



The Director-General



Secretary General

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

Drawing from the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020 - 2025¹, the Gender Action Plan (GAP) III provides the EU with a blue print to accelerate progress on empowering women and girls, by setting objectives and actions in six key thematic policy areas².

The Country Level Implementation Plan (CLIP) for Zambia was approved in August 2021. The objectives of the CLIP are implemented in three ways:

- 1) Ensuring all Actions in development cooperation have **gender as a significant objective, and are informed by a gender analysis with gender sensitive and sex-disaggregated data and statistics**
- 2) Engaging in **political and policy dialogue**.
- 3) Through **communication and public diplomacy**.

The CLIP is guided by the findings of the EU's 2021 Gender Country Profile. Updates on the contextual situation have been taken mostly from the recent [Zambia Gender Assessment](#) by the World Bank (2023) and the Agence Française de Développement Gender Country Profile (2023)³. This CLIP continues to align with the EU Roadmap for Engagement with Civil Society in Zambia for the period 2021-24. It is also aligned with the Human Rights and Democracy Country Strategy (HRDCS) for Zambia 2021-24 and the EU Youth Action Plan, especially the youth empowerment objectives.

Most importantly, the CLIP reflects the EU mid-term review conducted in 2023 of the Multiannual Indicative Plan (MIP) 2021-2027 for Zambia. The MIP mid-term review maintains the following three priority areas, as will the CLIP:

1. **Green partnerships for sustainable recovery, growth and jobs;**
2. **Supporting the people of Zambia to reach their potential and build resilience;**
3. **Fair, inclusive and peaceful society.**

¹ [EU Gender Equality Strategy](#)

² The six key thematic policy areas of engagement are: i) Ensuring freedom from all forms of gender-based violence; ii) promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights; iii) promoting economic and social rights and empowering girls and women; iv) promoting equal participation and leadership; v) integrating the women, peace and security agenda; and vi) addressing the challenges and harnessing the opportunities offered by the green transition and the digital transformation.

³ Both used the EU Gender Country Profile of 2021 in their literature review and included consultations with the EU delegation GFP.

Two additional priorities have been included in the MIP since 2021. The first is the inclusion of **budget support** measures as a result of the improved democratic climate in Zambia after the August 2021 elections. The EU frontloaded an additional EUR 60 million from the second period of the MIP. Budget support focuses on finance for social reforms to education, health and public procurement.

The second is a flagship programme on the **Lobito Corridor**. This initiative follows the Zambian government request in 2023 for a partnership on Critical Raw Materials. Following this, the EU and the USA announced their intentions to work jointly on the development of the Lobito corridor at the G20 Summit in September 2023. This includes the construction of a greenfield railway line from Luacano, in Angola, to Chingola, in the Copperbelt, crossing the border between the two countries in Djimbe.

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

The situation on gender and women’s empowerment in Zambia remains concerning. Poverty levels in Zambia remain high, particularly among females (56.7 percent of women to 53.8 percent of men). The country is also ranked very low when it comes to reducing gender gaps and inequalities sitting at only 146 out of 178 countries in the Gender Inequality Index⁴. A significant barrier hampering progress in gender equality lies within the socio-cultural context. Zambia is a predominantly patriarchal society with customs and traditions that often prohibit the empowerment of women. In Zambia’s Vision 2030, there is an objective to “eliminate gender inequalities in social economic development” and improve “educational attainment and eliminate gender gaps at all levels of human and social economic development.” The Eighth National Development Plan (8NDP) 2022—2026 mainstreams gender throughout its four pillars and gender is a significant objective in the human and social development pillar.

Context specific to the 6 GAP III thematic objectives:

Gender Based Violence (GBV): The prevalence of GBV is thought to be reaching crisis levels in Zambia. More than one-third (36%) of women age 15-49 have experienced physical violence at least once since age 15 and 14% have experienced sexual violence⁵. Sexual abuse and exploitation of children is also rife, and the country has some of the highest levels of teen pregnancies and early child marriage in the region. Approximately 6% of women declare that the first sexual intercourse before age 18 was unwanted. Six per cent of women begin childbearing at age 15, and this increases rapidly with age, reaching 53% of women child bearing at age 19⁶.

Economic and Social Rights: In **education**, although gender parity has been attained at primary school level, as children progress through the education system, the percentage of female learner’s drops. There remains a strong gender divide in literacy levels, with 66 percent of women being literate, compared to 82 percent of men⁷.

⁴ <http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2020.pdf>

⁵ Zambia Health and Demographic Survey (ZDHS) 2018

⁶ Zambia Health and Demographic Survey (ZDHS) 2018

⁷ ESB, 2020

Female **labour force** participation remains low. In 2020, male labour force participation was 43.7 percent, compared to 27.2 among women⁸. In 2020/2021, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly worsened the situation, widening gender gaps in employment. Female participation in **Commerce, Trade and Industry** also remains relatively low. Women have inadequate knowledge on the full business spectrum and associated processes and procedures, and this hinders their effective engagement in the economic sphere. In the **mining sector**, women's participation stands at 7.8 percent compared to 92.2 percent for males and most women participate the Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining sector. In manufacturing, only 29.4 percent of women participate compared to 70.6 percent of men. Women comprise a large percentage of the workforce in the **agricultural sector**, but do not have access and control over land and productive resources. The 2018 Zambia Demographic Household Survey (ZDHS) shows that men (17 percent) are more likely than women (8 percent) to own a house alone. Women's **access and ownership over assets** is further thwarted by high instances of property grabbing from widows which have recently deceased husbands.

There remain sharp gender differences in levels of access to and inclusion in financial services. Financial literacy is higher among men at 26.1 percent compared to women at 21.4 percent. The FinScope Survey (2020) shows that fewer women (56.6 percent) compared to men (62 percent) are banked, and more men (59.3 percent) than women (51 percent) use microfinance services.

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights: Access to quality and affordable health services continues to be a challenge overall, particularly in rural areas. As a consequence, many related indicators nationwide remain alarming: limited access to basic maternal care, high levels of maternal mortality (252/100,000 live births), under-five and neonatal mortality (respectively 64/1,000 live births and 42% of all under-5 deaths), as well as malnutrition indicators⁹. The very high prevalence of early and unintended pregnancies among adolescent girls and young women (29% of 15-19 years old) is mainly caused by lack of access to health-related information and very poor comprehensive sexual education¹⁰(called Life Skills and Health Education) that is constantly under political debate. Also by the socio-economic context including traditional harmful practices promoting sexual debut from puberty, high prevalence of **SGBV**, and barriers to access Adolescent **Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (ASRHR)**. Terminations of pregnancy in girls 18 years old and younger account for 25% of maternal deaths¹¹.

Participation and Leadership: Participation of women in decision-making positions remains very low, with the most recent parliament consisting of only 15 percent of women Members of Parliament in 2021¹², representing a decrease of 3 percent from the previous elections. The

⁸ Zambia Labour Force Survey 2020

⁹ Zambia Demographic and Health Survey 2018 <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR361/FR361.pdf>

¹⁰ Zulu et al. International Journal for Equity in Health, 2019. "Why teach sexuality education in school? Teacher discretion in implementing comprehensive sexuality education in rural Zambia.

¹¹ Deep Dive on improving maternal and newborn health and survival and reducing stillbirth in Zambia, Dr Apurva Chaturvedi, Health Specialist (RMNCH), UNICEF Zambia Mai 2023.

¹² https://www.sadc.int/sites/default/files/2023-02/ENGLISH-SADC_Gender_Monitor_on_Women_in_Politics_%26_Decision-making_2022-FINAL.pdf

number of women in Cabinet declined from 28.6 percent in 2020 to 16 percent in 2022 and at local government level, women comprise a paltry 8 percent¹³. Prior to August 2021, the Ministry of Gender (MoG) oversaw the coordination of gender related policies and laws. After the change in administration, the ministry was dissolved and reconstituted as the Gender Division under the auspices of the Office of the President with the full mandate of the former ministry. The Gender Division needs significant capacity strengthening, including a standalone budget to carry out its own activities. The current gender coordination structure in general would benefit greatly with the establishment of the Gender Commission as per provisions of the Zambian Constitution and Gender Equity and Equality Act.

Implementing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda: As Zambia is not a humanitarian context, no objectives under this area were assessed in the country profile that originally informed the CLIP.

Green Transition and Digital Transformation: Zambia has been experiencing the effects of **climate change** which have resulted in extreme weather conditions, such as droughts, rising temperatures, and unpredictable rainfall patterns. The frequency and intensity of climate events are expected to rise in future, with negative socio-economic impacts on the most vulnerable communities. The key sectors that will be most affected include agriculture, manufacturing, mining, energy and services. Moreover, the proliferation of climate-related diseases such as malaria, the loss of natural environments, the damage to infrastructure and disruption of biodiversity habitats are other adverse effects caused by climate change which are likely to undermine the Government's effort to reduce poverty¹⁴. Overall, climate change reinforces existing patterns of poverty and inequality, especially among women and poor households.

In terms of **digitalisation**, men hold most of the decision-making and economic benefit from the opportunities that digitalisation can offer. As of 2018, less women owned mobile phones (80.8%) compared to men (86.5%). Moreover, 76.7% of male-headed households indicated that they owned a mobile cellular telephone, compared to only 64.9% of female-headed households¹⁵. The gender gap is larger in relation to internet use. In urban areas men were twice as likely to have used internet in the last 12 months (24.9%) as compared to women (12.1%) that year. This difference is exacerbated in rural areas, where 11.1% of men used internet compared to only 3.2% among women¹⁶. Some of the key factors influencing low usage of Internet among women and people living in rural areas include the poor access to infrastructure and appropriate devices, the lack of awareness of the opportunities and benefits of using the Internet, as well as the lack of basic ICT skills and digital literacy.

2. Selected thematic areas of engagement and objectives¹⁷

¹³ https://www.sadc.int/sites/default/files/2023-02/ENGLISH-SADC_Gender_Monitor_on_Women_in_Politics_%26_Decision-making_2022-FINAL.pdf

¹⁴ *Zambia Sustainable Development Goals Voluntary National Review 2020*, (Lusaka: Republic of Zambia, 2020), 62.

¹⁵ Gender Status Report 2017-19

¹⁶ EU Gender Country Profile 2021

¹⁷ This section focuses on areas of engagement and objectives taken from the GAP III Joint Staff Working Document. It does not detail suggested indicators.

The following information lists the GAP III thematic areas of engagement and explains who the existing or planned Actions under the MIP (2021-2027) will contribute to the objectives of the thematic areas.

1. Freedom from all forms of gender based violence against women, girls, men and boys

Support to this engagement area will largely fall under the Equal Chances for Human Development Action that focuses on early childhood development and sexual and reproductive health rights. Under the second specific objective of this Action: - *to decrease inequalities through enhancing wellbeing and opportunities for female adolescents*, there is an outcome to facilitate access for to quality sexuality education, and for adolescent girls to receptive health services, and access facilitated for all to SGBV prevention and response mechanisms. This will contribute to the GAP objective: - *women, men, boys and girls in all their diversity, who experience sexual and gender-based violence have increased access to essential services and protection.*

2. Universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights

The EU has committed at least EUR 15 million under this thematic engagement area through the Equal Chances for Human Development Action (MIP priority 2). The Action's objective is to support the children of Zambia to reach their potential and to improve young female adolescent's resilience in alignment with Zambia's human development commitments under the Eighth National Development Plan (8NDP). The Action will contribute primarily to the GAP objective on *improved access for every individual to sexual and reproductive health care and services, including family planning services, information and education on sexual and reproductive rights.*

3. Economic and social rights and the empowerment of girls and women

A significant number of Actions under the MIP will contribute to this thematic objective and are listed below:

Nexus Energy Water in Zambia (NEWZA): The aim of this programme is to ensure a decisive improvement of the energy-water supply situation in Zambia by increasing the operational and financial performance of five national water utilities. The GAP III objective to *improve access to safe water and sanitation facilities* will be prioritised to overcome challenges including a lack of access to proper sanitation facilities and adequate and affordable hygiene materials, including menstrual hygiene.

Equal Chances for Human Development: This Action takes a holistic approach to address the challenges of early childhood development and education, as well as the already mentioned sexual and reproductive health rights of adolescent girls. Under this GAP III thematic area, it will contribute to the objective *on reducing gender disparities in enrolment, progression and retention at all levels of education and lifelong learning for women, men, girls and boys.* The Action will also contribute *to improved access to water and sanitation facilities* for both health and education facilities involved in the Action. Finally the Action will contribute to the objective *to improve nutrition levels of young children (0-8 years) and adolescent girls.*

Budget Support: The budget support component, aims to finance social reforms through budget support to education, health and public procurement. Support to gender equality and women's empowerment under this component will focus on the support to the education sector and the objective to *improve gender disparities in enrolment, progression and retention at all levels of education and lifelong learning for women, men, girls and boys*. The EU will work to ensure school infrastructure is as inclusive as possible, including for girls and persons with disabilities. Budget support also provides the EU with more opportunity for government dialogue through biannual high level discussions as well as quarterly policy dialogue. This dialogue is mostly focus on the 8NDP. The EU will ensure that the EU GAP III priorities that have synergies with the Zambian 8NDP are included in the dialogue (see section 4 for more detail). Future actions for budget support in the second half of the MIP will likely contribute to similar GAP III objectives.

Enterprise 2.0: This Action promotes inclusive, sustainable and climate resilient legume and horticulture agricultural value chains in Zambia. It contributes to the thematic objective on social and economic rights but also the green transition and digitalisation. Specific objectives supported under social and economic rights will focus on *increased access for women in all their diversity to financial services and products, and productive resources*. This will particularly support initiatives to improve access to markets and financial services.

Green Economy Promotion and Diversification (GEPD) Programme: The main objective to this Action is to promote green growth and an environmentally sound, gender/youth sensitive and economically viable diversification of the economy. The Action contributes to this thematic area as well as the green transition. On social and economic rights the Action will focus on the objective to *ensure that women and men increasingly participate in and have improved access to jobs, entrepreneurship opportunities and alternative livelihoods in the green economy and circular economy*.

Critical Raw Materials: This Action is still under development but will contribute to *ensure women, men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, fully enjoy and exercise their equal economic, labour and social rights*. It will also likely contribute to *reducing gender disparities in enrolment, progression and retention at all levels of education and lifelong learning for women, men, girls and boys*.

Lobito Corridor: This Action will be developed in the second half of the MIP and will contribute to the GAP III objective on *women, men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, fully enjoy and exercise their equal economic, labour and social rights*.

4. Women's Participation and Leadership in Politics and Public Life

Actions under MIP Priority 3 mostly contribute to this thematic objective, specifically:

Democratic Processes: In order to reinforce the democratic space in Zambia, government and civil society will be supported to provide *enabling conditions created for equal participation of women, men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, in decision-making*.

Enabling Access to Justice, Civil Society Participation and Transparency (EnACT): Initiatives will support legislative reform, access to justice, as well as accountability and transparency. It will aim to *ensure that women and girls, in all their diversity, have improved access to justice to safeguard their civil and political rights*. This will mostly be through bolstering the justice

sector, capacitating accountability mechanisms and supporting civil society to hold duty bearers to account.

Partnership to Enhance Public Finance Management and Accountability in Zambia: The aim of this Action is to improve public service delivery in Zambia through the enhancement of domestic revenue mobilisation, budget credibility and gender sensitivity; as well as improve accountability and transparency. The Action will work to *enable conditions for equal participation of women, girls, boys and girls in all their diversity, in decision making*, focused on *ensuring the existence of systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment*. For example, in 2024 EU will be supporting the Government of Zambia to conduct a Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) assessment, including the supplementary module on gender sensitive PFM in collaboration with the IMF.

In the second half of the MIP the EU will have funds approximating EUR 10 million for governance. This is yet to be designed but will contribute to this thematic objective.

Implementing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda: In the first half of 2023 Zambia determined to develop a National Action Plan (NAP) for WPS. However, as Zambia is not a humanitarian context, no objectives under this area have been targeted in the CLIP although many will contribute indirectly.

Including women and girls in the green transition and digital transformation

Green Partnership and Investment Programme along the Agriculture, Forestry, Biodiversity, Water and Climate Nexus: This Action's main objective is to support a climate-resilient transition towards green partnerships, sustainable growth and decent jobs in Zambia. It will contribute to all the objectives under this thematic objective on green transition. It will also contribute to a number of objectives under digital transformation, particularly *access to affordable and secure broadband, technology and digital tools*; and *participation, fully and equally, in the digital economy*.

Climate Action and Nationally Determined Contributions Implementation Support: This Action focuses on ensuring the Climate Change Strategy, aligned with Nationally Determined Contributions, is in place implemented and monitored. The Action works to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of climate change initiatives and monitoring of the Paris Agreement. The primary objective under this area of intervention will be on *strategies and agreements on climate mitigation, adaption, disaster risk reduction and sustainable management of natural resources and biodiversity are more gender responsive, at local, national, regional and international level*.

Green Economy Promotion and Diversification (GEPD) Programme: The main objective to this Action is to promote green growth and an environmentally sound, gender/youth sensitive and economically viable diversification of the economy. It contributes to GAP III thematic area on social and economic rights as well as the green transition. In area this thematic area the main objective supported is *to increase access for women in all their diversity to financial services and products, and productive resources*.

In the second half of the MIP the EU will support an Action on Forest Partnerships that will contribute to this thematic area once designed.

Partnerships with Member States: The Member States present in Zambia with a clear mandate to ensure gender equality and women's empowerment are reflected in cooperation activities are Germany, Sweden and Ireland.

Germany: Germany agreed to adopt the Joint European Strategy (JES) for Zambia as their own country strategy and, through their feminist foreign policy, are ensuring gender is mainstreamed strategically throughout their programmes. Joint programmes with the EU that have gender equality as a significant objective include the Enabling Access to Justice, Civil Society Participation and transparency (EnACT) that works to ensure gender balanced provision of legal aid as well as the implementation of important gender legislation such as the re-entry policy for student mothers. Good Financial Governance (GFG) IV works to support gender responsive budgeting in Zambia and implements gender specific public expenditure financial audits.

Sweden: Sweden's country strategy is still being finalised but complementary actions will be in sexual and reproductive health rights, the green economy and sustainable mining.

Ireland: Ireland's Mission Strategy 2023-2027 addresses gender inequality through a gender transformative approach. Ireland will work to complement the CLIP through activities to promote women's leadership, building capacity and supporting interventions of key civil society actors. Ireland works with the UN to support increasing women's participation and leadership and continues to invest in measures needed to address and prevent GBV. A key component is advocacy for girls' education and decent work for women through partnerships, such as the World Bank's Girls Education, Women's Empowerment and Livelihood (GEWEL) programme - addressing education, empowerment and livelihoods, and social protection.

The Ambassadors of the EU and Finland have agreed to take on the role of EU Gender Champion's for 2024, in the spirit of the Team Europe approach.

Partnerships with Civil Society: Partnerships with civil society focused on gender equality and women's empowerment will be in the form of grants under the Equal Chances to Human Development Action. The target group will be adolescent girls. There are also partnerships under the EnACT Action to work with civil society to provide gender balanced legal aid services and capacity building of CSOs including women-led organisations in accountability and transparency initiatives.

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

The Action under MIP priority 2- **on Equal Chances to Human Development** focuses on early childhood development and sexual and reproductive health rights. The Action will include grants to civil society that will be targeting adolescent girls, and will have a G2 marker. They will fund project on community involvement in support of female adolescents, including prevention of SGBV, technical and vocational skills building for female adolescents and support to reintegration of young mothers in the formal education system.

4. Engage in dialogue for gender equality and women empowerment

Policy dialogue with cooperating partners is also conducted on a regular basis in the context of the cooperating partner groups including the group focused specifically on gender.

Through the budget support component of the MIP, significant political and policy dialogue is foreseen. This will focus on the 8NDP and will include discussions on gender equality and women's empowerment where the GAP III objectives and 8NDP align. Particular synergies are identified in the 8NDP pillar on "*industrialised and diversified economy*". The objectives that focus on women's empowerment include: - to promote the empowerment of women, youth and PwD; promotion of enterprise development and contributing to decent job and wealth creation especially for the youth and women; and increasing disbursements of resources to support women, the youth and persons with disabilities with skills at local levels. Discussions linked to gender empowerment initiatives under the pillar on human and social development will target gender parity in education. Crosscutting this pillar and the good governance environment pillar will be promoting participation of women in decision making and support to government to reach its ambitious of 50/50 representation at parliament by 2026.

Dialogue with civil society will include the annual CSO road map dialogue that will have women's right organisations as participants. The road map includes gender actions that are in line with GAP III such as planned learning events for CSOs on gender mainstreaming which will also provide opportunity for dialogue.

The Gender Champion (s), nominated from the EU Heads of Mission will be a key advocate to drive dialogue and public diplomacy in gender equality and women's empowerment.

5. Outreach and other communication/public diplomacy activities

High level events on gender equality that are foreseen during the period 2021-2025 will include:

- The gender and youth communications campaign empowerment is planned for the beginning of 2024. It aims to profile the work the EU and Team Europe have been supporting gender equality and women's empowerment as well as youth empowerment in Zambia.
- Europe Month - at least one activity will have a direct or indirect gender theme.
- Celebrations to commemorate Women's Day. Support may also be provided to the Ministry of Gender for its Women's Day activities that will provide additional visibility to the EU.
- 16 Days of Activism against GBV - national government and civil society activities will be supported recognising these days.
- Human Rights Day - will have a gender theme for one of the years between 2021 and 2025
- Green Transition Campaign – will also include showcasing and success stories involving women

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

The Cooperation Facility under the MIP 2021-2027 has an indicative budget of 2% of the total allocation. Gender sector analyses, trainings etc. will be mainly funded through programme allocations and the Cooperation Facility if needed. Gender related activities will also be foreseen in the Delegation's Communication & Visibility Strategy.

Date:

Signature by Head of Delegation: