

INTEGRATING GENDER EQUALITY IN EU ACTIONS

HOW TO APPLY THE OECD-DAC GENDER EQUALITY POLICY MARKER

October 2025



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Acknowledgments

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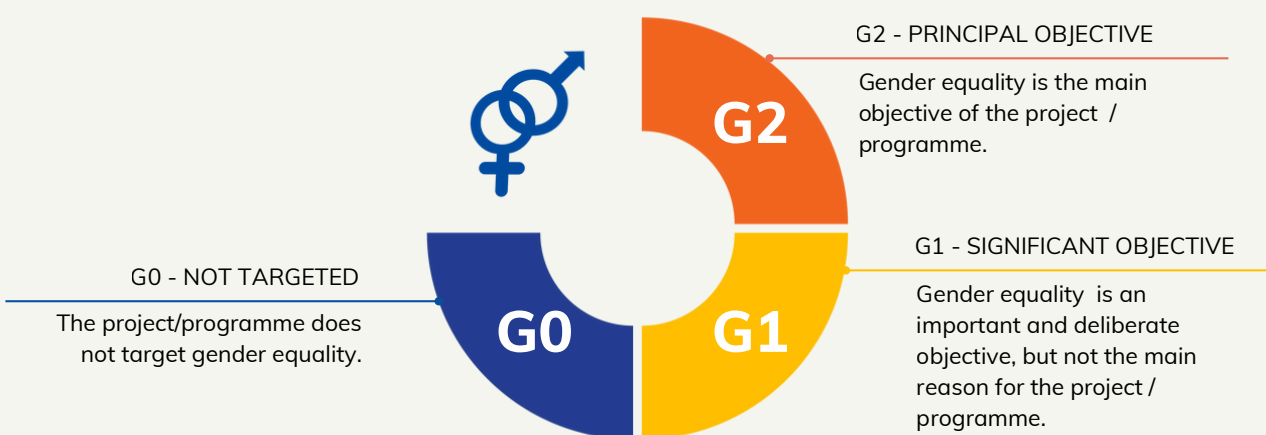
INTRODUCTION

This practical guide is produced for internal use by the European Commission (EC) external action Directorates-General and is intended to support EC staff in the design¹, implementation, and monitoring of EU-funded actions that pursue gender equality as a significant objective, in line with the OECD-DAC gender equality policy marker. It offers concrete recommendations, best practices, and key EU resources to strengthen gender mainstreaming.

The **EU Gender Action Plan** (GAP) III, the NDICI-Global Europe framework and the IPA III regulation set ambitious gender equality targets: 85% of new actions should prioritise gender equality. Moreover, gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment are recognised as cross-cutting priorities within the EU **Global Gateway** strategy, which aims to integrate gender across all investment pillars and deliver inclusive, sustainable results.

The EU applies the **OECD-DAC gender equality policy marker**² to indicate whether an action targets gender equality as a policy objective according to a three-point scoring system.

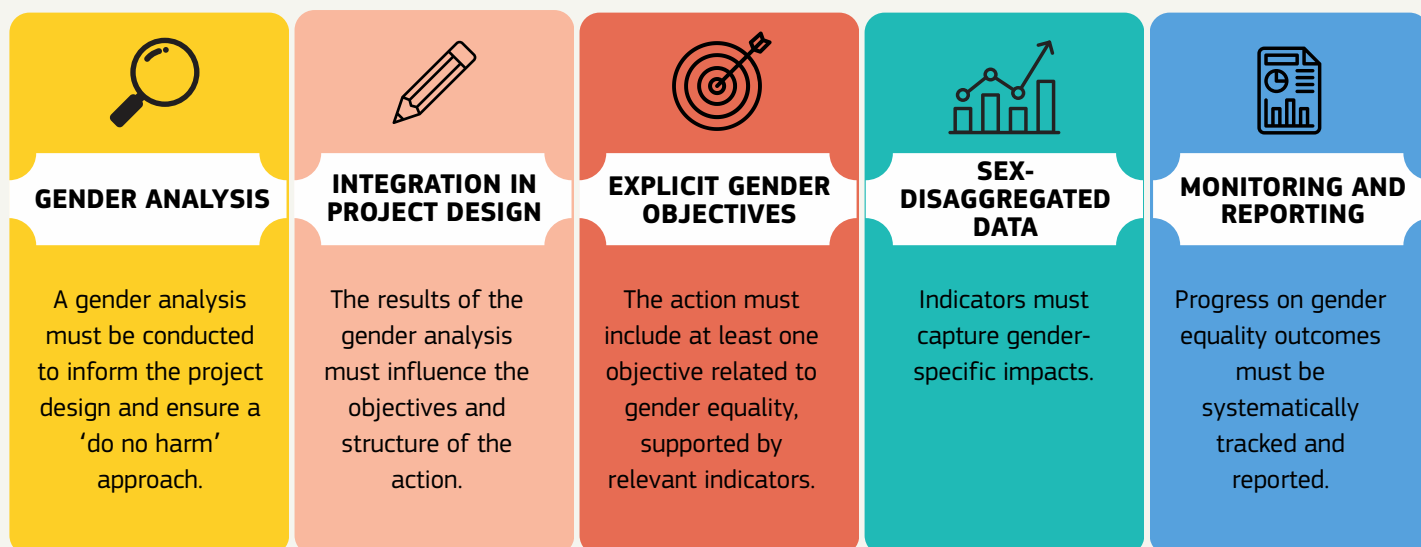
- **G2:** Gender equality is the principal objective of the action.
- **G1:** Gender equality is a significant but not primary objective.
- **G0:** The action does not directly target gender equality.



¹ NOTA BENE: This guide serves as a valuable resource throughout the entire programming process, with its primary focus on the design of the intervention. The mainstreaming of gender is of utmost importance during the design phase, as it is crucial to ensure that the target of at least 85% of G1 actions is effectively achieved. Consequently, the focus of this guide is on how to apply the G1 marker in EU actions.

² <https://web.archive.oecd.org/temp/2024-02-06/369190-dac-gender-equality-marker.htm>

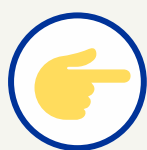
MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR AN ACTION TO BE MARKED G1 (ACCORDING TO THE OECD-DAC)



APPLYING THE OECD-DAC GENDER EQUALITY POLICY MARKER G1 IN EU PRACTICE

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CONDUCTING AND/OR APPLYING A GENDER ANALYSIS



A **sector-specific gender analysis**³ should be used as a basis for the design of any action, including blending and guarantee operations. If no such analysis is available, it should be conducted before the design phase to inform project formulation. This analysis should directly inform the design phase and be included in the Context/Problem Analysis section of SSC Fiche, Action Document and Action Fiche⁴.

³ There are several levels of gender analysis: gender country profile, sector/ thematic, and policy specific gender analysis. The Gender country profile should cover policy and legislative frameworks, status of government and other equality measures and actions, gender statistics on violence, education, health, employment, political participation, etc. Sector-specific gender analyses assess the gender issues in the sector: gender gaps, policy, practice, work force segregation, opportunities for gender-responsive outcomes by sector, opportunities for EU interventions, etc.

⁴ For ease of reading, the term "Action Document" is used throughout this Guidance to refer to both Action Documents (DG INTPA and DG MENA) and Action Fiches (DG ENEST).



TIPS FOR CONDUCTING AN EFFECTIVE GENDER ANALYSIS:

- It is important to collaborate closely with the Gender Focal Person of the EUDs to gather the most accurate and context-specific information regarding existing gender analyses or gender-sensitive resources.
- Use the Gender Country Profile and Country-Level Implementation Plan (CLIPs)⁵ to complement sector-specific analysis.
- Check whether you can make use of national or sectoral gender analyses. Coordinate with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), International Organisations (IOs), and national gender institutions to identify relevant studies.
 - Exchange with experts from other EU Member States to share learning and access existing resources.
 - Engage with local and international NGOs, which can often provide valuable data and insights.
 - Consult national partner institutions, which may have conducted relevant gender analyses.
- Ensure that the gender analysis identifies structural barriers as well as opportunities for action.
- Assess, including in the risk assessment, how the planned intervention may differently impact people of different genders, including any unintended consequences for women or marginalised groups, with a particular attention to potential intersectional vulnerabilities, i.e. women with disabilities, belonging to ethnic minorities, living in remote areas, etc.
- If it is not feasible to carry out a sectoral gender analysis before the design and development of SSC Fiches/Action Documents, it should be conducted during the inception phase - either as a standalone activity or within a broader socio-economic or feasibility study.

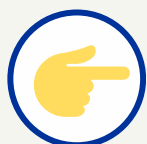
⁵ The CLIPs and Gender Country Profile by country are available in the Capacity4Dev platform: https://capacity4dev.europa.eu/groups/country-level-implementation-plans-clips-gender_en



Ensure that gender analysis findings are clearly reflected in the objectives, specific project activities, and expected outcomes of the action.

Integrate these findings into the logical framework (logframe) or result framework.

DEFINING GENDER EQUALITY OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES



The Action Document should include at least one specific objective or expected outcome explicitly focused on gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE), in line with EU commitments under the Gender Action Plan III (GAP III).

In practice, it is possible to formulate such objectives or outcomes across all sectors, including infrastructure, by integrating GEWE considerations into components such as policy reform, governance, education, or employment. Where a standalone GEWE-specific objective is not foreseen, a clear and measurable commitment to gender equality should be integrated into one of the other specific objectives or outcomes. Alternatively, the inclusion of at least one output that actively contributes to gender equality and women's empowerment is strongly encouraged.



TIPS:

To help identify gender equality objectives, refer to the GAP III and the accompanying Staff working document (SWD) (part II), which outlines a list of objectives aligned with the EU's political priorities and the SDGs.

For example (drawn from the [GAP III SWD annex](#)):

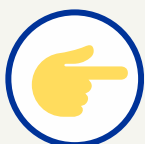
- Women, men, girls, and boys in all their diversity participate equally in shaping the digital world at local, national, regional, and international levels, and are represented in related policies and decision-making processes.
- Women and men in all their diversity increasingly access jobs, entrepreneurship opportunities, and alternative livelihoods in the green and circular economy.



Align gender objectives with the broader project goals of the action; for example, by promoting women's participation in decision-making within a democratic governance project, set targets for women and girls in capacity building activities, accompany infrastructure projects with scholarship and employment targets for women.

Aim for gender-transformative outcomes and outputs, as outlined in GAP III⁶. This is crucial for achieving meaningful and long-term impact.

DATA AND INDICATORS ARE SEX-DISAGGREGATED



The action document should include at least one gender specific indicator and/or an indicator related to gender equality and women's empowerment, ideally at the outcome level. As outlined in GAP III using sex-disaggregated data is a mandatory requirement.



TIPS:

- The GAP III annex offers a range of impact and outcome indicators that can inform and strengthen your action design. EU Results Framework (EURF), the Global Europe Results Framework (GERF)⁷ and SDG indicators⁸ are valuable references for sex-disaggregated and gender-related indicators.
- Aim to integrate gender-transformative indicators that reflect deeper change impact.
- When possible and if relevant prioritize the use of pre-defined indicators from OPSYS.

⁶ Gender-transformative approach: Practical tips to incorporate it into the intervention cycle, 2023, https://capacity4dev.europa.eu/articles/gender-transformative-approach-practical-tips-incorporate-it-intervention-cycle_en

⁷ Results Framework, https://capacity4dev.europa.eu/resources/results-indicators/global-europe-results-framework_en; Launching the Global Europe Performance Monitoring System containing a Revised GERF, 2022, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-5697-2022-INIT/en/pdf>

⁸ SDG Indicators, <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/>



Sex-disaggregated and gender-specific indicators available in OPSYS for G1 Marker application

OPSYS, the European Commission's digital platform designed to cover the whole project cycle, facilitates the aggregation and harmonisation of results by using core indicators. These are pre-defined⁹ indicators used for corporate monitoring and reporting. While their use is not mandatory, it is highly recommended. Among the core indicators in OPSYS you will find many of those included in the GAP III Staff Working Document. Their use facilitates consistent tracking of gender-related results and supports the identification of actions that contribute to gender equality. In addition to predefined indicators OPSYS also allows for the creation of customised, sex-disaggregated indicators to reflect context-specific gender outcomes and ensure more nuanced tracking aligned with their intervention logic.

For example (selected from the GAP III annexed SWD and available in OPSYS):

- Proportion of women aged 15–49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care (Key thematic outcome indicator)
- Number of laws and policies where recommendations made by women's rights organisations have been taken on board by regional, national and local government bodies during the drafting or revision process, including in conflict-affected contexts (Key thematic outcome indicator)
- Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population by sex, age and form of exploitation (SDG 16.2.2, GAP III Impact indicator)

⁹ Predefined indicators for design and monitoring of EU-funded interventions, https://capacity4dev.europa.eu/library/opsys-predefined-indicators_en



If the gender analysis identifies gaps in sex-disaggregated data or gender-responsive indicators, the action should include measures to generate this data. This could involve capacity building of implementing partners and statistical departments, or supporting efforts to collect and analyse programme results from a gender perspective.

Select gender-sensitive indicators that allow for meaningful tracking of progress and clearly demonstrate your contribution to gender equality.



MONITORING AND EVALUATION ON GENDER EQUALITY

The action design should clearly demonstrate how gender equality and a human rights-based approach (HRBA) will be integrated into the action's monitoring and evaluation framework. Person-related indicators should be sex-disaggregated and where feasible further disaggregated by other relevant factors (i.e. disability status).

Tip for Action Designers and M&E Planning

When drafting Sections 5.1 (Monitoring and Reporting) and 5.2 (Evaluation), it is essential to go beyond generic language and ensure that gender equality, human rights, and disability inclusion are fully integrated into the monitoring and evaluation framework.

Monitoring and Reporting: Indicators should be disaggregated, at a minimum by sex and disability status wherever feasible. Monitoring systems must assess how the action aligns with the human rights-based approach and promotes gender equality throughout implementation.

Evaluation: All evaluations should explicitly assess the extent to which the action integrates the HRBA and contributes to gender equality and women's empowerment. Evaluation teams must include expertise in human rights, gender equality, and disability inclusion to ensure meaningful analysis and accountability.