



The Director-General



Secretary General

Gender Action Plan III – 2021-2025 **Country Level Implementation Plan – CLIP *Cabo Verde***

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

Cabo Verde has made significant gains in promoting gender equality since its independence. In over four decades of investments and effective efforts, profound changes have been made in terms of laws, policies and programmes to promote gender equality. The main achievements of the country have been: the implementation of the Sexual and Reproductive Health Programme (formerly the Maternal and Child Health Programme), that led to the reduction in the maternal mortality rate and reduction in the number of children per woman (from 10 children in 1975 to 2.5 in 2018); the Education for All Programme, reversing the illiteracy rate in women and reducing the gender gap to zero in ages between 15 and 49; the approval of a Law on Gender-based Violence (GBV) in 2010 and a Parity Law in 2019. These gains represent important gains for gender equality, as well as for sustainable development.

Cabo Verde is a signatory to a number of international and regional instruments and has made considerable efforts in implementing them, particularly the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); the Equal Remuneration Convention; the Beijing Platform for Action; and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

The current national Plan for Sustainable Development 202-26 (PEDS II) reiterates the Government's commitment to gender equality, also demonstrated by previous national plans for gender equality. In PEDS II, gender equality is one of the four objectives under the social pillar. Cabo Verde adopted its fourth National Gender Equality Plan (PNIG) 2021-2025, as well as a second National Plan to Combat GBV (PNVBG) 2015-2018, complementing the Law on combatting GBV in force since 2011. Underpinning gender equality laws and public policies is the production and dissemination of gender-sensitive statistics, which has made it possible to highlight existing inequalities and to adopt measures to resolve them.

Gender inequality is based on various social, cultural and institutional factors. Women make up the majority of the poor (55%) and 85% of the extreme poor households are female headed households. There are also clear differences between men and women in employment, income,

and school drop-out rates, and these differences are exacerbated whenever gender intersects with other personal characteristics, for example for people with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ or the elderly. With regards to employment, women are more likely to be unemployed, engage in domestic and informal work (making up 63.6% of the informal sector) or to carry out low, unpaid or precarious work - leading to greater vulnerability.

Significant differences remain between the legal framework and its implementation - and the day-to-day experiences of Cabo Verdean women and girls. Cabo Verde is a patriarchal society in which gender roles and stereotypes are tolerated. This puts women and girls in a vulnerable position and makes it more difficult to enforce legislation and to fight against discriminations.

GBV remains a key and persistent problem. The small size of most communities makes it difficult for victims to remain anonymous; gender roles and stereotypes are deeply rooted in Cabo Verde's patriarchal society; and there is a lack of resources for integrated support, for response to emergency situations and for follow-up. Forms of violence prevalent in the country include physical, emotional and/or psychological violence, sexual violence, and domestic violence. In 2018, according to a national survey conducted by Cabo Verde's National Institute of Statistics (INE), 11% of women aged 15-49 said they had been victims of physical violence as early as the age of 15.

According to the High Council of Public Prosecutors, there are currently 2,688 GBV cases pending in court, and 1971 new cases were reported from 1st August 2021 to 31th July 2022. This points to the inefficiency of the judicial system with accumulating caseloads and long delays in judicial decisions, which affects victims' rights. Also, only five shelters for victims and survivors of GBV are available in the country, which means that on several islands there is no immediate response to safeguard victims' protection. A gap that the Government hopes to overcome soon, as it allocated, for the first time, funds from the 2023 State Budget to the victim support fund, a mechanism foreseen in the GBV Law.

In terms of political participation, the implementation of the Parity Law has brought about notable results with a substantial increase in the number of women in Parliament in the last legislative elections bringing from 26% to 38.9%, placing Cabo Verde amongst African nations with the highest female parliamentary representation.

The EU Delegation (EUD) in Cabo Verde has been at the forefront in promoting gender equality and women and girls' empowerment. This is done through various instruments. Gender is reflected as a key priority in all political and policy dialogues between the EU and Cabo Verde. The EU Delegation has, and will continue to hold policy & political dialogues on gender equality and to raise awareness on the need to tackle GBV and harmful stereotypes.

Gender indicators were introduced in the last two EU budget support programmes, including the creation of a GBV victims support fund, the approval and implementation of the Parity Law, and most recently, gender mainstreaming in poverty reduction policies and prevention of school dropout of girl teenagers, in particular of those that become pregnant. Through its projects and programmes, the EU supports partners and key actors committed to ensuring gender equality. In particular, the EU supports civil society organisations (CSOs) projects that address gender

issues, and governmental initiatives that allow for gender mainstreaming in national plans (e.g. the National Care Plan, the Tourism Gender Mainstreaming Plan).

Gender equality and the fight against GBV also represent a substantial part of EUD's Multi-annual Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy (2022-24) and its implementation.

2. Selected thematic areas of engagement and objectives

The overall objective of the CLIP is to support gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in all thematic areas of the Multi-annual Indicative Programme (MIP) 2021-2027 for Cabo Verde. The MIP for Cabo Verde focuses on two priority areas: i) Governance for Human Development and Equality and ii) Green Economy for Decent Jobs and Inclusive Growth.

Governance for Human Development and Equality: This thematic area focuses on fostering a macroeconomic and institutional framework for economic recovery, reducing inequalities, and promoting inclusive growth. Through this priority area, the EU Delegation will promote social protection mechanisms to support vulnerable populations by contributing to the government's ambition of eradicating extreme poverty by 2026. This action in particular targets the economic and social rights of women and girls and addresses challenges to their empowerment. Working with civil society (CSO), local authorities (LAs) and partners at local and national levels, this priority area will promote women and girls' empowerment by creating and enabling legal, political and social environment allowing women and girls to access quality social services.

More concretely, during the last months the EU Delegation to Cabo Verde held regular dialogues with national authorities on gender equality and women empowerment, in particular within the framework of the budget support programme "Sustainable Development Goal contract for inclusive and green growth which includes the development of the Social Support Plan for Teaching and Training of Adolescents and Young People, 2023-2026 (*Plano Nacional de Apoio Social ao Ensino e Formação de Adolescentes e Jovens*), adopted through a resolution by the Minister of Social Inclusion and Development dated 29 December 2022. Its objective is to ensure that children and adolescents remain in the education or vocational training systems, with an emphasis on gender equity and in line with the goal to ensure 100% of compulsory education for all children in Cabo Verde. The elaboration and implementation of this Social Support Plan are part of the EU's budget support performance targets.

Green Economy for Decent Jobs and Inclusive Growth: This thematic area aims to boost the green economy through the creation of decent jobs in the areas of sustainable tourism, renewable energy, fisheries, and environmental protection. Working in partnership with relevant Ministries and Departments of the Government of Cabo Verde at all levels, financial institutions (e.g. the European Investment Bank), private sector, and civil society, this priority area tries to mainstream gender to ensure women and girls' access to lifelong learning to improve their employability, entrepreneurship and career opportunities, access to green, decent jobs, and strengthen their participation in the green and circular economy. Through a focus on green tourism, the EUD aims to better support the link between Tourism and local value chains,

allowing women and girls to reap the benefits of an economic sector which is the main contributor to GDP in Cabo Verde.

More specifically, the Team Europe Initiative's "Pilot - Maio Green Deal" which constitutes a number of already initiated and new projects on the Island of Maio, where EU and its Member States have a long and significant presence, will enable a new economic and environmental development model, while promoting the diversification of the country's economy. It will be built on four pillars of «green interventions»: (i) Green tourism; (ii) Increased access to renewable energies; (iii) Generalised sustainable access to water and sanitation; (iv) Blue economy and Agriculture.

Furthermore, there are currently four projects in the pipeline under Global Gateway that will contribute to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the long run: 2 sovereign framework loans on Renewable Energy investments and for the Cabo Verde Blue Ports facility - and private loans to CV Telecom to support interisland connectivity; and to Cabeolica to support the expansion of wind energy capabilities. By contributing to the Government's ambition of attaining 50% of renewable sources in its energy mix by 2030, Team Europe is effectively contributing to reducing the cost of energy for businesses and families – this will have an important spill over effect on poverty reduction. Support for a greener and more sustainable model of tourism will also help to tackle social issues (e.g. prostitution, child and sexual abuse), namely in the most touristic islands (Sal and Boa Vista) and in the capital, Praia.

Potential synergies, cooperation, partnerships, training and joint implementation with EU Member States and other EU actors

EU Member States present in Praia include Spain, France, Luxembourg and Portugal. Each has cooperation activities to different degrees and on a variety of subjects. The main cooperation portfolios are those of Luxembourg/LuxDev and Portugal/Camões I.P. Other Member States, although not present in Praia, also have cooperation with Cabo Verde (i.a. Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands and Denmark).

Several actions could be co-financed and/or implemented by EU Member States in the spirit of Team Europe (e.g. Portugal). For example, there is a strong potential for collaboration with the Spanish cooperation which is highly engaged in gender issues. There will also be a focus on seeking increased cooperation and synergies during key events including but not limited to International Women's Day and the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence.

The role of civil society in design, implementation and monitoring

The MIP underlines the need to promote an enabling environment for civil society, to enhance their meaningful, continuous and structured participation as governance actors focusing on particular thematic areas of expertise, and/or with a geographical focus in view of improving the development of the country. CSOs in Cabo Verde are active particularly on issues related to agriculture, human rights, health, environmental protection, sustainable tourism, and focusing on particularly groups (including the youth and children, women, and persons with

disabilities). However, their capacities are limited in regard to project management, financial assurances or even advocacy skills.

In the context of the implementation of the Roadmap for CSO engagement (2021-2025), which will be updated in the course of 2024, regular meetings will be held between the EUD, EU Member States, national stakeholders and implementing partners across thematic areas, particularly with a view to facilitate more structured dialogue and strengthen CSO's interaction with Government, as well as strengthening their advocacy skills. A Call for proposals from CSOs was recently successfully concluded.

Dialogues with national CSOs are taking place quite often, both at formal and informal level. During 2022, the EU Delegation to Cabo Verde organised two high level advocacy dialogues on gender based violence & gender equality which saw the participation of the Government, CSOs, and the Cabo Verdean Institute for Gender Equality and Equity (ICIEG). These dialogues served as a way to advocate with Government for the allocation of funds by the State Budget to VBG victims fund. In 2023, the EU Delegation organised a high level political dialogue on sexual abuse and exploitations of minors and women within the tourism sector, which saw the participation of the President of the National Assembly and the Secretary of State for Family and Social Inclusion. These dialogues had extensive media coverage.

3. Targeted action(s) supporting gender equality and women's empowerment

The GAP III aims at increasing the number and effectiveness of actions having gender equality as principal objective¹ with a target of a least one G2 action implemented in each country by 2025.

In Cabo Verde, no G2 action has been identified yet but future programming for the period 2024-2027 will address the following GAP III thematic areas of engagement of i) strengthening economic and social rights and empowering girls and women, and ii) addressing the challenges and harnessing the opportunities offered by the green transition and the digital transformation, in line with and supporting a transformative approach in the two priorities of the MIP for Cabo Verde.

A call for proposals for Civil Society organisations in the area of sustainable tourism was recently launched. As of November, three new projects aimed to support and strengthen civil society as an actor for sustainable development in the promotion of sustainable tourism, the active participation of women and young people will be implemented in three different islands amounting to a total of EUR 2.85 M.

The overall objective of these actions will contribute to the complete realisation and enjoyment of Cabo Verdean women and girls' human rights, empowerment and socioeconomic agency, and support them in unlocking their potential to contribute to society. The expected results are:

¹ Defined as G2 actions in line with OECD gender maker [G2](#). These actions should aim at achieving a long-lasting change tackling harmful gender norms and stereotypes, by implementing a comprehensive and gender-transformative approach.

(1) Women and girls in all their diversity, fully enjoy and exercise their equal economic, labour and social rights: this action will promote decent work, economic opportunities in the green and digital economy and in local value chains, comprehensive access to multi-sector essential social services, and secondary school completion of young school girls (refers to specific thematic objectives 1, 4, 5 and 6, see SWD).

(2) Women and girls in all their diversity influence decision-making processes on environmental conservation and climate change policies and actions: this action will promote the participation of women and girls, and improve their access to jobs, entrepreneurship opportunities and alternative livelihoods in the green and circular economy, with a particular focus on environmental conservation of both marine and terrestrial ecosystems (refers to specific thematic objectives 1, 2 and 4, see SWD).

4. Engage in dialogue for gender equality and women empowerment

The CLIP identifies the political and policy dialogues that the EUD will prioritise to engage with the Cabo Verdean government and other key stakeholders including civil society, NGOs, UN agencies, and implementing partners. The EUD is continuously engaging in dialogue at various levels, including high level and senior officials such as members of Government, Mayors, Parliamentarians and civil servants in senior positions. The aim is to promote ownership in tackling gender issues, encourage policy shifts and implementation of relevant laws, not least through appropriate allocation of resources. This is done by placing gender issues high on the political agenda.

The EUD also engages in dialogue during key events on gender issues notably with ICIEG, the Cabo Verdean Institute for Gender Equality and Equity, civil society (e.g. ACLCVBG, the Cabo Verdean Association for the Fight Against GBV; Laço Branco; OMCV, the Cabo Verdean Organisation of Women; Morabi, etc.), implementing partners, other donors, UN agencies and multilateral agencies to further mutual and/or agreed priorities and shared agendas, and reinforce cooperation efficiency.

Regular, structured dialogue is foreseen in the CSO Roadmap. The monthly meetings of the EU Heads of Cooperation also present an opportunity to engage in exchanges on how to further gender equality and foster synergies in terms of programming and projects, including during key national and international events. The key areas for dialogue are the implementation of relevant laws and strengthening interaction between Government and civil society, specifically by empowering CSO as key actors to address gender issues.

5. Outreach and other communication / public diplomacy activities

Indicate if possible the strategic communication/high level events on gender equality foreseen during the period 2021-2025 by the EU or in cooperation with EU MS.

Women and woman headed households make up the majority of the extreme poor in Cabo Verde. Supporting the Government's ambition to eradicate extreme poverty by 2026 through a focus on social protection represents a significant proportion of the EU's Budget Support Programme for 2021-2024. The disbursement of payment tranches is dependent on the Government's performance on agreed indicators and these impact gender equality. The EUD

will continue to engage in public diplomacy such as the referred high level policy dialogues to disseminate results and point to remaining challenges.

The EUD actively engages in strategic communication and high-level events on gender equality as well as other gender-related issues. This has included key annual events such as International Women's Day and the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence campaign. The EUD has also organised roundtables, high-level advocacy and cultural events to raise awareness on gender equality in collaboration with implementing partners, namely the UN and CSO. The EUD wishes to engage more with Member States (including as Team Europe) in public diplomacy activities.

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

The technical assistance (TA) framework contract for Civil Society will reinforce the EUD's capacity to deliver on the Gender Action Plan III, by supporting the implementation of the CLIP. In particular this TA will support the updating and developing of the Gender Country Profile, sector analyses, gender mainstreaming, trainings and gender-related events.

EU Member States have their own policies and programming that support gender mainstreaming:

- **France:** France mainstreams gender across all its projects. Currently, it supports projects with CSOs in the area of sustainable development.
- **Luxembourg:** Under its Indicative Cooperation Programme (PIC 2021-2025), Luxembourg aims to contribute to social inclusion and the reduction of inequalities, in line with PEDS II, through gender mainstreaming across its five axes of intervention: i) employment and employability, ii) water and sanitation, iii) local development, iv) climate action and v) energy transition. While mainstreaming is the general approach, a few targeted initiatives can be mentioned:
 - The “**Common Agenda for Gender: Women leaders for the 2030 agenda**” was developed for the island of Fogo in 2021 in collaboration with ICIEG as part of the Programme Platforms for Local Development, financed by Luxembourg and implemented by UNDP. The objective of this agenda is to serve as an advocacy instrument to promote increased participation of women in local decision-making and politic processes, as well as to trigger concrete actions in response to the most pressing concerns of women in Fogo, one of them being gender-based violence.
 - The programme Employment and Employability, financed by Luxembourg and implemented by LuxDev, helps to ensure that **at least 50% of participants in vocational trainings** on offer throughout the country are women. Furthermore, as part of the programme **4 crèches** in the immediate neighbourhood of vocational training institutes are being built or renovated in 2023, to ensure that child care is not a bottleneck that prevents young mothers from attending the trainings on offer.
 - In 2020 and 2021, the programme Jov@Emprego implemented by ILO accompanied informal vendors to formalize their businesses and targeted in particular women selling in the markets of Sucupira, Assomada and Ribeira Grande de Santiago. The project led to the **formalization of 163 businesses run by women** (total of 189 businesses formalized).

Added to this, are regular small grants to local women's associations (in particular ACVLVBG) to promote strategic dialogue and awareness-raising.

- **Portugal:** Under the Strategic Cooperation Programme (PEC 2022-2026), signed in March 2022 between Portugal and Cabo Verde, the promotion of gender equality and the fight against all forms of GBV is highlighted as one of its cross-cutting objectives for all the therein identified priority intervention sectors. The centrality and cross-cutting nature of gender equality is also specifically enshrined in the new Portuguese Cooperation Strategy 2030. The Strategy elevated gender equality, empowerment and the rights of women and girls to a guiding principle. These are considered a structuring pillar and a determining condition for progress in sustainable development. In this regard, Portugal continues to finance **CSO projects** in the form of small grants aiming to i) support the socioeconomic inclusion of women and girls and provide them with professional training and skills to allow their engagement in income-generating activities; ii) strengthen the Local Networks for Preventing and Combating the Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children and Young People, supporting the materialisation of community-based initiatives aimed at strengthening mechanisms for self-prevention, awareness-raising as well as strengthening psycho-emotional care of children and young people.

It has also been through the small grants program that the Portuguese cooperation has associated itself to activism initiatives promoted by civil society, such as the annual week of Reflection on GBV promoted by the Cabo Verdean Association for the **fight against GBV**, in partnership with academia and other public and private entities.

Also the ongoing program “**Fight against Poverty**”, held between the Ministry of Labour, Solidarity and Social Security of Portugal and the Ministry of Family, Inclusion and Social Development of Cabo Verde comprises direct annual funding to Cabo Verdean CSOs in 4 islands (Fogo, Sal, Santiago e Santo Antão). It focuses on social and educational support to children and youth; income-generating activities for women; housing improvement; TVET activities for women and youth and support to people with disabilities.

It is also important to underline the new project - “**Promoting the financial and emotional autonomy of women and girls on Fogo island**” – signed in July 2023 with ICIEG, and which aims to empower women and girls, especially the most vulnerable.

- **Spain:** Spanish cooperation mainly supports the empowerment of women through education and training of rural women. In particular, it focuses on employment and women's professional inclusion through mentoring in entrepreneurship (e.g. in agriculture and fisheries). Spanish support also focuses on providing training to promote political participation of women and democratic processes. Ongoing and recently approved Spanish initiatives are briefly described below:
 - “Empowerment and economic autonomy of women” (2021-2024), implemented by ICIEG. It seeks to guarantee access to decent employment for Cabo Verdean women, increasing their income and strengthening the formal economy.
 - “Promoting women's participation in democratic processes” (2021-2023), developed by ICIEG. This initiative seeks to guarantee access to decision-

making and to the public sphere for women, by eliminating the structural barriers they face, training them and raising awareness among the population.

- “Nu sta li: Increased economic and social empowerment of LGBTIQ+ population by minimizing COVID-19 effects” (2022-2024), implemented by Fundación Triángulo and ICIEG. The project aims to empower the LGBTIQ+ community through professional training and facilitation of access to employment.
- “Improved access to resources and quality care for women and girl victims of GBV in Fogo, Santo Antão and Santiago” (2023-2024), executed by Fundación de Religiosos para la Salud (FER). It contributes to the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, improving access to quality care for victims of GBV.
- “NOS-DIREITU. Contributes to the consolidation of the exercise of LGTBIQ+ Human Rights in Cape Verde in coherence with 2030 Agenda”, developed by Fundación Triángulo and ICIEG. This project will aim to advance into the consolidation of LGBTIQ+ Human Rights in Cabo Verde.
- “Empowerment of women victims of GBV and/or at risk of GBV through social and labour market inclusion”, implemented by Fundación de Solidaridad Amaranta and ICIEG. This initiative aims to contribute to reduce the vulnerability of women who are victims of violence through their professional and personal empowerment, giving them access to an autonomous life project free of violence.
- “LIDERA RURAL. New socioeconomic and affirmation opportunities for women and young people in rural areas of Santo Antão and São Vicente”, implemented by CERAI and Ministry of Agriculture and Environment. Its purpose is the promotion of the economic, social and cultural rights of youth and women in rural areas.

Date:

Signature by Head of Delegation: