



# Gender Equality

## Mainstreaming gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment

Gender equality is a human right and a prerequisite for poverty reduction and sustainable development. Gender equality is achieved when women and men, girls and boys, have equal rights, life prospects and opportunities and power to shape their own lives and contribute to society. As one of the main thematic priorities for Swedish development cooperation, a gender equality perspective shall permeate all Sida's work.



### MAIN AREAS OF SUPPORT

Sweden has a longstanding commitment to gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment in development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. This commitment has been strengthened with the Government's Policy Framework (2016); the Feminist Foreign Policy and Sida's action plan for strengthening mainstreaming of gender equality (2016–2018).<sup>1</sup>

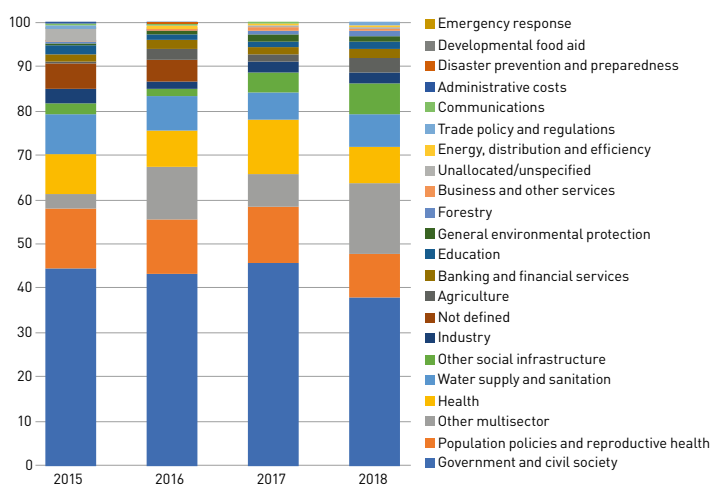
Sida uses a three-pronged approach for gender mainstreaming with targeted support to gender equality *interventions*, by integrating a gender *perspective* in all operations and sectors and by highlighting gender equality and women's rights in the *dialogue* with partner organizations and other stakeholders.

A new global strategy for gender equality and women's and girl's rights (2018–2022) was adopted in 2018. The strategy complements the comprehensive work for gender equality that Sida is supporting through bilateral, regional and other global strategies by supporting global catalytical and innovative efforts.

Gender equality is featured in most of Sida's strategies covering areas such as women's and girls' human rights, women's economic and political participation, ending gender-based violence and harmful practices, promoting

girls' education, sexual and reproductive health and rights, women, peace and security and integrating gender equality in development programmes and humanitarian assistance.

### SIDA'S DISBURSEMENT TO CONTRIBUTIONS WITH GENDER AS THE PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE 2015–2018 PER MAIN SECTOR, %



<sup>1</sup> The action plan will be updated in 2019

### THE GLOBAL GOALS

The Global Goals for Sustainable Development include everyone – and we can all contribute. The goals are interdependent and therefore indivisible. Sida's main contribution is to implement development cooperation, thereby reducing poverty and saving lives. Together we can build a better future where no one is left behind.



## Results

### DEVELOPMENT IN THE WORLD

Despite progress made in reducing maternal mortality, closing the gender disparities in education, increasing the number of women in the world's parliaments, challenges remain for achieving gender equality by 2030.

Increased polarisation, conservative values and push-back for advancing women's and girls' rights, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, as well as a shrinking space for civil society which is affecting women's rights organisations. Women and girls are exposed to a higher degree of discrimination and gender-based and sexual violence than men and boys. Following the #metoo movement, governments, donors and non-governmental organisations have increased their attention to prevent and address sexual exploitation, abuse and sexual harassment in development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. Greater attention is made to the impact of intersecting forms of discrimination on gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment.

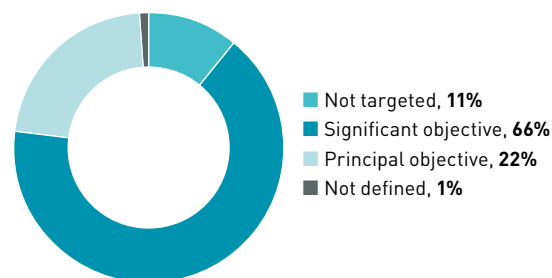
### SWEDISH SUPPORT

Sida has strengthened its work on gender equality which has resulted in an increased support to targeted interventions where gender equality is the principal objective from 17% in 2015 to 22% by the end of 2018. This is the highest level among the 30 OECD DAC countries. The proportion of support where gender equality is an important and deliberate, but not the main objective, decreased from 73% to 66% while the share of support not targeted to gender equality increased from 10% to 11% in the same period.

The integration of a gender perspective has been particularly strong in the human rights and democracy sector as well as in social sectors such as education and health.

Continued efforts are made in strengthening integration of a gender equality perspective and in including gender equality as a principal or significant objective in productive sectors, as well as in environment and climate change and humanitarian assistance.

### SIDAS' GENDER POLICY MARKER 2018



### PROJECTS AND SUPPORT

Women's rights' organisations are crucial for advancing gender equality and the rights of women and girls and Sida is a leading donor for funding and championing their work. Support is also provided to organisations that are challenging patriarchal masculinities and engaging men and boys as agents of change. Multilateral organisations including UN Women and the World Bank are also among Sida's key partners. Sweden co-chairs the OECD DAC Gender Equality Network and strategically uses dialogue and a convening role at global, regional, and country levels as advocacy tools for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. A leading role is often taken on controversial issues such as sexual and reproductive health and rights. In 2018, Sida co-organised the Stockholm Forum on Gender Equality to intensify efforts for a gender equal world as a path to achieve sustainable development, peace and security.

### STORY OF CHANGE

In the MENA region, Sida partners with UN Women through a regional programme, Men and Women for Gender Equality. The programme seeks to better understand the root causes of gender inequalities and address them through innovative solutions. Young men are now reaching out to other men to stop domestic violence and to promote the sharing of household tasks. Women's rights organisations and networks are promoting gender equality in the family context by using alternative interpretations of religious texts.



Sarah Marsso, Knowledge Building Coordinator at Musawah  
Photo: UN Women/Emad Karim

"We offer a new knowledge-based discourse and framework to advocate for equality and justice for women living in Muslim contexts."