Partners for progress

Sweden is a supporter of gender equality nationally, in its development cooperation and in the UN and is the first country to adopt a feminist foreign policy. This policy ensures that a gender equality perspective is incorporated into policymaking, both nationally and internationally. Since the establishment of UN Women, Sweden has been a key financial and political partner and has consistently been UN Women’s largest donor. In 2018, the two partners signed a new agreement where Sweden commits to multi-year regular resource funding for 2018-2021.

Sharing common goals

The collaboration between Sweden and UN Women is supported by their shared fundamental commitment to gender equality. Sweden’s development cooperation holds the rights of women and girls to be central and prioritizes strengthening the rights of refugees as well as women’s economic power, combating violence against women, promoting women’s role in peace processes as well as their leadership and political participation, and fighting for sexual and reproductive rights. These are specific goals in common with UN Women and why Sweden strongly supports the mandate and work of the entity.

In 2018 Sweden was UN Women’s largest contributor to regular (core) resources with US$ 19.9 million and the largest contributor in total resources with US$ 54.8 million.
Together we achieved:
Women’s Economic Engagement

Sweden has contributed to strategic notes for more than 15 UN Women offices including South Sudan, Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, Liberia, Moldova, Mali, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, and Georgia, providing flexible, predictable other resource funding. This is in addition to broader normative programmes at the country level. An example of this is Sweden’s SEK 86,450,000 contribution to the Uganda Strategic Note 2016-2020: Harnessing Gains of Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Uganda, which address women’s economic vulnerability and employment opportunities in the agricultural sector, among other issues. The programme already notes significant results with the equipping of almost 2,000 women with entrepreneurial and life skills to establish, operate and expand their businesses and support for the adoption of gender-responsive budgeting as a core principle for national development planning. Through the programme government ministries and civil society organizations such as the Council for Economic Empowerment for Women – Uganda and the Gender and Economic Policy Management Initiative are building their capacities to support women’s economic security and rights.

Women’s Leadership and Political Participation

Sweden has been a long-time partner in Kenya where it is supporting work across several sectors, including getting more women involved in decision-making processes. UN Women has collaborated with 15 civil society organizations to identify female candidates for elected office in 47 counties. In 2017, UN Women supported the campaigns of 167 female candidates through the development and dissemination of information education and communication materials. In 2017, a record number of women were elected. Three women were elected as governors, three as senators, 98 as members of the County Assembly, and five as Speakers of County Assemblies.

Combating Violence Against Women

Combating violence against women is one of Sweden’s six gender development priorities. Sweden provided SEK 5,200,000 in funding for the Building Capacity to Prevent Violence Against Women programme in Bangladesh from 2014-2019. The programme provides civil society organizations with new tools and partnerships to enhance their ongoing efforts to prevent violence. Several of the organizations have staged the documentary Seven, which focuses on the issue of violence against women. The programme also works with tertiary educational institutions to attain a broader commitment to institutionalizing the guidelines in the High Court Directive on Sexual Harassment (2009) and ensure that policies and actions are in place.

Swedish funding also enabled the the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES), the largest multi-country study of its kind in the Middle East and North Africa. Coordinated by UN Women in collaboration with Promundo and local research partners, the report provides a comprehensive overview on what it means to be a man in Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, and Palestine today.

Strategic Partnership Framework

In 2017, the Government of Sweden through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) entered a new Strategic Partnership Framework 2017 – 2020 with UN Women. This framework is the mechanism by which Sweden supports the implementation of UN Women’s Strategic Plan and related international commitments e.g. the 2030 Agenda, CEDAW & Beijing Platform for Action.

Sweden’s National Committee for UN Women

Sweden hosts an active National Committee for UN Women, which contributes to the Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women. In 2017, the national committee contributed USD 57,000 and in 2018 USD 33,568 to UN Women.