



# WELCOME PACKAGE

ON HUMAN RIGHTS-  
BASED APPROACH,  
GENDER EQUALITY,  
AND DISABILITY  
INCLUSION



# IMPRESSUM

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DG INTPA	Directorate-General for International Partnerships
DG NEAR	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement
EU	European Union
GAP	Gender Action Plan
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
IPA	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex
LGBTIQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, and Queer
NDICI	Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
TEU	Treaty on European Union
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations

## Introduction

This Welcome Package is a short and useful guidance on Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA), Gender Equality and Disability Inclusion for all new staff in Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) and Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement (DG NEAR).

It briefly presents the main framework documents in relation to HRBA, Gender mainstreaming and Disability inclusion. Further, it includes information and resources useful in integrating the HRBA in your daily work, as well as mainstreaming Gender and Disability inclusion throughout your actions, programmes, and further activities.

## Gender Equality, Human Rights, Disability Inclusion, Intersectionality

The EU is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities, as laid down in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU).

### 1997 **Amsterdam Treaty**

"Positive actions" and gender mainstreaming.

### 2000 **EU Charter of Fundamental Rights**

### 2007 **Treaty of the EU**

Gender Equality is "a fundamental value and an objective."

### 2017 **European Consensus on Development**

The EU and its Member States will promote women's and girls' rights, gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls and their protection as a priority across all areas of action. They will implement a rights-based approach to development cooperation, encompassing all human rights. They will continue to play a key role in ensuring that no-one is left behind, wherever people live and regardless of ethnicity, gender, age, disability, religion or beliefs, sexual orientation and gender identity, migration status or other factors. This approach includes addressing the multiple discriminations faced by vulnerable people and marginalised groups.

### 2020 **EU Strategy on Gender Equality 2020-2025**

The strategy pursues a dual approach of gender mainstreaming combined with targeted actions, and intersectionality is a horizontal principle for its implementation.

## **2020 EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024**

Structured around five main areas of action: protecting and empowering individuals; building resilient, inclusive and democratic societies; promoting a global system for human rights and democracy; new technologies: harnessing opportunities and addressing challenges and delivering by working together.

## **2020 EU Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in External Action 2021–2025 (GAP III)**

The EU GAP III makes the promotion of gender equality a priority of all external policies and actions; offers a roadmap for working together with stakeholders at national, regional and multilateral levels; steps up action in strategic thematic areas; calls for the institutions to lead by example, and ensures the transparency of the results.

## **2021 EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child**

Key strategic document for promoting of the rights of the child within the EU and globally. The strategy includes six thematic priorities: 1. Participation in political and democratic life 2. Socio-economic inclusion, health and education, 3. Combating violence against children and ensuring child protection 4. Child-friendly justice, 5. Digital and information society: safety and opportunities, 6. The Global Dimension, including during crisis and conflict.

## **2021 EU Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030**

Highlights the EU's role and responsibilities, both within the EU and globally, through its external relations to uphold and advocate for the human rights of persons with disabilities in international relations and all external actions.

## **2023 EU Guidance note; Leaving no one behind - disability inclusion in EU external action**

This guidance note supports EU external cooperation staff and partners in integrating the rights of persons with disabilities across their work, including in policy, programming and implementation of actions. This note is aligned with the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) and its toolbox. It contributes to implementing the EU's action plan on human rights and democracy.

## **2013 EU Guidelines to promote and protect the enjoyment of all human rights by LGBTI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex) persons**

These guidelines aim to provide officials of EU institutions and EU Member States with guidance in order to promote and protect the human rights of LGBTI persons within its external action. They seek to enable the EU to proactively promote the human rights of LGBTI persons, to better understand and combat any structural discrimination they might face, and to react to violations of their human rights.

## **2020 EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025**

It is the first-ever Commission strategy on LGBTIQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, and Queer) equality and it delivers on the European Commission's commitment to building a Union of Equality. It strives to build a Union where diversity is celebrated as part of our collective richness, where all people can be themselves without risk of discrimination, exclusion or violence.

## 2021 Global Gateway

One of the commitments of the Global Gateway Investment Agenda is to address gender equality and inclusivity throughout its five priority sectors: Digital sector, Climate and Energy, Transport, Health and Education and Research.

# Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA)

The HRBA methodology applies to all EU external actions, in whatever sector or whatever country. The HRBA guides all interventions under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) – Global Europe and Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) III financing instruments.

Through the application of the HRBA, our interventions will deliver more relevant and sustainable results.

### THE OBJECTIVES

All interventions, policies and technical assistance should advance the realisation of human rights, including women's rights and labour rights. No matter the sector, country or stakeholder involved, the HRBA targets the respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights for women and men, girls and boys, in all their diversity.

### THE OUTCOMES

The outcomes of interventions should contribute to the development of the capabilities of 'duty-bearers' to meet their obligations and/or of 'rights-holders' to know, claim and enjoy their human rights.

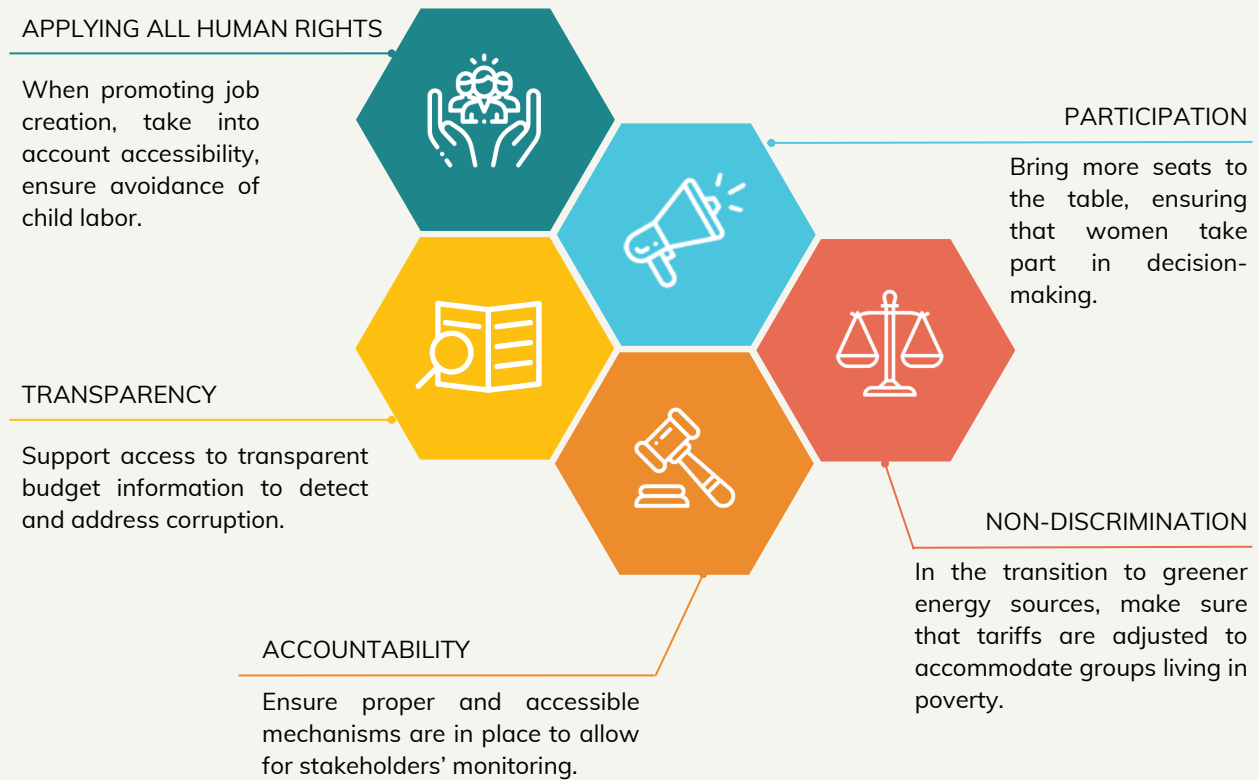


## The Human Rights-Based Approach looks at:

### THE PROCESSES

While the HRBA builds on the human rights standards and principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), it ensures that all processes used in programming, designing and implementing EU external action promote fundamental human rights and freedoms. The HRBA applies the five working principles: a) applying all human rights for all, b) meaningful and inclusive participation and access to decision-making, c) non-discrimination and equality, d) accountability and rule of law for all, and d) transparency and access to information supported by disaggregated data.

## Five Working Principles of HRBA



### Applying all human rights for all

This is the first principle of the HRBA. The HRBA acknowledges that human rights are international obligations ratified by states and they are legally binding. It also acknowledges that human rights are universal and indivisible: they apply to all human beings, and all have equal relevance and cannot be ranked.

This means development action has to consider all rights for all people. It recognises the complexity of development contexts: we cannot address one human right by putting other rights on stand by. Human rights are connected and can be mutually reinforcing. In our work, we are addressing different human rights in the same time.

### Meaningful and inclusive participation and access to decision-making

Ensuring meaningful participation entails transitioning from perceiving stakeholders as passive project beneficiaries to recognising all persons as active rights-holders entitled to take part and contribute to development results.

### Non-discrimination, equality, and equity

The elimination of all discriminations either based on race, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, disability or other criterion is one of the main goals of a human rights-based approach.



This means development action has to assess patterns of inequality and identify those who are more negatively affected by unequal distribution of resources, lack of opportunities and access to services. Often, these patterns tend to follow a circular logic: people living in remote areas, for instance, tend to have poorer access to quality education, less financial resources, and also fewer opportunities to participate in decision-making. And since they don't participate, they cannot claim for better services in their areas.

Equity goes a step further than equality and refers to offering varying levels of support depending upon need to achieve greater fairness, and as a final goal, equality of outcomes. Equality refers to equal opportunity and requires positive action to ensure persons in all their diversity can equally access and benefit from our programs.

### **Accountability and rule of law for all**

Accountability means upholding state institutions to their highest standards in realising people's rights and empowering people to claim for their rights through access to justice and the rule of law.

The duty-bearers are just not simple service providers. They have the obligation to fulfil their duties and should be monitored and held accountable.

### **Transparency and access to information supported by disaggregated data**

Transparency and access to information is key to ensure people's meaningful participation. Without transparent and independent information, available in ways that are accessible to all, it is impossible to render state institutions accountable, as well as to improve the actions, to target them when they are most needed, etc.

## **EU GAP III 2021-2025**

EU GAP III 2021-2025 provides us with a strategic, ambitious political tool that sends a clear message of the EU's commitment to mainstream gender equality and women's empowerment in all areas of its external action:

- it makes the promotion of gender equality a priority of all external policies and actions;
- it offers a roadmap for working together with stakeholders at national, regional and multilateral levels;
- it steps up action in strategic thematic areas;
- it calls for the institutions to lead by example;
- it ensures the transparency of the results.

The EU is committed to implement GAP III in every aspect of its external action through a human rights, gender-transformative and intersectional approach, both in terms of GAP III's geographical coverage and areas of action, as well as gender mainstreaming in all areas of external action.

## EU GAP III SIX AREAS OF ENGAGEMENT



### ENSURING FREEDOM FROM ALL FORMS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

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.



### PROMOTING SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

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



### STRENGTHENING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RIGHTS AND EMPOWERING GIRLS AND WOMEN

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



### ADVANCING EQUAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP

Women, men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, 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.



### INTEGRATING THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA\*

Ensuring participation, gender mainstreaming, leading by example, prevention, protection, relief and recovery.

\* [EU Action Plan on WPS 2019-2024](#)



### ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES AND HARNESSING THE OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY THE GREEN TRANSITION AND THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Women in all their diversity influence decision-making processes on environmental conservation and climate change policies and actions.

## Gender Mainstreaming and Markers

Gender mainstreaming ensures that policies and programmes maximise the potential of all – women and men, girls and boys, in all their diversity. The aim is to redistribute power, influence and resources in a fair and gender-equal way, tackling inequality, promoting fairness, and creating opportunity.

To make sure that gender is correctly mainstreamed into each action, and to guarantee that the efforts to achieve gender equality can be monitored and measured at global level, all the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries and the EU are using the gender-marker. This systematic analysis conducted by the OECD is based on three scores, scoring how well an action addresses gender equality.

The OECD distinguishes 3 types of actions:

G0 – Actions in which gender is not targeted

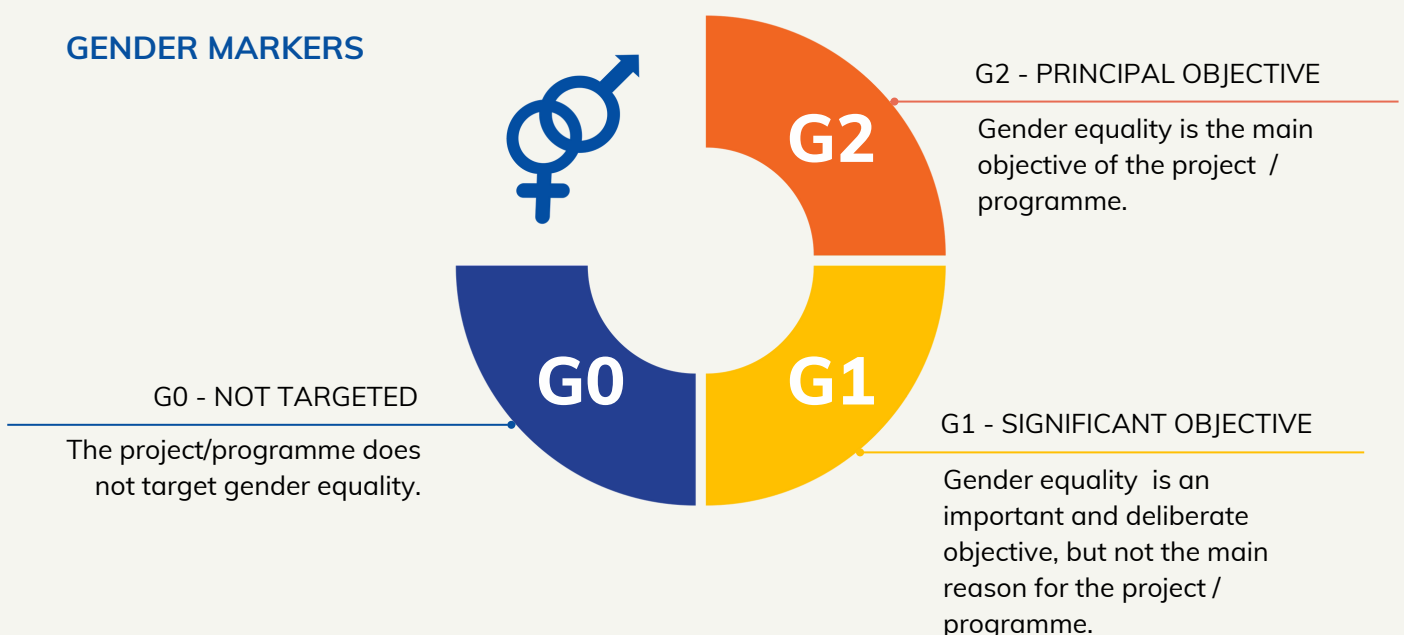
G1 – Actions in which gender is a significant objective

G2 – Actions where gender is the principal objective



At least 85% of all new external actions will have gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment as a significant objective (G1) or as a principal objective (G2) by the end of 2025 (EU GAP III).

### GENDER MARKERS





At least 5 % of the external actions should have gender equality and women's and girls' rights and empowerment as a principal objective (G2) (NDICI).

## Disability Inclusion

The EU became a party to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in January 2011, the first human rights convention signed by the EU. The CRPD reframes disability, shifting away from a medical approach to a social and rights-based approach; an approach that recognises structural, systemic, and social barriers and how they limit and hinder a person's participation and thus 'create' disability.

The CRPD views the barriers in society as discriminatory and requires the states to adopt measures to remove and prevent discrimination. At the same time, it provides persons with disabilities with an instrument to claim their rights.

The CRPD and the EU Consensus for Development strengthen the commitment of EU to include the rights and concerns of persons with disabilities in EU external policies and practices.



Disability is not something inherent to an individual - it is a result from the negative interaction between persons with impairments and barriers created by society (CRPD).

Disability does not exist within the person, it is not a diagnosis and not a fixed situation, and it can be changed.

Persons with disabilities are diverse, as everybody else, and should not be considered or approached as a homogenous group of people.

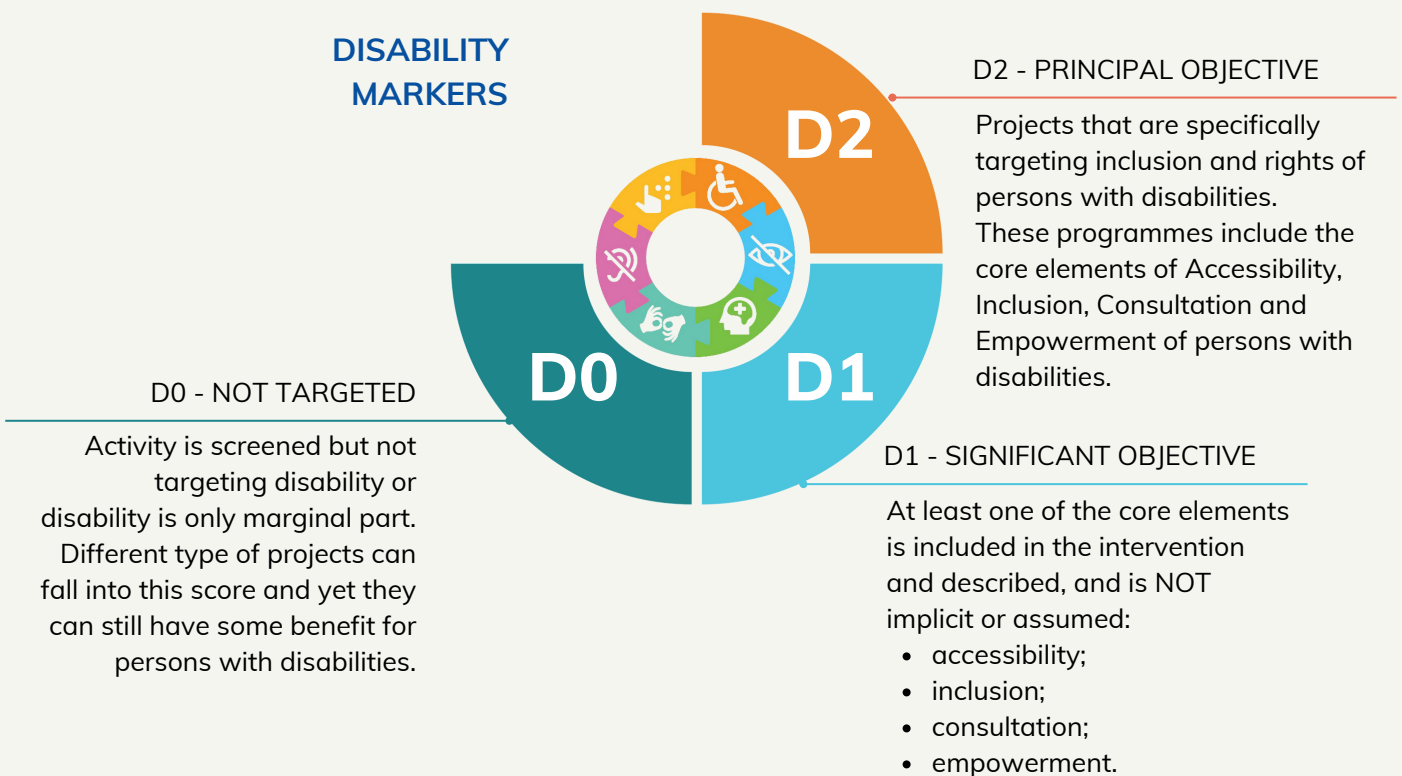
For more, see the [EU Guidance note: Leaving no one behind - disability inclusion in EU external action](#) and the [E-learning tool on disability](#).

# Disability Marker

The policy marker on the inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities (disability inclusion marker) tracks projects and programmes that:

- promote the rights of persons with disabilities, their inclusion and empowerment;
- support the ratification, the implementation and/or the monitoring of the UN CRPD.

The EU adopted the Disability Marker in 2019.



## Accessibility

Project ensures that accessibility and universal design measures have been incorporated into the design so that persons with disabilities can access and participate on an equal basis with others.

## Inclusion

Project provides for measures that ensure persons with disabilities are able to contribute to and benefit from the project equally with others and are able to be active participants of the project.

## Consultation

Project ensures that persons with disabilities and/or their representing organisations are included in consultations, meetings organised by or for the project/programme.

## Empowerment

Projects that in addition to the main activities build capacity of persons with disabilities or their representative organisations. The capacity building focus can range from additional measures encouraging their participation, involvement and strengthening skills, to enhancing advocacy and influencing skills.

## Intersectionality

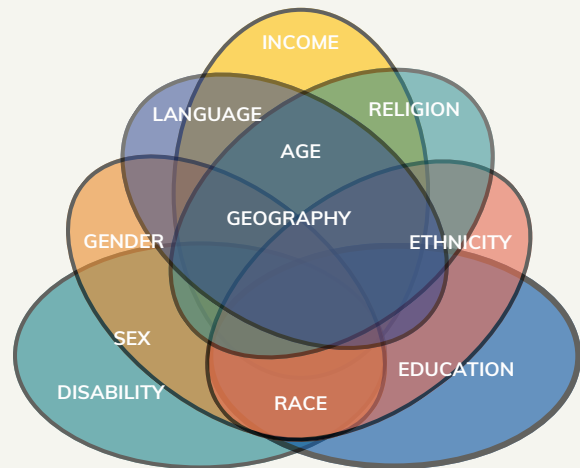
Intersectionality helps to understand how different aspects of a person's identity combine to create different modes of discrimination.

It is an analytical tool for studying, understanding and responding to the ways in which sex and gender intersect with other personal characteristics/identities, such as disability, age, ethnicity, etc., and how these intersections contribute to unique experiences of discrimination.

Discriminations and vulnerabilities cannot be tackled in an isolated way. They are interconnected. People experience multiple forms of discriminations that should be addressed in the same interconnected way.

Discriminations and vulnerabilities are structural, we must understand their causes if we want to produce a transformative change and eliminate them.

The EU is committed to ensure that no one is left behind, wherever people live, and regardless of ethnicity, gender, age, disability, religion or beliefs, sexual orientation and gender identity, migration status, race or other factors. This includes addressing the multiple discriminations faced by vulnerable people and marginalised groups.



## Useful resources



MY INTPA



MY NEARNET



EU LEARN



EU ACADEMY

Click on the title to access the resource



### RESOURCE BOX

RESOURCES FOR RIGHTS-BASED, GENDER MAINSTREAMED, AND DISABILITY INCLUSIVE INTERVENTION CYCLE

[HRBA virtual and interactive toolbox \(2021\)](#)

[Staff working document HRBA toolbox](#)

[Staff Working Document: Objectives and Indicators to frame the implementation of the Gender Action Plan III](#)

[Joint communication of the EU Gender Action Plan: An ambitious vision on gender equality and Women's Empowerment for EU external action \(2021-2025\)](#)

[NDICI programming guidelines – Thematic Guidance Note – Inclusion of Gender equality and Women's empowerment](#)

[EU Guidance note. Leaving no one behind. Disability inclusion in EU external action with technical briefs on gender and disability and disability and climate change](#)

[Making Consultations and Dialogues Inclusive And Accessible For All - Practice Note](#)

[EU Guidelines to promote and protect the enjoyment of all human rights by LGBTI persons \(2013\)](#)

[EU-UNICEF Child Rights Toolkit: Integrating Child Rights to Development Cooperation \(2014\)](#)

EU KNOWLEDGE PLATFORMS

[Human Rights-Based Approach \(self-paced training\)](#)

[The Gender Action Plan III \(2021-2025\) in a nutshell \(self-paced training\)](#)

[How to use the OECD-DAC gender equality policy marker \(self-paced training\)](#)

Click on the title to access the resource



## RESOURCE BOX

[E-learning tool disability \(self-paced training\)](#)

[Guidance on disability marker \(Cap4Dev\)](#)

[Course: Child Rights Toolkit: Integrating Child Rights in Development Cooperation \(europa.eu\)](#)

### OTHER EU RESOURCES

[International policy framework in GEWE](#)

[Background paper on GBV – Setting the context](#)

[Policy guidelines on inclusive SDGs](#)

### EXTERNAL RESOURCES

[Sustainable Development Goals](#)

[UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the SDG-CRPD resource package](#)

[Council of Europe](#)

[UN Women Training Centre](#)

[The Danish Institute for Human Rights](#)