

Panel 2: Financing gender equality and women's empowerment in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

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Thank you very much Mr. Moderator.

I would like to highlight two interconnected aspects in my opening remarks on financing gender equality and women's empowerment

1. What do we understand about the financing gaps that hold back implementation of GEWE commitments?
2. How we can address these in the new agenda using the Addis Ababa Accord and Action Agenda as an entry point?

First, the gaps.

- The SG's 20 year review of the Beijing Platform for Action provides us with a great deal of evidence on financing gaps. It found that underinvestment in gender equality and women's empowerment has contributed to slow and uneven progress in all 12 critical areas of concern. Inadequate financing hinders the implementation of gender responsive laws and policies. Even in countries that are considered to spend significant resources on gender, data shows that these **allocations range from a mere 0.1% to 21.9% of national budgets**. Costing of national gender equality plans further reveal **financing gaps often as high as 90%**. Official development assistance too accounts for a fraction of overall aid with **only 5% targeting gender as a principal objective**.
- The lack of financing can be attributed to a number of factors including 1) weak alignment between fiscal policies and gender equality objectives 2) limited capacity to integrate gender into national planning and budgeting processes; (3) insufficient and inadequate prioritization of gender equality in other financing streams such as ODA, private and innovative financing.
- We know that the full implementation of the SDGs will require significantly stepped up resources from all sources and at all levels. If we are to realize the transformative potential of the SDGs, then we need transformative financing. A number of Member States have laid out this vision with the **Addis Ababa Action Plan on Transformative Financing for GEWE**. This Plan calls on all actors to adopt a number of strategic policy actions – at domestic and international level - to mobilize maximum resources to implement new and existing gender quality commitments.

So what might this entail?

1. *First* - Domestic resource mobilization is essential for financing national gender quality objectives. This involves a **reorientation and reformulation of fiscal policies** to increase fiscal space for gender investments, as well as, improving tax administration and compliance, and eliminating both the **implicit and explicit gender biases in tax systems**. In addition to

this, resources generated through tax must be used to advance gender equality and women's rights. Implementing GRB and strengthening accountability mechanisms will ensure more efficient, transparent, and effective financing.

2. *Second*, ODA must continue to be a dynamic driver for advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls globally. Between 2002 and 2013, gender focused ODA rose from **USD 8 billion to USD 28 billion**¹ and increased at a faster rate than overall aid, growing by 4% annually. To enhance and maximize the quality of gender equality-focused ODA, it should be targeted and mainstreamed across all sectors where spending remains inadequate (agriculture, water and sanitation, transport and energy) – especially in the economic sectors.
3. *Third*, while States have the primary responsibility to deliver results for women, we know that the **private finance will play an important role in financing the 2030 Agenda**. This must be buttressed with a strong **domestic regulatory frameworks** to private actors accountable and ensure that private financing is **fully aligned with national development objectives**. Private actors must take full account of the gender implications of their investments as well as its own internal operations. They must adopt UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights as well as the Women's Empowerment Principles that set expectations for business to promote gender equality and empowerment of women in the workplace, market and community.
4. *Fourth*, investment in national statistical agencies to collect and analyse data disaggregated by sex, age, location, income amongst others. This data is essential for effective monitoring of the SDGs including in meeting financial commitments, as well as for determining more effective financing allocations. The proposed indicator under SDG 5 that ***measures the number of countries which have set up systems to track gender equality allocations and to make those allocations public*** will allow the collection of comparable data across countries to ascertain how much goes towards gender equality programming.
5. For financing for gender equality to be truly transformative it requires efforts by all actors to address both the **structural causes and consequences of gender inequality**, and, therefore, it is central to build multi-stakeholder partnerships in achieving **adequate, predictable and robust** financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women. This cannot be done without the full and equal participation of **women and women's organizations**.

The questions that this panel will address are as follows:

- First: How are macroeconomic policies being reviewed to ensure policy coherence in the pursuit of sustainable development that is truly inclusive and effectively contributes to the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women?

¹ "From Commitment to Action: Financing Gender Equality and Women's Rights in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals."

OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality, March 2015, p. 2.

- Second: What measures are being implemented to close the resource gaps and effectively invest in GE and the empowerment of women and girls? What good practices exist to accelerate these efforts?
- Third: What steps are being put in place at national level to monitor and track resources allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment? How is funding for women's organizations going to be enhanced?
- And fourth, how can GRB be best used for implementing commitments to gender quality and women's human rights in the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development? How can those challenges be tackled? What lessons can be learned and used from the implementation of the MDGs?