



Evaluation of EU External Action – Response of the EU Services



Evaluation title	Mid Term Evaluation of the implementation of the EU Gender Action Plan III		
Lead EU Service	European Commission Directorate-General for International Partnerships (INTPA), Unit G.1, Gender Equality, Human Rights and Democratic Governance	EU Delegations involved	Case studies were conducted in Palestine, Serbia, Colombia, DR Congo, and The Philippines
Associated EU Services	European External Action Service (EEAS), and European Commission Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (NEAR), Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), and the Service for Foreign Policy Instrument (FPI).	Main policy areas addressed by the evaluation	Gender equality and women and girl’s empowerment
Evaluation budget	EUR 398,394	Contractor	Particip GmbH
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Recommendations from the independent Evaluation

Response of the EU services (to be updated one year later)

1. MATCHING THE EU'S GAP III AMBITION AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR GEWE WITH DEDICATED HUMAN RESOURCES IN ALL EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICES

Details of the recommendation:

The EU, devoting a substantial portion of its external action resources in support of gender equality, mainly through gender mainstreamed interventions, should put in place the human resources at all levels to ensure that gender mainstreaming requirements, as well as the OECD-DAC gender marker system, are fully understood by all staff.

1.1. The European Commission (EC) and EEAS should create full-time positions dedicated to GEWE in all key branches (e.g. directorates) of DG NEAR, DG INTPA, ECHO, FPI, and EEAS. The EC and EEAS should increase the GEWE-only dedicated human resources at Headquarters level (EC) and at central level (EEAS).

1.2. The EC and EEAS should create one full-time position dedicated to GEWE per sub-region, located as a "hub" in one EUD of the sub-region and serving as a complement to, and transition with, HQ GEWE specialists, as well as a facilitator for mutual support among EUDs on GEWE.

1.3. The EC and EEAS should add clear GFP functions to the job descriptions and to the performance appraisal schemes of the GFP (gender advisors in EEAS) who hold other functions (this concerns most GFPs in EUDs, in geographic desks, and in thematic services). The job descriptions should contain a percentage of the full-time-equivalent which should be dedicated to GEWE, and this should be reflected on the full-time-equivalent dedicated to other tasks.

1.4. Building on past efforts relating to this issue, the EC and EEAS should jointly develop terms of reference for different types of GFP functions (headquarters, field, thematic coverage, geographic coverage). These ToR should include typical tasks, required percentage of FTE, desired level of seniority and decision-making power, training and experience requirements, reporting and accountability lines.

Partially accepted

1.1. And 1.2.

The evaluation recommends the appointment of full-time positions staff dedicated to GEWE with the purpose of more sustainable gender mainstreaming both at EU Delegations (EUD) and Headquarters (HQ) level (both within the Commission and in the EEAS). Recommendations 1.1 and 1.2 are unlikely to be accommodated due to overall resources constraints. This situation can only change in the framework of discussions on a new budgetary cycle. This is why it is all the more necessary to focus on expanding in-house expertise, knowledge, engagement and dedication of all staff to Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE).

1.3. The percentage of Gender Focal Points (GFPs) whose Job Description includes their GFP's role is monitored annually in the framework of annual reporting on GAP III. In 2021 this percentage scored 65% for HQ and 37% in Delegations. Following updated statistics to be issued in the GAP III mid-term report, action will be taken to further improve this score and follow up on this engagement.

1.4. This recommendation is accepted. DG INTPA and DG NEAR will issue a new version of the GFP Kit by end of October 2023 which will guide their work and frame their responsibilities and tasks. The EEAS has recently created a platform with policy documents, guidance notes, check lists, training material as well as good practice. This platform is accessible for Gender Focal Points and aims to facilitate and enhance gender mainstreaming in Headquarters. In addition, the EEAS is currently working on a note detailing the role of a Gender Focal Point.

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2. MANAGING GAP III CHANGE FOR GEWE WITH THE WORKFORCE

Details of the recommendation:

The EU should further train, coach, advise, and motivate its staff to implement GAP III, relying on gender-responsive leadership as per GAP III recommendation.

2.1. Develop and deploy, as systematically as possible, training and coaching targeting managers (e.g., Heads of Units in headquarters and in EUDs/CSDP missions and operations, Heads of Cooperation, Heads of Political Section, etc.) and new GFPs, on the fundamentals of GEWE in the EU external action under GAP III. The training should be continuously updated and cover:

- Fundamental GAP III concepts: gender responsiveness, gender transformation; intersectionality; gender mainstreaming vs. gender targeting (and the markers associated);
- The GAP III strategic framework on GEWE, and key international standards;
- GAP III indicators, and how to use/tailor them in action documents and country-level/regional level GAP III reporting;
- WPS, including conflict- and security- sensitive gender analysis, conflict analysis with an integrated gender perspective (where applicable), as well as programming for WPS;
- A region-specific module (one per region) on the key features of national frameworks and key issues in countries of the region.

2.2. Develop and deploy, as systematically as possible, a series of sector-specific trainings targeting the respective sectors' GFPs, and then (cascading) task managers, and officials in thematic line DGs such as Trade, Agri, Connect, and others (GFPs but also other technical staff). These trainings should cover:

- Sector GEWE analysis (and/or gender-sensitive sector analysis);
- Unpacking (e.g., with good practices from EUDs) of what a gender transformative approach could look like in operational programming (mix of modalities in AAPs, partnerships...);
- Typical entry points to GEWE in the respective sectors;

Partially accepted

2.1. Training for managers has been piloted starting in 2022. A mandatory training was provided by DG ECHO, benefitting 75 % of DG ECHO's middle management and 57 % of senior management at Headquarters

An intense and innovative pilot training programme run by the Folke Bernadotte Academy in 2022 with EU managers (both from EU Delegations and HQ services) was very well received and already generated concrete follow up actions, including the development of action plans by some managers. Based on the pilot training programme, training courses will again be offered in 2023. The objective for 2023 is to set in place a course for managers that will become a permanent feature of the EU training offer overall.

2.2. A number of key thematic trainings were piloted successfully and are proposed regularly to GFPs and other EU staff, Member States staff (for instance on gender markers, digitalisation, green deal, WPS, migration, jobs and growth, etc.). Training on "new" concepts introduced with GAP III (intersectionality, gender transformative approach, strengthened engagement with women's rights organisations, etc.) were recently piloted. DG INTPA conducted for instance a series of webinars on gender transformative approaches and on strategic alliances with women's rights organisations. Podcasts on gender transformative approaches are in progress.

DG INTPA/NEAR, on the basis of a need assessment exercise, are in the process of reviewing their learning strategy on GEWE and GAP III, including training, guidance and innovative knowledge sharing

R2

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typical gender-specific indicators at Action Document Level (including the GAP III thematic areas and outcome indicators), and realistic ways to tackle the challenges (and resources needed) with gender-disaggregated non-GEWE outcome indicators. <p>2.3. Use the dedicated GEWE human resources to (both proactively and on demand) advise and coach the GFPs and their peers (staff of geographic Desks, Heads of Cooperation and Heads of Political, thematic DGs' technical staff).</p> <p>2.4. Systematically entrench GEWE in results-based management and performance monitoring processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include GEWE-specific indicators in programming documents, to be covered in reporting processes. • Systematically include GEWE-related personal objectives in individual performance assessments. 	<p>tools. The new strategy will be finalised by October 2023 and will also take into account the recommendations of this evaluation.</p> <p>For Gender Focal Points in primarily civilian Missions a standardised training course developed in cooperation with Folke Bernadotte Academy on the integration of a gender perspective in Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) will continue to be systematically implemented.</p> <p>The regular EEAS biweekly meetings include elements of training.</p> <p>2.3. Units in charge of GEWE with EU services are regularly providing guidance, ad-hoc support and trainings/guidance to GFPs. DG INTPA and NEAR are for instance organising yearly GFP seminars, where GFP are trained (last edition took place in March 2023 and trainings proposed included among other topics: designing a programme to fight Gender Based Violence, Gender Responsive Budgeting, Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) and Gender transformative approaches, etc.). Other trainings (notably those available through INTPA academy) are opened to a wider audience (other EU staff, staff of Member States, CSOs, etc.).</p> <p>2.4. DG INTPA/NEAR conduct systematic quality review of Annual Action Programmes and Action Documents and recommend the integration of GAP III key thematic outcome indicators in the interventions' logical frames. This will, over time, allow better monitoring of results through the corporate monitoring system OPSYS.</p> <p>Regarding the recommendation to include specific individual <i>GEWE related personal objectives</i>, the Job Description of all Senior managers/ Heads of Unit and Heads of Cooperation of DG INTPA already includes a specific objective on GEWE/GAP III, which is used for the annual performance assessment, requesting them to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) lead by example both in the workplace and when directing implementation of the mandate. (ii) mainstream gender equality. (iii) consult gender focal points, gender advisers and experts. (iv) motivate and hold staff to account for implementing gender equality commitments.
<p>R3</p> <p>3. CLARIFYING THE WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA (WPS)</p> <p><u>Details of the recommendation:</u></p>	<p>Partially accepted</p>

Recommendations from the independent Evaluation

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The EU should more clearly define and harmonise the WPS agenda, so it is uniformly understood and embraced across services.

3.1 Update and complement the existing internal guidance on the EU-wide vision on WPS under GAP III. This could be done through:

- Thematic guidance notes on WPS, with modules on various types of contexts (security sector reforms in non-conflict affected countries; DDR; fragility contexts, active conflicts, recent conflict, less recent conflict; gender and conflict issues vis-a-vis other thematic areas of the GAP III); and modules on various pillars of WPS and interconnection between WPS and other areas (SGBV, but also WEE and access to resources, women's political participation including participation in security- and conflict-related policy and dialogues, etc...)
- Harmonisation of guidance on conflict analysis with an integrated gender perspective between EEAS and EC – with different levels of depth depending on the service, and specific methodological guidance and capacity building. Harmonised guidance should, in particular, clarify the division of labour, cooperation and coordination processes, among the various services.
- Inclusion of WPS in sector-specific GAP III training, ideally with:
 - A section on the WPS aspects of the respective sectors (e.g. the training on GEWE in growth and competitiveness could include a segment on WPS in rural development, the importance of women's DDR in local economic development in conflict-affected countries, support to women's access to financial and natural resources in fragility contexts and in reconstruction, economic opportunities for most at-risk women in such contexts...
 - A component dedicated to WPS as a whole, developed jointly by EEAS and EC.

3.2. Progressively increase the WPS-specific expertise. This could be done by:

- Gradually dedicating (more) specific positions to WPS in EEAS (particularly at central level, so as to increase human resources dedicated to building capacity and developing knowledge-based

3.1. A comprehensive policy framework for the EU's efforts regarding WPS commitments is provided by the EU strategic approach to Women, Peace and Security and its action plan 2019-2024, as well as two sets of Council Conclusions on WPS (2018 and 2022).

The EEAS (Gender and Diversity team) has further initiated process of developing one pagers to provide thematically focused guidance on key priority issues. Resources permitting, the EEAS will seek to make available an even broader set of thematic guidance. In addition, there are two DG INTPA Conflict Sensitivity Guidance Notes on Gender, as well as on Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding that include WPS.

Regarding the proposed harmonisation of guidance on conflict analysis with an integrated gender perspective between the EEAS and the EC, there is already clear guidance in the EU Guidance Note on Conflict Analysis from 2020. In general, integration of gender analysis into conflict analysis is subject to a variety of factors such as: available gender expertise, EU delegations' commitment to gender mainstreaming, capacity building on gendered drivers of conflict, commitment by senior managers, etc.

See 3.2 concerning available (staff) resources to also take into account dimensions of fragility and conflict in all areas of GAP III and to embed these dimensions in Gender Country Profiles and Country Level Implementation Plans.

In the EEAS, a collaboration between Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPC) and the Folke Bernadotte Academy in 2021-2022 resulted in the development and delivery of a course tailored for Gender Focal Points in Missions. It is now being assessed how newly appointed GFPs in Missions can continue to benefit from this training course. Although the EEAS does not offer a specific GFP course for focal points in the Headquarters, training courses on gender mainstreaming are available.

DG INTPA has designed and delivered two iterations of the training on Gender, Conflict and Peacebuilding, and the second day focuses specifically on this issue. The training should be delivered iteratively, resources permitting. EEAS will collaborate with the EC on inclusion of WPS in more sector-specific GAP III training.

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<p>guidance and expertise on WPS), and the EC (particularly at the level of geographic desks and where possible in the most relevant EUDs), and limiting over-reliance on seconded staff, so as to secure institutional ownership and memory.</p> <p>Training GFPs and the staff working on security (in the context of conflict, but also security sector reforms) on WPS.</p>	<p>3.2. EEAS will advocate within its remit and via channels available for sufficient staff and financial resources to support WPS and gender equality, while acknowledging respective restrictions, as explained in 1.1 and 1.2. EEAS will also continue to welcome the benefits of secondments from EUMS, acknowledging that seconded staff are often are technical experts in the field in question, and thus bring an added value that enables implementation of WPS in EU’s external action. Furthermore, EEAS will explore how to best leverage the important role of political sections and their staff at Delegations’ level, as well as how to strengthen capacities of operational staff, to recognise and enhance the role of gender focal points in relation to WPS, etc.</p> <p>By running gender focal points networks, organising regular meetings, and providing information platforms, the EEAS and the EC are maximising the potential of existing resources to mainstream WPS as well as GEWE with GFPs.</p>
<p>R4</p> <p>4. SCALING UP THE ANALYTICAL BACKUP FOR GEWE PROGRAMMING</p> <p><u>Details of the recommendation:</u></p> <p>The EU should strengthen gender analysis at the beginning of each key programming step (i.e., multi-annual programming, annual programming, and design of specific intervention).</p> <p>4.1. Develop GAP III guidance notes on all thematic priority areas of GAP III, including a section on analysis.</p> <p>4.2. Amend the ToRs and guidelines of the Gender Country Profiles, requiring in-house analysis with the participation of task managers, supported by (not substituted with) external expertise when necessary.</p> <p>4.3. Develop ToRs for sector gender analysis (adapted to each sector), in cooperation with thematic Directorates of the Commission’s external action DGs.</p> <p>4.4. Strengthen involvement of CSOs and EU MS in joint GEWE analysis.</p>	<p>Partially accepted</p> <p>4.1. Specific guidance already developed includes: GAP III and Green Deal, GAP III and Jobs and Growth, GAP III and digital transformation, and Gender, Conflict and Peace building. Additional guidance on specific aspects will be developed following the results of the ongoing assessment, the aim being to focus on themes and questions where guidance will have value added.</p> <p>4.2. Most of EU Delegations have updated their Gender Country Profile after the adoption of GAP III, starting in last quarter of 2020. Revision of terms of reference (ToRs) for gender country profiles could be integrated in the HQ instructions regarding the next EU Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). Overall, active involvement of EU staff in guiding gender analysis and extracting /using conclusions in the programming process will be promoted through different means, including raising managers’ involvement and calling on their responsibility, renewed training offer etc.</p> <p>4.3. and 4.4. Guidance on sector gender analysis has already been developed. Refinement and update will be developed in line with results of the needs assessment mentioned above. The role of CSOs and EU MS will also be promoted whenever relevant.</p>

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<p>R5</p> <p>5. STREAMLINING AND ALIGNING GAP III WITH THE PROGRAMMING PROCESS FOR CONCRETE CHANGE ON GEWE</p> <p><u>Details of the recommendation:</u></p> <p>The EU should more strongly align the MFF and GAP III cycles. The EU should also clarify the role of Gender Country Profiles and CLIPs as country-level operational documents supporting EU programming, acting as a bridge between MIPs and AAPs/action documents stewarded by the GFPs.</p> <p>5.1. Use the opportunity of the Mid Term Report of GAP III, scheduled for 2023, for all EU Delegations to review and where necessary update their CLIP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the first-generation CLIPs, including future planned actions under the current MIP, preferably specifying which action will be launched under which AAP (timing). • Strengthen EU and EU MS commitments around a handful of key, achievable, results. <p>5.2. Aligning GAP III duration with the current MFF (i.e., until 2027). Adopt GAP III successor so that new GAP objectives can be incorporated in the next MFF guidance and related instruments. Send instruction for the update of the gender country profile early enough to feed both MIPs and CLIPS design. CLIPs could, in the future, form an annex to the MIPs. – to make it coincide and aligned with the MFF while ensuring that both preparation processes cross-fertilize. In addition, AAPs could include a section on how the CLIP will be implemented through actions, in the given year.</p> <p>5.3. Reinforce the GFP’s role as steward of the GCP — CLIP process, ensuring engagement of HoC, HoP, and sector leads, under HoD leadership.</p> <p>5.4. Reinforce the GEWE quality assurance of action documents, and the systematic, continuous collection of data on the results of quality assurance by INTPA G1.</p>	<p>Partially accepted</p> <p>5.1. In the framework of the preparation of the GAP III Mid Term Report a joint note co-signed by EEAS, INTPA and NEAR was sent out on 13 April 2023 to Heads of Delegation asking them to contribute to the Mid Term Report but also to assess and when necessary, update, their CLIP during 2023. The update will be synchronized with the Mid Term Review of the NDICI-Global Europe Instrument. In this process the revised CLIPs will indicate actions to be taken in forthcoming Annual Action Programmes (AAPs). Focus on selected priorities, where possible jointly pursued with MS, will also be promoted.</p> <p>5.2. The synchronisation of the GAP III adopted in November 2020 and the MFF 2021-27 allowed to raise the importance of gender equality in the financial instruments (notably thanks to the fact that the objective on GEWE was included in NDICI-Global Europe) and in the subsequent programming documents. The principle of linking the policy framework on GEWE (ie the GAP) with the programming cycle and cross-fertilization between processes added value. Interfaces between CLIPS and AAPs will continue to be ensured as appropriate.</p> <p>5.3. Gender Equality is everybody’s responsibility. The role of GFPs requires to be reinforced in parallel to gender responsible leadership and managers’ engagement.</p> <p>5.4. Within INTPA, and in line with the co-creation process, efforts are being made to review Action Documents as early as possible from a Gender/HRBA/disability approach (screening of AAPs with already initial indications as how to ensure gender mainstreaming, reference to guidance on the OECD-DAC gender markers and how to apply it). While DG NEAR is unable to provide quality assurance of all Action Documents because of the very limited number of staff available, it is reinforcing such process by relying on the technical assistance facility “Knowledge Hub” to review a selection of ADs, with the ultimate purpose of creating a pool of examples and best practices to build the capacity of colleagues designing ADs. With support of the technical assistance, DG INTPA and DG</p>

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	NEAR will ensure regular assessment on the quality of gender mainstreaming, notably in the context of the Common Reporting System data check to be performed yearly.
<p>6. CLEARER POSITIONS AND MESSAGING</p> <p><u>Details of the recommendation:</u></p> <p>The EU should clarify that, while it wishes partnership and will always seek common ground for cooperation, it will call out and respond to partner country policies incompatible with international law on GEWE and conventions on GEWE.</p> <p>6.1. The EU Delegations should communicate concomitantly (and in proportions that are for them to decide, based on context) on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government's international commitments (and their possible violations), as well as shared values and principles on GEWE • The concrete, grass-root benefits of GEWE and of what the EU does in each country to support GEWE. <p>To this end, each EUD should identify key concrete, grass root-level benefits of their recent GEWE actions (whether in G1 or G2 actions), and systematically communicate on these through public diplomacy and policy dialogue.</p> <p>6.2. Each EU Delegation, in line with the GAP III, should reflect on GEWE red lines which would trigger active public diplomacy and possibly the activation of conditionalities (e.g., for budget support), as has been done in the past with relation to the Rule of Law and corruption.</p> <p>6.3. Each EUD should identify coalition partners (EU MS, CSOs, like-minded donors/IOs, including IFIs) on each GAP III thematic priority area selected in their CLIP, and regularly consult with them to define common messages.</p> <p>6.4. DGs INTPA and NEAR and EEAS should use the CLIP GAP III mid-term review process to encourage EUDs to formulate key messages in the CLIPs' sections on dialogue and communication.</p>	<p>Partially accepted</p> <p>6.1. The EEAS with EU delegations will continue a structured and systematic approach to advance gender equality and women's rights, respond to pushbacks against GEWE, and to engage with partner countries on respective violations of international law, including by mobilising political tools such as Human Rights Dialogues, Political Dialogues, HR CS, and public diplomacy. Positive narratives, such as benefits of the GEWE, but also recognition of progress in respective policy and legislative frameworks at partner countries also forms part of the above engagements and enhancing this aspect of diplomacy will be considered and applied where relevant.</p> <p>6.2. Active public diplomacy on all aspects of GEWE will be undertaken as part of EU's overall commitment to gender equality as a foreign policy priority.</p> <p>6.3. and 6.4. The EU actively seeks to advance GEWE in coalition with other partners both at country and global levels, and will seek further venues for this, including in the framework of GAP III thematic priority areas, not least on WPS which the evaluation has identified as a thematic area in need for further targeted efforts.</p> <p>Consultation, cooperation and various forms of coalition and partnerships with CSOs are pursued by EU delegations based on country specificities and existing platforms, notably within the framework of the EU Roadmap for CSOs, build on existing processes and seeking sustainable solutions. Shared messages and joint initiatives will be generated in these frameworks. In countries within the Enlargement region, DG NEAR works in constant exchange with national</p>

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	<p>institutions, promoting Enlargement countries' alignment to EU acquis and relevant European standards, including on Gender Equality. In its yearly Enlargement Package reports, DG NEAR provides a detailed assessment of the state of play and the progress made by these countries on their respective paths towards the European Union, with a particular focus on implementing fundamental reforms, as well as clear guidance on the reform priorities ahead.</p> <p>Attention of EU delegations will be called on to integrate messaging on positive results as well as developing country- and context specific key messages in the "Dialogue section" of the next CLIP. A possible update could also feature a revised "Political dialogue" part of the CLIPs, allowing to promote the development and use of key messages in respective dialogues as well.</p>
<p>7. STRENGTHENING THE MONITORING OF GAP III RESULTS</p> <p><u>Details of the recommendation:</u></p> <p>The EU should increase the monitoring of GEWE financial allocations, their utility, and their adequacy. To this end, it should more clearly define GEWE targets and train its staff on their use and strengthen mechanisms for monitoring this spending.</p> <p>7.1. Systematize the monitoring of GEWE financial allocations through systematic review of G1 and G2 actions, and confirmation/deletion/rightsizing of the marker.</p> <p>7.2. Increase attention to GEWE in the review of blending and other loans and guarantees, as well as Macro Financial Assistance, through the implementation of dedicated studies assessing opportunities and challenges related to the integration of GEWE in these interventions.</p> <p>7.3. Reconsider introducing specific coding for specific GEWE thematic areas (in priority, WPS).</p> <p>7.4. Ensure that GEWE coding and meta-data in OPSYS enables reliable data extractions on GEWE financial flows and performance results.</p> <p>7.5. Invest resources to consolidate the data on the G1/G2 markers in Action Documents, allowing timely analysis and consistent reporting.</p>	<p>Partially accepted</p> <p>7.1. In DG INTPA gender mainstreaming is fully integrated in the quality review process of all interventions by all services (both EUD and HQ services), with the support of the gender equality unit and the technical facility "Knowledge Hub". The quality review allows checking of the gender markers and provide comments to meet the standards of the OECD DAC gender markers. DG NEAR makes use of the technical assistance facility "Knowledge Hub" to review a selection of ADs, with the ultimate purpose of creating a pool of examples and best practices of gender mainstreaming and of the correct application of the gender markers, to build the capacity of colleagues designing Ads.</p> <p>7.2. Ensuring adequate gender mainstreaming of Blending operations is a priority in DG INTPA and DG NEAR units in charge of gender equality. An interservice EU working group is very active and further guidance and trainings are under preparation. A specific training was delivered during the GFP seminar in March 2023 on EFSD+ and gender mainstreaming. Further trainings for financial officers are under consideration. A working group between EU services and financial institutions has also been set up and is meeting very regularly to exchange on how-to carry-on GAP III requirements in various blending operations.</p> <p>7.3. Any discussions on additional DAC code for GEWE (including on WPS) should be undertaken within the framework of OECD-DAC. This issue could be brought up by the EU in one of the next OECD DAC gendernet meetings.</p>

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	<p>7.4. Collaboration with the team managing OPSYS is on-going to ensure that the monitoring system tool developed is allowing meaningful extraction of data for gender equality results (See also point 2.4)</p> <p>7.5. The verification of the encoding of the markers in the monitoring system of the DG INTPA has been undertaken to a very large extent in 2023 (for figures to be reported to OECD-DAC for 2022). The exercise aimed at checking encoding errors as well as the adequacy of the final scoring of interventions with regards to gender markers. Corrections were proposed when needed. This exercise should be repeated each year. Final analysis and lessons learnt of this exercise are under preparation by INTPA/NEAR technical assistance and follow up actions will be discussed based on the report to be presented early May. This exercise should be repeated yearly.</p> <p>Since January 2023, DG NEAR has been submitting a diversified selection of Action Documents to the technical assistance facility “Knowledge Hub” to ensure (among a variety of elements) the correct application of G markers.</p>
<p>R8</p> <p>8. STRENGTHENING THE APPROACH TO WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT (WEE)</p> <p><u>Details of the recommendation:</u></p> <p>The EU should adopt a more transformative change approach to WEE, including developing a unified and coherent approach to mainstreaming and monitoring.</p> <p>8.1. Provide widespread training on existing WEE guidance that includes: a clear definition of what transformative change related to WEE is for the EU, clear Theory of Change, good practices that EUDs could implement.</p> <p>8.2. Clarify what is required to mainstream and monitor WEE within its blending and financial instruments, e.g., criteria for QA processes and how mainstreaming will be measured.</p> <p>8.3. Make the EU’s support for care economy work more visible by clarifying how care economy activities that are mainstreamed in other projects or sectors of work can be reported distinctively in results achieved, budget allocations and indicators as care economy inputs.</p> <p>8.4. Conduct a WEE portfolio review to identify where the EU’s support for women’s economic empowerment is contributing to related transformative change and how the EU can shift to a more transformative approach in the future.</p>	<p>Partially accepted</p> <p>8.1 The EU is providing regular trainings to its staff on gender equality and trainings on women’s economic empowerment, and sessions presenting best practices already took place. This recommendation will be taken into account for the preparation of future trainings as well as in the use of the existing guidance notes on women’s economic empowerment.</p> <p>8.2 A guidance on the application of the OECD DAC gender equality policy marker to the EFSD+ has been developed in collaboration with EU pillar assessed international financial institutions and will be published mid 2023. This guidance sets the minimum criteria regarding gender mainstreaming that are applied during the quality review processes of blended operations. Furthermore, regarding specifically women’s economic empowerment and access to finance, further analysis on challenges and good practices are conducted for instance in the framework of Team Europe Initiative on Investing in Young Businesses in Africa.</p> <p>8.3 INTPA will include a specific section on care work in the thematic paper on Gender and Social Protection currently under preparation. INTPA will also have a specific focus on care economy activities and components within social protection programmes as part of the foreseen thematic</p>

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	<p>evaluation on social protection programmes (2014-present) to be conducted in the second semester of 2023.</p> <p>8.4. The EU is working towards transformative actions through the GAP III and will take these recommendations into account. Good practices are also collected in the GAP III reporting exercise, including best practices on transformative actions, as well as in some specific areas of women's economic empowerment such as the Aid for Trade review. Furthermore, the EU will assess the possibility of conducting review on a sample of WEE projects to identify where the EU's support for women's economic empowerment is contributing to related transformative change and how the EU can shift to a more transformative approach in the future.</p>