Bank, 2019

¹¹ The State of African Women, 2018, IPPF

¹² Tanzania Demographic Health Survey 2015-16

¹³ National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty II, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, 2010

Gender parity is achieved at the pre-primary and primary education levels; however, the differences in enrollment and attendance between girls and boys rises at the secondary level and in higher education, particularly in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects. A report by the Economic and Social Research Foundation (ESRF) and UNDP in 2017 showed that 61% of the total population achieved the basic primary education level, with a higher proportion of males (about 64%) compared to females (59%). However, the numbers declined to 16% of people aged 15 years or above in the total population with secondary education. In the male population aged 15 years or over about 17% had secondary education, compared to 14% of females. As regards higher education, 2% of males and only 0.8% of females have a university education¹⁴. A recent World Bank study¹⁵ reports that just over one in four girls completes her secondary education, and that compared to 14 other African countries, adolescent girls in Tanzania have one of the lowest educational achievements. The report also goes further to provide evidence that two main contributing factors for low educational attainment are early child marriage and early pregnancy.

The TDHS 2015-16 shows that there is a clear correlation between levels of education and teenage pregnancy. Teenage childbearing decreases drastically with increasing education level of young women, from 52% among young women with no education to 10% among young women with secondary or higher education. The 2015-16 TDHS also shows that the prevalence of teenage pregnancies has increased from 26% in 2004/05 and 23% in 2010 to 27% in 2015-16 and is a critical concern in Tanzania¹⁶.

One of the challenges affecting gender parity in access to education in Tanzania is the practice on Tanzania mainland of prohibiting pregnant girls from attending and returning to school after they have given birth. The situation on Zanzibar is different and re-entry is allowed. A recent study on global education by UNICEF highlighted that Tanzania had some of the more discriminatory environments in the world due to the prohibition of allowing pregnant girls to attend and return to school after giving birth¹⁷.

Some additional factors that influence the decision for girls to enroll and attend school include 1) travel time and the potential dangers of commuting to school on foot for girls; 2) access to basic sanitary and hygiene services and products in school including clean facilities and menstrual hygiene products for adolescent girls; 3) perception of value of sending girls to school. Families often have to compare the cost of schooling at the higher levels versus the potential income generated by putting a girl to work. Moreover, many families do not believe a girl will select nor be successful in a lucrative career, so few families see the long-term investment in promoting a girl child's educational opportunities.

Regarding female literacy, the literacy among women has increased over the last decade, from 67% in 2004-05 to 77% in 2015-16. Literacy among men has been higher than among women throughout the decade and increased from 80% in 2004-05 to 83% in 2015-16. However, there are regional variations and for women these range from 56% to 90% and above. About 15 percent of women aged between 15 and 49 year did not have formal education compared to 8 percent for men. Three in 10 women and two in 10 men in the lowest wealth quintile have never been to school.¹⁸

There is little evidence of how successful the Vocational education and training (VET) programs are in impacting gender equality, and achieving gender parity, despite national policies governing VET¹⁹. For example, there are no specific statistics on how such programs target female participants, what the retention rate is for female participants or whether female graduates are employed at a higher rate or with a more competitive salary.

¹⁴ Social Policy, Gender and Labour in Tanzania, ESRF and UNDP, 2017

¹⁵ The Power of Investing in Girls: Educating Girls and Ending Child Marriage in Tanzania, World Bank, 2019

¹⁶ Child Marriage in Tanzania at a Glance, Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, 2017

¹⁷ Global Education Monitoring Report Gender Review, UNICEF, 2018

¹⁸ Tanzania Demographic Health Survey 2015-16

¹⁹ The Vocational Education and Training Act, The United Republic of Tanzania, 2006

1.3 Objective 3: Equal access by women to financial services, productive resources including land, trade and entrepreneurship.

The Tanzania Inclusive National Entrepreneurship Strategy (2017) aims to “achieve the economic empowerment and effective participation in social progress of all citizens, including youth, women, the rural poor and other disadvantaged groups”. Other strategies of relevance, including the Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) Policy (2003), the Trade Policy (2003), the National Skills Development Strategy (2016-2021) and the National Agricultural Policy refers to women in general terms, without specifying objectives or actions. This means that there is no specific focus on women, nor any outspoken strategy on how to address female entrepreneurship in the country

Tanzanian women are more likely than men to be engaged in informal non-wage earning work, and Tanzanian women have a higher rate of unemployment than men. Outside of agriculture, three-quarters of paid and self-employment opportunities are in the informal sector, with more women workers (an estimated 82 per cent of informal sector workers) than men (72 per cent)²⁰. Tanzanian women spend more time overall than men on unpaid care work activities, and less on cash-earning work. Gender disparities are also evident in formal sector employment, where men and male youth account for 62.2 percent of workers²¹.

Agriculture is a main driver of Tanzania's economy, but is expanding at a slower rate than other sectors in the economy. The sector relies heavily on women's participation, and according to the 2012 census 66% of working females and 57% of working males are active in the agriculture sector²². Gender disparity persists, as almost all value chains in Tanzania are male dominated, and decision-making at the household level continues to be male-dominated in all farming-related activities, even in those where women contribute the majority of the labor²³. When women are involved, they are involved in the least profitable stages with low possibilities for growth and expansion. Women farmers tend to be older, less educated, and often widowed or divorced and they also have less access to farming equipment, and less capacity to demand or secure men's help in the fields²⁴.

Under the Land Act and Village Land Act of 1999, Tanzanian law grants women the same rights as men to access, own and control land. However, even if women formally have the legal right to own land under the Act, poor implementation and the continued existence and application of customary law play a key role in undermining women's economic empowerment. Per the Land Tenure Support programme performance report in 2019, 24% of Certificate of Customary Right of Occupancy's were registered to individual women compared to 39% registered to individual men²⁵.

Gender discrimination based on the customary laws and practices is felt most in the rural areas where most women have low education and low income. They only have usufructuary rights on the land that they till, as such there are numerous cases where women are thrown out of their homes and land when the husband dies, and she refuses to be inherited by one of her husband's male relatives.²⁶

Regarding access to financial services, a 2017 UNCDF study found that 66% of women entrepreneurs funded their start-up from personal savings or borrowed from family and friends, many women are part of savings groups. Only 11 % used formal banks²⁷. Only 54% of Tanzanian women own mobile phones compared to 71% of men²⁸, limiting their ability to access mobile money. Rural women are at particular disadvantage as compared to urban women. Some of the

²⁰ 'My Mother Does a Lot of Work': Women Balancing Paid and Unpaid Care Work in Tanzania, BRAC, 2017

²¹ Formal Sector Employment and Earnings Survey, 2016, National Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Finance and Planning, May 2018

²² Gender Dimension Monograph, the 2012 Housing and Population Census, National Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Finance and Planning, 2015

²³ Role of women in agriculture, FAO, <http://www.fao.org/3/V8192E/v8192e01.htm>

²⁴ 'My Mother Does a Lot of Work': Women Balancing Paid and Unpaid Care Work in Tanzania, BRAC, 2017

²⁵ Land Tenure Support Programme Performance Report, United Republic of Tanzania, Ministry of Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development, 2019

²⁶ Tanzania Women Lawyers' Association-Review of Laws and Policies related to gender-based violence of Tanzania Mainland-September, 2014

²⁷ UNCDF "Power Access and Agency Country Assessments Tanzania", 2017

²⁸ Bridging the Gender Gap in Financial Inclusion, Financial Sector Deepening Trust, 2017

issues that contribute to the differences between women and men include lack of capital, access to documentation, lack of collateral, low financial literacy and lack of autonomy to purchase a mobile phone.

All the factors listed above including constraints around land ownership, limitations in accessing financial services, social norms around productive and community roles, but also others such as poor access to gender-sensitive business development skills support, impact female entrepreneurship in Tanzania.

1.4 Objective 4: Equal rights and ability for women to participate in policy and governance processes at all levels.

The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania provides for equal participation of women and men in all aspects of the political process. The Constitution provides for affirmative action to rectify historical gender imbalances in women's access to political decision-making bodies, such as parliament and local councils, through the provision of "special seats" for women. Tanzania has thus made significant strides in terms of women's representation in the political sphere. Women's participation in parliament increased from 16.7 per cent (1995), to 22.6 per cent (in 2000) and 30.4 per cent in 2005 to 36 per cent in 2010 and 37 per cent in 2015²⁹. The proportion makes Tanzania one of 20 countries in the world that have reached or surpassed the 30 per cent mark for women's representation in Parliament according to Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) data. Per the IPU in 2019, Tanzania has 36.9% female representation in parliament and is ranked 27 worldwide³⁰. Tanzania also elected its first ever female Vice President in 2015.

Despite such progress, there remain some key challenges to women's equal participation in the political sphere. Per the UN Women in 2019, the percentage of female ministers actually decreased from 2010 (31%) to 18% in 2019. Women's representation remains low in political positions at the level of the Local Government Authority (LGA). During the 2015 election, only 5 per cent of the elected district councilors were women. A study funded by DFID showed that women's political participation at the local level had little to no impact on policy changes, suggesting that women are facing significant challenges in advocating for changes affecting women and girls³¹. The same study also showed that women continue to be underrepresented in top-level positions in the public sector where their impact would be the most transformative and far reaching in terms of promoting gender sensitive reforms.

Some ways to strengthen and further progress in this area are to promote leadership, mentoring and coaching programs on political representation of females at all levels. This includes civic education to women to assist them in navigating the political system, but also for men to address some of the traditional, sexist cultural norms and beliefs that undermine women's participation in the political domain.

1.5 Objective 5: Women's organizations and other CSOs and Human Rights Defenders working for gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment and rights freely able to work and protected by law.

Recent trends in Tanzania point towards more restrictive civic space. This concerns for example some laws and policies: the Statistics Act of 2015 impacts on the generation and use of official and non-official statistics; the Access to Information Act of 2016, which introduced a series of obstacles making it more difficult for those requesting information from the government; the Cybercrimes Act of 2015, further limiting access to information, and certain NGO regulations have limited CSO's

²⁹ Tanzania Country Gender Profile, The Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, 2016

³⁰ Women in national parliaments. <http://archive.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm> 2019

³¹ Strachan, A.L. (2015). Women in politics and the public sector in Tanzania (GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1286). Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham

freedom of expression, interaction with media and ability to undertake functions such as research and information sharing with the public. These limitations include women's organizations and those working on behalf of gender equality and women's rights.

Historically, the women's grassroots movements have pushed forward achievements by providing collective power at different times to affect policies around maternity leave, girls' right to education at the university level, reforming land rights access, and gender budgeting among other issues. However, current challenges remain including lack of strong leadership, disconnected and contradictory messages, and limited institutional capacity and resources for viability and growth of CSOs.

Members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) community face widespread discrimination that restricts their access to healthcare, housing, employment and justice. Same sex sexual acts between men are criminalized.

2 Some Trends Relevant to Other Issues Affecting Gender Equality:

There are some notable trends not covered above that affect women specifically, and as such impact their lives and Tanzania's progress towards gender equality. One particular concern is the lack of progress made on maternal mortality. The maternal mortality ratio is 556 maternal deaths per 100 000 live births for the 10-year period before the 2015-16 THDS, which is not significantly different from the estimates reported in the 2004-05 THDS and the 2010 TDHS and is consistent with the estimate from the 2012 Population and Housing Census.³² One contributing factor is that only 46% of births are assisted by a doctor, clinical officer, nurse, midwife or maternal and child health aide³³. The fertility rate in Tanzania stands at 5.2 children³⁴.

The situation in terms of malnutrition and food security also has important gender dimensions and although the trend moves in the right direction, according to the TDHS 2015-16, 34 per cent of children under 5 years are stunted. Stunting is attributed to a combination of factors, including maternal malnutrition, inadequate infant feeding practices, low health care quality, clean drinking water and poor hygiene. The risk of stunting is 33 per cent higher among first-born children of girls under 18 years in Sub-Saharan Africa³⁵.

Tanzania is one of the few African countries where the rate of new HIV infections continues to increase. While no specific figures are available to demonstrate what percentage of the new cases are in women, HIV prevalence rate remains nearly twice for women (6.2 per cent) that of men (3.8 per cent)³⁶.

3 Conclusions

Tanzania has made an improvement from 1995-2017 in terms of gender equality. This is reflected in the ratings on the Gender Inequality Index, scoring 0.652 in 1995 and 0.537 in 2017. However, Tanzania ranks 130 out of 155 countries in 2017, indicating that there is much progress left to be made.

Tanzania has signed and ratified most of the international conventions and protocols addressing gender equality and women's rights; however as noted above, certain national laws, policies, and more importantly practices are contradictory to the provisions in the international standards. There

³² Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey 2015-16

³³ UNICEF, 2019

³⁴ Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey 2015-16

³⁵ Fink, G., Sudfeld, C.R., Danaei, G., Ezzati, M., and Fawzi, W.W. 2014. "Scaling-Up Access to Family Planning May Improve Linear Growth and Child Development in Low and Middle-Income Countries."

³⁶ The State of African Women report, IPPF, 2018

needs to be continued advocacy efforts to ensure harmful policies and practices are reversed. To this end, continued efforts on addressing harmful social norms and practices should be at the heart of interventions promoting gender equality and women and girls' rights in Tanzania.

Tanzania has made significant progress in terms of women's representation in the political sphere. The Constitution provides for affirmative action to rectify historical gender imbalances in women's access to political decision-making bodies, such as parliament and local councils, through the provision of "special seats" for women. However, key challenges remain, not least at local level, a concern is the changing and decreasing trend of female ministers since the elections in 2015.

Many of the challenges facing Tanzanian women and girls are multi-dimensional- for example the correlation between educational attainment, FGM, child marriage/early pregnancy and poverty. As such, interventions need to consider the entire context to look across systems and sectors and not only intervene on one specific factor. Awareness-raising on these issues must continue to be prioritized at all levels of society and involve the different groups of women, girls, men and boys.

Violence against women and girls remains a clear concern and strong implementation of the National Plan of Action to end Violence against Women and children is vital. There are some worrying signs of shifting trends for teenage pregnancies and a maternal mortality rate that appears to be consistent over the past 25 years. A positive development related to violence against women and girls in Tanzania is the decrease in female genital mutilation. In all of these areas, there is a need for a continued comprehensive approach and careful monitoring.

Regarding women's economic empowerment, the agriculture sector where most women are employed, whether formally or informally, is expanding at a slower rate than other sectors which are male dominated. Factors such as constraints around land ownership, limitations in accessing financial services and skills development, and social norms around productive and community roles, underscores the need to take a broad perspective when working with women's economic empowerment.

The brief also underlines the importance of developing data collection systems that capture the full experience of Tanzanian women and girls. Understanding how different groups of women and girls fare across various indicators would provide a richer understanding of the lives of women, men, girls and boys and gender equality in Tanzania and also provide some insight into how solutions may be tailored to the different target beneficiary groups.