

Gender Action Plan III – 2021-2025
Country Level Implementation Plan – CLIP Namibia

1. Context for EU action gender equality and women's empowerment in the country

Introduction:

The promotion of Gender Equality and Women Rights is one of the priority areas in the Human Rights and Democracy Country Strategy (HRDCS) 2021-2024 and it features prominently in the MIP Namibia for the programming period 2022-2027 and in the CSO Roadmap 2021-2024. Together with other development partners and EUMS, the EU has been working actively to promote gender equality, to empower women and to address GBV in Namibia throughout the last years and will continue to do so. We will continue to work with relevant ministries, UN agencies, local and international CSOs and other stakeholders. We will do so through our bilateral programmes, through our thematic programmes and through political dialogue. The EU and its Member States present in Namibia will endeavour to closely coordinate and create synergies between the various projects and programmes implemented on the ground. We trust that the proposed plan has the potential to make a real positive difference in Namibia for more Gender Equality and Women Empowerment. Input for this action plan was received through consultations with the government, relevant CSOs and from the Gender Country Analysis for Namibia as well as from the HRDCS 2021-2024.

i) Women Rights and Gender Equality – Wide gap between policy and implementation

With a *Gini Inequality Index* value of 0.44 Namibia scored 106th out of 162 countries in 2019¹. 44 percent of parliamentary seats are held by women², 9 of out of 23 ministries are headed by women (representing roughly 39%). 40.6% of adult women have reached at least a secondary level of education compared to 42% of their male counterparts. Female participation in the labour market is significantly lower (57,2%) compared to men (64,2%). Namibia also scores well overall in the Global Gender Gap Report³, having narrowed its overall gender gap significantly during the past years, however income gaps are still relatively large, and there is slow progress in reducing wage gaps. There are also persisting inequalities in accessing financial and real estate assets and not all women have the same inheritance rights as men, constituting one of the most relevant aspects of structural inequality.

Namibia has a very comprehensive “**National Gender Policy 2010-2020**” and an accompanying “**National Gender Action Plan**” in place⁴, with the aim to guide actions towards integration and mainstreaming of gender perspectives in the broad development framework, and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women in the socio-economic, cultural and political development of Namibia. Namibia also has a dedicated “**Prioritised Action Plan to Combat GBV 2020-2024**”. The four priority actions range from “Survivors First: Getting the response basics right” (protection), Safety Nets and Community Care: Primary prevention upgrade” (protection), “Counting the Cost: Adequate data, adequate funding” (data availability and statistics) to “Youth in the Lead: Transforming gender

¹ http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/NAM.pdf

² <https://www.ipu.org/women-in-politics-2021>, Namibia scores 15/188 for women representation in Parliament and 31/181 for Ministerial positions in Parliament.

³ http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf

⁴ The national Gender Policy is currently under review through an inclusive and comprehensive consultation process, which is one of the reasons why the updated Gender Country Profile for Namibia will only be done in the course of 2022, along with sectoral gender analysis.

norms for long term prevention” (prevention), thus focussing on both an immediate improvement of the protection services for victims and the long-term cultural and behavioural shifts to prevent GBV.

Namibia also has a whole range of policies in place that address aspects of Gender Equality and GBV: Combating of Rape Act, Domestic Violence Act, Married Persons Equality Act, Labour Act, Prevention of Organised Crime Act, Child Care and Protection Act, Combating of Trafficking in Persons and of course the National Gender Policy (2010-2020). On top of these national instruments, Namibia ratified important international, regional and sub-regional conventions and protocols, such as the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and is implementing the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Strategy in addressing GBV⁵. In 2019, Namibia adopted its National Action Plan for the implementation of the Women Peace and Security agenda (UN SCR 1325), for the period 2019-2024. To celebrate the 20th anniversary of the adoption of this Resolution, Namibia launched a new International Women Peace Centre based in Windhoek, on 31 October 2020.

At the same time, Sexual and Gender Based Violence continues to represent one of main challenges in term of human rights and socio-economic development of the country. The government has in recent years established dedicated “Gender Based Violence Protection Units” (operating within the police services) and some shelters (mostly not operational!) as part of its services to the victims and survivors of gender based violence. This Prioritised National Plan of Action on Gender Based Violence (2019-2023), accompanied by its robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework, is focusing on addressing the complex nature of GBV by all stakeholders.

While all of the above looks rather good on paper, a full-hearted implementation of the relevant policies is often delayed due to various reasons ranging from lack of resources in the relevant ministries to budgetary constraints, amongst others. Many challenges therefore remain. Namibian women and girls are still subjected to harmful cultural practices and both structural and physical violence. Gender based violence against women and girls (particularly sexual assault and rape), constitutes a particularly worrying phenomenon and has reached pandemic dimensions during the past years, even further exacerbated by the Covid-19 crisis. The lockdown situation did not only result in an increase of GBV cases, it has also led to a significant increase in learner’s pregnancies. GBV protection and response services, prevention services and save heavens for victims of GBV such as shelters are in fact rudimental, merely some CSOs manage to offer relevant referral, protection and psycho-social services to survivors of GBV.⁶ There is also an urgent need to strengthen engagement with youth and community based and faith-based organisations for transforming toxic gender norms for long term prevention and to look into the possibility to work more closely with traditional leaders/authorities (e.g. through the Council of Traditional Leaders) as they play a crucial role in safeguarding “customary law”, but they can also use their influence for introducing and/or legitimising positive behavioural innovation in their communities.

Another economic hindrance to more independence that CSOs highlight is the (in-)accessibility and the (low) amount of the child grant. With a majority of women being the primary caretakers of their children, an increase of the maintenance grant would lead to more financial independence (from the father) and – along with other measures such as the amendment of the divorce act and other policies – could encourage women to quit rather than stay in abusive relationships.

⁵ An EU-funded regional SADC project is also implementation work on the ground in Namibia.

⁶ Those are mainly funded by the EU and some EUMS and not by the Namibian government.

ii) The Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (MIP – EU Namibia 2021 – 2027)

The MIP Namibia 2021-2027 identifies three priority areas for the future programming as follows: 1) **Early Childhood Development/Fundamental Skills** 2) **Green Economy for decent jobs and inclusive growth** and 3) **Governance and Gender Equality**.

As far as **priority area one - Early Childhood Development/Fundamental Skills** - is concerned, there is consolidated scientific evidence that the period of a child's life from 0 to 8 years of age is critical for building a strong foundation for healthy development, norms and values, lifelong learning and school achievement. Therefore, implementing quality early childhood development (ECD) programmes is a highly cost-effective strategy to ensure that all children develop to their full potential. Through regular dialogue with the relevant ministries, the EU will advocate for the introduction of "gender identity" at curriculum level, laying the foundations for a gender equal society during these formative years in a child's life. In strong coordination and partnership with UNICEF and other partners, gender issue will be specifically targeted and mainstreamed throughout the entire programme. Our intervention in the area of early childhood education will also look into bolstering parenting skills and the role of life skills teachers in schools, as key points of entry for interventions which seek to influence attitudes and values on gender and therefore has a large transformational potential.

- Most activities under this priority area 1 of the MIP will be G1 actions, while some will be G2 actions. (EUR 16 Million for the first financing period 2021-2024).

Priority area two, Green Economy for decent jobs and inclusive growth – will mainstream gender throughout the entire programme. This will be particularly important in the area "access to water and sanitation" and with regards to "creating livelihood opportunities in the green economy/conservation economy". The extent of the gender focus will need to be developed at formulation stage. This will also be supported by dedicated gender sector analysis to be conducted in 2022 along with an update of the Gender Analysis for Namibia.

- All activities funded under this priority will be G1 actions (EUR 10,25 Million for the first financing period 2021-2024)

Priority area 3 –Governance and Gender Equality – will both mainstream gender equality and specifically support amongst others the Ministry of Gender Equality with the implementation of both the reviewed National Gender Strategy and the National Prioritised Action Plan to Combat GBV. The EU's support will be channelled both through government and through CSOs (through calls for proposals). Policy dialogue will be an important element throughout the implementation period. In order to help the youth raise their voice on relevant policy issues, the MIP Namibia also foresees to support the Namibian Youth Parliament.

- Most activities under this priority area 1 of the MIP will be G1 actions, while some will be G2 actions. (EUR 2,5 Million for the first financing period 2021-2024)

2. Selected thematic areas of engagement and objectives

As mentioned above, Gender Equality and Combatting GBV is one of the priorities of both the new HRDCS for Namibia 2021-2024 and of the MIP for Namibia 2022-2027. Given the fact that Namibia belongs to the group of Upper-Middle-Income-Countries, the bilateral envelope is relatively small and through the MIP Priority 3 around EUR 1 Million will be made available for "Gender Equality" between 2022-2024. The exact modalities are still to be discussed with the Ministry of Gender, but it is most likely going to result in a combination of Technical Assistance and Grants to CSOs. Support to gender equality can also be foreseen through the support measures (both Cooperation Facility and Support to CSOs). The other two priorities of the MIP (Inclusive green growth and Early childhood education) will have a strong gender dimension incorporated into their actions.

3. Targeted actions supporting gender equality and women's empowerment

As for the objectives, these are indicatively outlined as follows and will complement the already ongoing activities under existing EDF programmes and projects.

A) Ensuring freedom from gender-based violence (part of MIP priority area 1+3)

Objective:

- Women, men, girls and boys are free from all forms of gender-based violence in the public and private spheres, in the work place and online

Specific objectives:

- Women, men, girls and boys, in all their diversity (WMGB), are better protected from all forms of gender-based violence in the public and private sphere, in the work place and online through legislation and effective enforcement
- WMGB are agents of change regarding discriminatory social norms, gender stereotypes, and gender-drivers of conflict
- WMGB who experience gender-based violence have increased access to essential services
- Women's rights organisations, social movements and other civil society organisations are influential in ending gender-based violence

Future support through MIP 2022-2027 (bilateral envelope, Cooperation Facility and Support to CSOs):⁷

- Provision of technical assistance to strengthen the coordination of the implementation Combatting GBV action plan to the Ministry of Gender
- Provision of grants to CSOs for the implementation of various components of the Combatting GBV action plan & advocacy (covering both protection and prevention)
- Policy and technical dialogue on “gender identities” and the promotion of the integration of “gender” in Early Childhood Development curricula development, including teacher's trainings
- Support to structured dialogue with Civil Society in key focal sectors, including gender specifically, but also mainstreamed in other focal sectors
- Support to multi-lateral organisations, institutes and bodies supporting EU-Namibia cooperation as per government needs and requests (e.g. the recently established International Women Peace Centre based in Windhoek)
- Support to various family law reforms (advocacy, dialogue)
- Study on “The Cost of GBV in Namibia” for the Ministry of Gender to be commissioned through the EPDN (Enhancing Participatory Democracy Programme) in 2021.
- 11th EDF Regional Programme: Support to Peace and Security in the SADC Region: roll out the regional tools/guidelines (GBV Training Guideline; Guideline for developing SOPs; and support to

⁷ EUMS are also active in this thematic area of support:

Through its Fund for local Cooperation, the Embassy of Finland will fund two projects: a) Gentlemen and Supergirls: Addressing GBV with teenagers in the Ohangwena and Omusati regions in Namibia. Creating awareness of GBV in schools through arts and counselling for teenagers, both boys and girls b) Women Leadership Centre – Reducing family violence in San communities: An education and awareness project. Creating and engaging awareness groups & Family Violence Forums, training of community trainers.

Germany currently also supports various CSOs and initiatives and is going to support gender equality through a regional programme, details to be included as soon as available.

strengthen legislation, programme implements the SADC GBV Strategy (attached) and aims at supporting Member States' priority actions.)⁸

B) Promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights (Priority area 3 of the MIP)

Objective:

- Women and girls in all their diversity access universal health and fully enjoy their health and sexual and reproductive rights.

Specific objectives:

- Enabled legal, political and societal environment allowing women and girls to access quality sexual and reproductive health care and services and protecting their sexual and reproductive rights
- Improved access for every individual to sexual and reproductive healthcare and services, including family planning services, information and education on sexual and reproductive rights

Future support in this thematic area of engagement will be covered through the various programme aiming to reduce and prevent GBV, as GBV and the promotion sexual and reproductive rights are intimately connected and need to be tackled from all sides.

C) Promoting economic and social rights and empowering girls and women (Priority area 2 and 3 of the MIP)

Objective:

- Women, men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, fully enjoy and exercise their equal economic, labour and social rights

Specific objectives:

- Women in all their diversity have improved access to entrepreneurship opportunities, including social entrepreneurship, alternative livelihoods and strengthened participation in the green and circular economy
- Improved access to safe water and sanitation facilities
- Women, men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, have improved nutrition levels
- Women in all their diversity have improved access to entrepreneurship opportunities, including social entrepreneurship, alternative livelihoods and strengthened participation in the green and circular economy

Future support the above mentioned objectives through MIP 2022-2027:

- Support to access to safe water and sanitation facilities (through MIP priority area 2, inclusive green growth, most probably through grants)
- Support to access to (affordable) energy, particularly in rural areas
- Support to improved nutrition outcomes in ECD educational establishments supported through the EU's budget support programme (priority MIP area 1, Early Childhood Education)
- Support to the creation of livelihood opportunities and access to entrepreneurial opportunities (through MIP priority area 2, inclusive green growth, e.g. in the sector of conservation agriculture/biodiversity)
- Support to capacity building activities for CSOs who encourage female entrepreneurship (potentially through the Cooperation Facility and Support to Civil Society Organisations)⁹

⁸ This programme has a strong link to the thematic engagement area "Integrating the women, peace and security agenda" mentioned further below. It's implemented by the local SADC office.

⁹ Worth mentioning in this section is that Germany is funding a very comprehensive programme, "StartUpNamibia", which also particularly targets women.

- Support to role models (best female student, Namibian female engineers...)
- Support to organisations that provide education/training in entrepreneurship, financial management and vocational skills

D) Promoting equal participation and leadership (Priority areas 1,2 and 3 of the MIP)

Objective:

- WMGB participate equally in decision-making processes, in all spheres and at all levels of political and public life, including online, to take on leadership roles, to enjoy and exercise their human rights and seek redress if these rights are denied

Specific objective:

- Enabling conditions created for equal participation of women, men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, in decision-making

Future support the above mentioned objectives through MIP 2022-2027:

- Support to Participatory Democracy through support to the Namibian Youth Parliament (most probably in partnership with UNICEF)
- Skills development of CSOs, including CSOs working on women rights and women empowerment through grants to be awarded through a call for proposal
- Promoting knowledge dissemination, networking and mentoring opportunities for CSOs / Support the coordination efforts of CSOs to be able to speak with one voice by supporting CSO platforms/ CSO coordination organisations (Cooperation Facility)
- Supporting actions aiming at fostering collaboration between the focal sectors' project holders and CSOs, including private sector's organizations; (Cooperation Facility)

E) Integrating the women, peace and security agenda (relates to MIP priority area 3)

Many of the possible objectives under this thematic area of engagement have already been touched upon in the previous engagement areas, however it is worth mentioning that through the MIP 2022-2027, the EU Delegation intends to support the recently established "International Women's Peace Centre" in Windhoek. First contacts have been established and dialogue will be expanded in the future. Potential areas of support include mediation, post trauma counselling, as well as GBV prevention, and would create synergies with the EU's MIP priority 3. The International Women's Peace Centre would potentially be supported through the Cooperation Facility.

F) Addressing the challenges and harnessing the opportunities offered by the green transition and the digital transformation (MIP priority area 2)

Objective:

- Women in all their diversity influence decision-making processes on natural resources management, environmental conservation and climate change policies and actions

Specific objectives:

- Increased participation of women and girls in all their diversity in decision-making processes on environment and climate change issues
- Women and men in all their diversity, increasingly participate in and have improved access to jobs, entrepreneurship opportunities and alternative livelihoods in the green economy and the circular economy
- Women and men have access to environmental education opportunities

Future support to the above mentioned objectives through MIP 2022-2027:

The actions under this priority area will all have a strong gender lens.

- Support to an increased share of renewable energies in the energy mix will facilitate a stronger and greener economic recovery
- Support to ensuring a more inclusive water supply and sanitation facilities
- Support to livelihoods in rural and urban communities
- Support to practices and conservation initiative
- Support to environmental awareness educational activities

4. Engage in dialogue for gender equality and women empowerment

On top of the above mentioned targeted actions, the EU Delegation to Namibia will engage in dialogue on gender equality and women empowerment through various fora and formats, ranging from formal discussions within the framework of the political and human rights dialogue, in line with GAPIII to public and mediated debates on gender equality and women empowerment with the most relevant CSOs from various sectors. Regular EU-CSO dialogue on gender equality and women empowerment (and other sectors!) is foreseen in the CSO Roadmap, it will take place in a structured manner on a regular basis, twice a year. Discussions with and outreach towards line ministries, in particular the Ministry of Gender and the Ministry of Justice, Social Affairs and other relevant state institutions, in particular in relation to law enforcement, will complement our efforts and create synergies with ongoing initiative and future targeted actions. Steering committees of the various programmes to be implemented under the new MIP will help in both structuring and broadening the dialogue in this regard. We hope that our future engagement with the Youth Parliament will enable us to organise activities that specifically address women empowerment for the young generation and we intend to encourage specific debates of gender equality in Parliament, either through our ongoing EDF11 EPDN programme or through new MIP funding. Specific dialogue is also envisaged to be organised with the Namibian Youth Forum on gender equality issues. Networking events and other occasions with prominent male role models speaking up for equal participation and leadership and gender equality will equally be organised in an effort to keep the topic of gender equality high on the medial agenda. Equally, dialogue sessions and/or events about female political participation and influence with both the ruling and opposition parties will be envisaged.

5. Outreach and other communication / public diplomacy activities

The EU Delegation has in the past and will continue to be very vocal about gender equality and women empowerment. We use every occasion to highlight the importance, e.g. in press releases, speeches, on social media and in direct dialogue with national interlocutors, from government, the private sector and from Civil Society. As the EU Delegation is funding various relevant grants in this sector (psycho-social support, sexual comprehensive skills, women empowerment etc.) communication and outreach opportunities present themselves many times a year¹⁰, usually in the framework of an event or an activity organised by one of the grantees. The participation in such events enables us to contextualise our messages and to reach out to the communities at grass-root level. Our participation to such events complements our dialogue efforts at government level in a comprehensive manner. The EU Delegation will also produce a whole set of contextualised messages for various channels – but particularly for social media - on specifically important International Days with a strong relation to our ongoing cooperation programmes, such as “Human Rights Day”, “International Day of the Girl Child”, “International Day of Rural Women”, “International Day for the Elimination of Violence against

¹⁰ Exceptionally less so during 2020 and 2021 so far due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Women”, “World Mental Health Day”, just to name a few. At least one high level event will be organised together with government partners, CSOs and other relevant actors for networking, outreach and public diplomacy purposes.

The EUD will collaborate with the HoMs present in Namibia to highlight the steps taken by the EU as a whole in favour of Gender Equality and Women Empowerment, including through the identification of a Gender Champion among the MS as appropriate.

6. Technical Facility and/or financial resources allocated to support GAP III implementation

The implementation of GAP III at country level will mainly be funded through technical assistance and grants in priority sector three of the MIP (Governance and Gender Equality, approx. EUR 1 Million for Gender Equality 2021-2024) and through grants provided through the Support Measures/Support to Civil Society (approx. EUR 0.5 Million between 2021-2024) as well as through the Cooperation Facility. We expect to complete the update of the Country Gender Analysis for Namibia and the preparation of sector specific gender profiles relevant for the MIP priorities in the course of 2022 with the support of the ongoing EDF11 programme “Enhancing Participatory Democracy in Namibia”. Under the same programme, a study on the cost of GBV in Namibia will also be prepared.

Date: 04 OCT 2021

Signature by Head of Delegation: 