



CSW MULTI-STAKEHOLDER FORUM

*“Implementing the 2030 Agenda to Accelerate Realization of
Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls”*

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Panel 2 on Financing Gender Equality

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Good morning Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

- First of all, let me thank you for inviting me to speak at this important panel discussion. Both gender equality and financing for development are key priorities for Switzerland. And I hope, in these few remarks, that I will be able to convince you that the two issues are closely related to each other.
- We are very pleased that gender equality has a strong position in the SDGs for all the reasons that we are discussing today.
- We are also satisfied with the importance that the topic has received in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, as empowering women is not only the morally right thing to do, but also smart economics: there is a large body of evidence showing that reducing gender inequalities and increasing female labor force participation have sizeable and beneficial effects for the overall economy. Indeed, for many countries promoting the economic participation of women and girls is one of the few resources left to stimulate growth that is inclusive. On the other hand, inequality of opportunities, such as unequal access to education, health services, financial markets, land and resources are obstacles to sustainable development and economic growth.

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- For these reasons, Switzerland has been actively engaged with other Member States and UN Women in advocating for a strong integration of gender equality and women's empowerment both in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) and the Agenda 2030. This joint effort materialized into 47 references contained in the AAAA regarding women and gender equality.
- These new commitments now call for well-resourced actions to ensure the implementation. As we have just embarked in the implementation period for the SDGs, it is now time to meet the financing goals of all gender-related targets in SDG 5 and the other goals.
- Switzerland has also endorsed **the Action Plan for Transformative Financing for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**, launched at a side event in Addis, which captures the principles and commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment of the Addis Action Agenda. We believe it is a crucial guide into the arduous task of implementing the AAAA, as it outlines the transformative policy and financing actions necessary for this implementation phase. Let me highlight some of its key aspects, which cover for example enabling environment of women's economic empowerment, domestic resource mobilization, private finance, financial literacy and inclusion as well as access to technology, and gender responsive public finances.
- We are firmly committed to translate the action plan into the Swiss development cooperation as well as into national policies. Let me assure you that women's economic empowerment is one of our priorities in so doing.
- Indeed, concrete changes in all countries are required to achieve gender equality and to effectively contribute to women's and girls' employment, entrepreneurship, and control of assets. Providing women with equal economic opportunities involves **targeted policy interventions** such as removing legal restrictions, including anti-discrimination laws, measures to ensure educational attainment, financial inclusiveness as well as ensuring decent work standards.
- In our own **national policies**, priority is now being given to improve our social infrastructure by reducing the unpaid care work and to amend our legislation to close the gender wage gap and ensure equal pay for work for equal value.
- **On the international level**, Switzerland calls on Member States to mobilize partners for significantly increased investments, both in scale and scope, to close the financing gaps that hinder progress towards and the realization of gender equality and women's empowerment. We further wish to stress the importance and necessity of **partnerships**, in particular between financial development banks (World Bank, Regional banks) and UN funds and programs, such as UN Women.
- **In our own development cooperation programmes**, we support **gender-responsive budgeting** programs. For example, we cooperate with UN Women to assist States in elaborating gender responsive budgeting in Western Balkans (Macedonia).

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- We also advocate that gender equality and women's rights are a topic in broader macroeconomic policy discussions here at the UN.
- I am turning finally to institutional aspects, as Switzerland is actively engaged in the architecture of the monitoring and review of the Agenda 2030.
- Switzerland intends to remain involved in the intergovernmental discussions and negotiations on financing for development to continue bringing attention to the economic dimension of gender equality.
- We consider that gender equality as a cross-cutting issue in the AAAA and the Agenda 2030 should also be a well-established topic for the next 15 years in the new yearly Financing Forum. We take this opportunity to announce that we will organize a side event during the CSW together with other member states and UN entities on that very issue to generate collaborative effort and make it a visible priority.
- I wish you all a fruitful exchange on these key issues that will be considered during the forthcoming CSW and we look forward to working with all relevant stakeholders for this next session.