



Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

Third Development Policy Action Plan on Gender Equality (2023–27)

More information can be
found on our website.



<https://www.bmz.de/en/issues/feminist-development-policy>



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All the terms that **appear in red** are explained in the glossary beginning on page 29.

I. Development Policy Action Plan on Gender Equality – the context

Gender equality is a human right. One that has not been fully achieved in any country in the world thus far, however. Throughout the globe, people are **discriminated** against on the basis of their **gender**, their ethnic or social origin, a disability or for other reasons. And yet we all know that societies are more stable, peaceful and sustainable when everyone is able to participate equally and self-determinedly in social, political and economic life.

The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) is therefore realigning its development policy. We are convinced that systemic change is necessary if the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the **2030 Agenda** are to be achieved. Discrimination, oppression and unequal treatment – in any form – belong in the past. That is why German development cooperation addresses the structural causes of **inequality**. Women and girls are at the heart of our efforts, as they represent the largest disadvantaged group.

The BMZ's strategy **Feminist Development Policy – For Just and Strong Societies Worldwide** sets the overarching political framework for German development policy. The objective is to strengthen the rights, resources and representation of women and girls as well as **marginalised** groups in all their diversity.¹

This **Third Development Policy Gender Action Plan** translates our feminist strategy into specific measures for 2023 to 2027. It focuses on the relevant action areas, defines thematic priorities, and is designed to provide guidance on how **feminist** development policy can be implemented as concrete action.

The BMZ has set itself an ambitious objective: By 2025, 93 per cent of newly committed funding is to go to projects that promote gender equality. Through our strategy and this action plan, however, we are going above and beyond a mere quantitative increase and want to achieve a **qualitative realignment from a feminist perspective**.

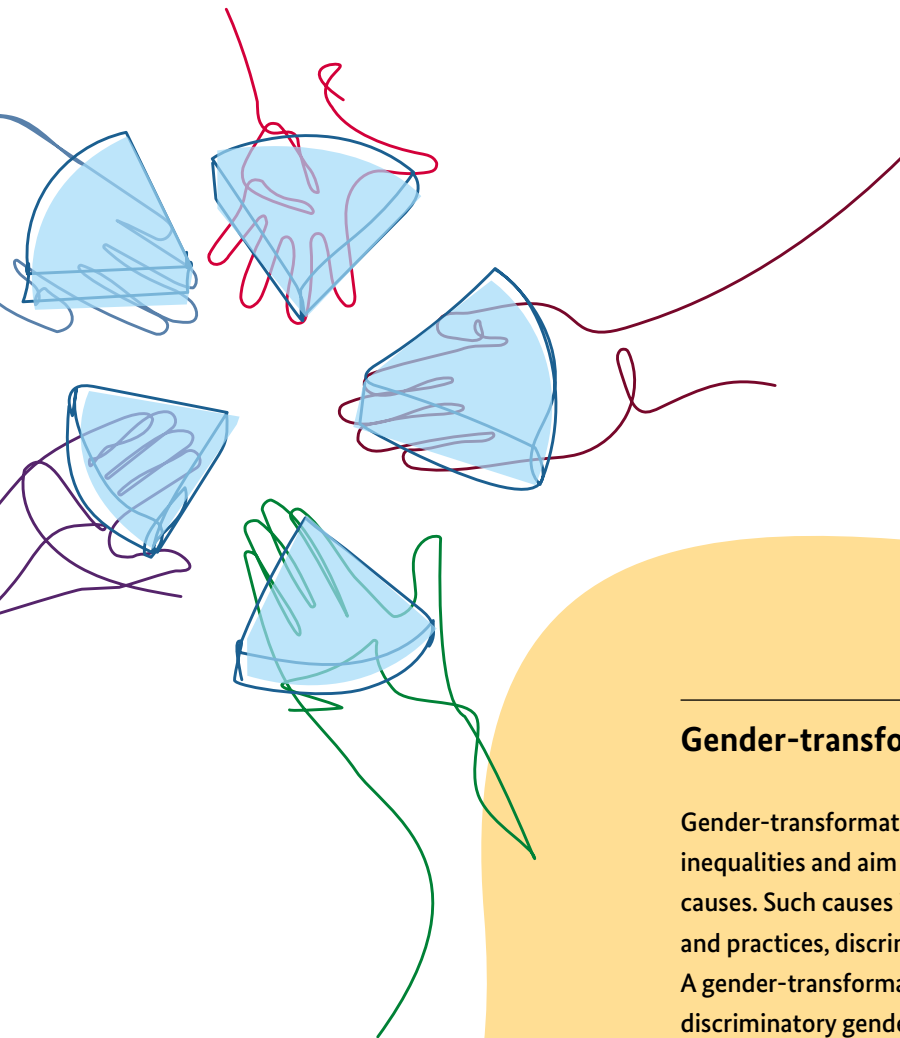
The aim of this plan is above all to make the feminist core elements of the strategy visible, measurable and, above all, scalable. This action plan therefore emphasises the following approaches first and foremost:

- **human rights-based approaches** that show women and other disadvantaged groups and individuals as actors and rights holders,
- **gender-transformative** approaches that help to overcome discriminatory power structures and gender stereotypes and norms, thereby initiating long-term change,

- **intersectional** approaches that take into account the overlaps and interactions between different forms of discrimination,
- approaches that illustrate a learning process that involves critical reflection on issues of power, the aim being to ensure a **post-colonial, anti-racist** understanding of development policy,
- approaches that develop international alliances for gender equality and include greater and inclusive involvement of local civil society.

When preparing this Gender Action Plan, we engaged in close dialogue with civil society organisations and experts from the Global South and North as well as the academic community. Their ideas and experiences have been incorporated into the plan. Dialogue between these stakeholders will be sustained throughout the plan's implementation process and when measuring its success.

Peer learning is imperative if we are to develop and advance sustainable solutions to the global challenges of our time.



Gender-transformative approaches

Gender-transformative approaches create social awareness of gender inequalities and aim to actively and sustainably change the underlying causes. Such causes include discriminatory laws, unequal social norms and practices, discriminatory attitudes, and **gender roles or stereotypes**. A gender-transformative approach must break down and address discriminatory gender stereotypes and norms not just at an individual and interpersonal level but at a societal and systemic level too.

Integration of the **gender** approach into implementation of German development policy can take place at different levels of intensity that range from gender-sensitive to gender-transformative. Gender-sensitive and gender-responsive measures have already been successfully agreed in some country contexts. They too make a key contribution to promoting gender equality.

II. Reviewing implementation – monitoring and evaluation



This Gender Action Plan defines thematic priorities, goals and potential measures for implementing feminist development policy. In order to make implementation transparent, the BMZ has defined quantitative and qualitative indicators as well as descriptors to measure success for the years 2023 to 2027. The descriptors set out the changes targeted by transformative and intersectional approaches.

The BMZ is responsible for monitoring the Gender Action Plan, based on project data provided by the governmental implementing organisations.² We intend to commission an accompanying study to analyse the descriptors. A mid-term report will provide a basis for dialogue and for making any required adjustments.

Monitoring of the Gender Action Plan will, where possible, take into account feminist principles:

→ **Focus on transformative approaches:**

When selecting measures in the Gender Action Plan, we prioritise transformative approaches that aim to change power relations, gender roles and norms.



→ **New methods for measuring impact:** Transformative and structural impacts can only be achieved in the long term and are difficult to document methodologically. Together with the implementing organisations, partner governments and target groups in the partner countries, the BMZ will evaluate measures that contribute to

transformative impacts, derive lessons learned for implementation and disseminate project approaches, for example by commissioning accompanying studies. Methods such as storytelling should be given greater consideration as a source for measuring success.

→ **Participatory and inclusive:** Where possible, monitoring involves civil society, the academic community and local knowledge. To this end, a committee is to be set up consisting of civil society organisations from the Global South and North, project partners, the BMZ's Youth Advisory Council as well as representatives from the implementing organisations and from the academic community. The committee is to meet at least once a year and advise the BMZ on implementation and further development of the plan.

→ **Space for reflection and learning:** A mid-term report in 2025 will create space for dialogue and reflection on the results achieved and enable changes to be made where necessary.

→ **Intersectionality:** Intersectional approaches will be used in data collection and analysis where technically feasible, provided anonymity can be safeguarded (**do-no-harm** approach).

III. Rights, resources and representation – strengthening the “three Rs” in German development cooperation

Reducing inequality is one of the key pillars of sustainable **development** and one of the tasks that humankind will face in the future. The BMZ strives to end inequalities in the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, environmental and social.³ Our feminist development policy builds on the 3Rs approach – strengthening rights, resources and representation.

Rights: We work with our partner countries in order to eliminate discriminatory laws and norms and strengthen rights and access to justice for women and marginalised groups.

Resources: Together with our partner countries, we improve access to and control over resources for women and marginalised groups.

Representation: We strengthen full, equal and meaningful participation of women and marginalised groups and their role as decision-makers in social, political and economic decision making processes.

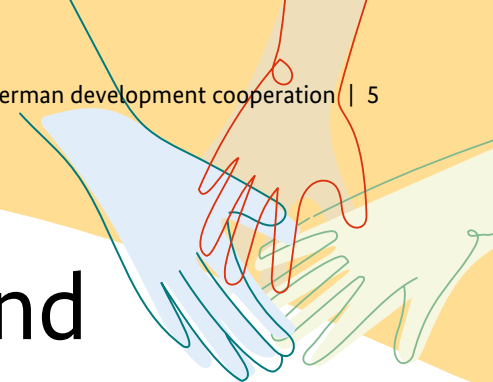
In all of these areas, we draw on local knowledge and expertise and work to a greater degree with local civil society.

Sustainable development can only succeed if structural inequalities are reduced and all people – regardless of their sex, language, age, disability,

ethnic or social origin, religion, socioeconomic situation, gender identity or **sexual orientation** – have equal rights.

In the following sections, we describe how the 3Rs can be implemented in the various areas of development cooperation. The thematic priorities have been selected on the basis of the BMZ’s core and initiative areas model, the coalition agreement and feedback from consultations with civil society and the academic community, among other things. They address important aspects of existing international commitments, such as the German Federal Government’s Action Plan for the Women, Peace and Security Agenda or the EU Gender Action Plan III – An Ambitious Agenda for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in EU External Action (GAP III).

The priorities and measures listed below are not exhaustive. The objectives and principles of our feminist development policy should be incorporated into all areas of German development policy, both at bilateral development cooperation and international level and within the BMZ itself (sections IV–VI).



Peace and inclusive societies

Women and other disadvantaged groups are underrepresented in political and social processes throughout the globe. Social norms and laws prevent them from participating in society on an equal footing. As a result, their concerns and needs are not adequately taken into account.

Sexual and gender-based violence is on the rise in (post-)conflict, refugee, displacement and many migration contexts. At the same time, women are rarely involved in transforming or resolving conflict.

It is a well-known fact, however, that equal participation by women and other disadvantaged groups and the inclusion of all stakeholders in peace and reconstruction processes and in transitional justice are not only a prerequisite for sustainable and peaceful societies but can also help strengthen social cohesion.

Facts and figures

- Between 1992 and 2019, an average of just 13 per cent of negotiators in peace processes were women. ⁴
- Sexual violence is exacerbated by (violent) conflicts. Conflict-related sexual violence is used as a means of warfare, among other things. ⁵
- On average, women still have only three-quarters of the legal rights of men. ⁶
- The global average of women in parliaments worldwide is less than 27 per cent. ⁷

We work towards achievement of the following goals:

Goal 1

Women and marginalised groups play an equal role in shaping measures to promote inclusive societies, prevent conflict and build peace.

Goal 2

Women and marginalised groups have equal access to basic services and needs-based support in migration, refugee, displacement and (post-)conflict contexts.

Goal 3

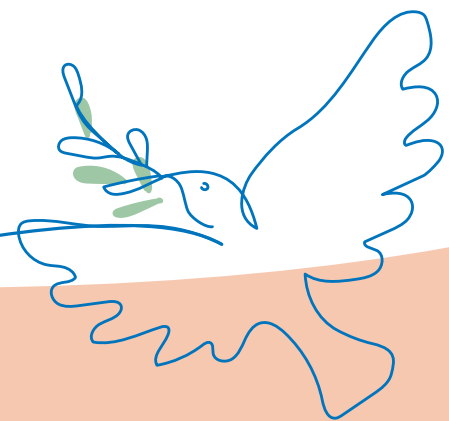
Women and marginalised groups have access to justice and can participate in political life on an equal footing.

We assess the following:

- The percentage of the BMZ's newly committed project funding that promotes gender equality in the area of peacebuilding and inclusive societies
- The number of people who have directly participated in municipal, regional or national policy- or decision-making processes (disaggregation: women) (*standard indicator*) ⁸
- Gender-transformative approaches ⁹ include those that discuss and analyse asymmetrical power relations and role models in the context of migration, displacement, conflict and post-conflict situations and peace processes together with local civil society and traditional and religious authorities.

We conduct the following measures together with our partner countries:

- We implement the German Federal Government's Third Action Plan for the Women, Peace and Security Agenda 2021 to 2024.
- We support equal participation in peace negotiations and conflict resolution, for example through the UN Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, or by training and networking peace activists.
- We promote community-based approaches, awareness-raising campaigns and intergenerational dialogue for equal participation by all, both online and offline.
- We improve access to protection and support in migration, refugee and (post-)conflict contexts by providing basic services, creating jobs, offering high-quality (technical and vocational education and) training and psychosocial assistance and promoting political participation. The Action Network on Forced Displacement – Women as Agents of Change, among others, plays a role here.
- We promote social protection systems that take into account the needs of women, girls and other disadvantaged groups, even in times of crisis.
- We strengthen local organisations, traditional and religious authorities as well as youth and women's networks in their efforts to build inclusive societies, practise civil conflict management, support migration contexts, prevent violence, and promote transitional justice and reconciliation processes.
- We improve access to justice for women and marginalised groups through targeted legal information and the removal of legal and social barriers, for example through the Gender Justice Platform, a global collaboration between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Women.
- We promote women and marginalised groups as decision-makers in political, social and economic decision-making processes at all levels.
- We support the development of gender-equitable laws and equality legislation as well as application of the law by the administration and judiciary.



Gender equality reforms in Colombia

Together with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the BMZ is supporting Colombia in implementing policy reforms in the area of gender equality. Support is based on policy-based financing, whereby the disbursement of funds is linked to political reforms. Specific measures have been agreed to prevent gender-based violence, improve gender equality and strengthen the rights of people

with different sexual orientations and gender identities. A better legal situation is also to be created for implementing the national care policy. Funding is supplemented by technical support and advice for the Colombian government, for example on establishing and strengthening the new Ministry for Equality and Equity, which began its work in mid-2023.

Gender-based violence

Gender-based violence is a serious human rights violation that affects women, girls and **LGBTIQ+** persons in particular. The risk of being exposed to it is even higher for people with overlapping discrimination characteristics, such as women and LGBTIQ+ refugees, as well as girls or women with disabilities. Gender-based violence is also on the rise in the digital space and can interact with other forms of misconduct, such as corruption. Survivors of such violence are often no longer able to participate in social life or go to school or work. It includes violence in the immediate social environment, for example by family members or (ex-)partners, sexual violence, but also female genital mutilation and early and forced marriage.

The fact that gender-based violence occurs in all societies and is accepted in many is partly due to **patriarchal** norms and gender-based roles. In order to bring about change, we start with families, communities and society as a whole. The people affected are at the centre of our work. With this **survivor-centred approach**, we provide holistic support that is geared to the associated stress and trauma. We cooperate with civil society in particular, which is often the first point of contact for survivors. Dialogue with our partner countries and a context-sensitive approach are particularly important here.

Generation dialogue for social change

The BMZ has been supporting the implementation of generation dialogue for social change for more than 20 years. This creates protected spaces in which community members of all genders and generations can discuss sensitive issues such as female genital mutilation and jointly develop ways to overcome these practices. In doing so, community members themselves explore, recognise and evaluate the reasons for the existence of such practices and the values that underpin them. Since 2001, generation dialogue has also been implemented in Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritania, Namibia, Nepal, Pakistan, Sierra Leone and Yemen in the context of other sensitive social issues.

Facts and figures

- One in every three women worldwide is affected by physical and/or sexual violence in the course of their lifetime.¹⁰
- On average, more than five women and girls are killed every hour by a person in their social or family environment.¹¹
- Girls and women with disabilities are up to ten times more likely to experience violence than those without disabilities.¹²
- LGBTIQ+ persons are exposed to an increased risk of gender-based violence.¹³
- Around 200 million girls and women worldwide are affected by female genital mutilation.¹⁴



We work towards achievement of the following goals:

Goal 1

Discriminatory norms and gender stereotypes are changing, leading to a decrease in gender-based violence and harmful practices.

Goal 2

The partner countries create and implement the legal basis for overcoming all forms of gender-based violence with the involvement of survivors.

Goal 3

Survivors and victims of gender-based violence have access to psychosocial, medical, social and legal services.

We implement the following measures together with our partner countries:

- We establish drop-in centres for survivors of gender-based violence where they can receive safe and confidential medical, legal and psychosocial care as well as support through social and financial services.
- We promote training and further education programmes as well as employment prospects for those affected, which support them in developing self-determined, independent life prospects.
- We strengthen rule of law institutions and access to justice and improve the prosecution of perpetrators and reparations in our partner countries and internationally.

We assess the following:

- The percentage of the BMZ's newly committed project funding that promotes the elimination of gender-based violence and harmful practices
 - The number of children and young people who have received support with protection against/experience with violence, abuse and exploitation (disaggregation: girls/young women (up to 18 years)) (*standard indicator*)
 - **Gender-transformative** approaches work specifically with men and boys, for example. The aim is to teach them how to behave respectfully and non-violently towards women, girls and LGBTIQ+ persons and thereby contribute to positive changes in gender roles and images of masculinity.
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- We advise on the development of laws and measures to prevent gender-based violence and to support those affected.
 - We carry out prevention work and awareness-raising campaigns on the causes, forms and handling of gender-based violence: in communities, schools and in institutions such as the police, the justice system and the private sector.
 - We initiate dialogue processes in which all participants reflect on gender stereotypes and develop ways to overcome them.
 - We work with religious actors and other local leaders as agents of change to address all forms of gender-based violence, such as female genital mutilation.

Health, sexual and reproductive health and rights

One third of the world's population do not have reliable access to essential health services. Women and marginalised groups, especially LGBTIQ+ persons, internally displaced persons and refugees, are often denied services and information on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), such as access to modern contraceptives, safe births and safe abortion. At the same time, women account for the majority of health and care workers and are often exposed to precarious working conditions and an increased risk of infection, among other things.

In order to improve the physical and mental health of all people and to realise **sexual and reproductive health and rights**, the needs of women and other disadvantaged groups must be placed front and centre of what we do. Structural causes of disadvantage and stigma include discriminatory laws in the health sector, corruption, unequal social norms and practices as well as patriarchal gender roles and stereotypes. Feminist approaches contribute to women and girls in particular being able to make more self-determined decisions about their lives.

Facts and figures

- Every two minutes a woman dies from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. ¹⁵ Approximately 218 million women in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) have an unmet need for modern contraception. ¹⁶
- In 2019, 344 million people fell into poverty as a result of illness. Women and women-headed households are particularly affected by this. ¹⁷
- The life expectancy of Indigenous Peoples is up to 20 years lower than the life expectancy of their non-indigenous counterparts. Indigenous Peoples frequently have poorer health and are more likely to experience disability and reduced quality of life. ¹⁸
- LGBTIQ+ persons are less likely to access essential health services due to experiencing stigma, discrimination and human rights violations in the healthcare system. ¹⁹

We work towards achievement of the following goals:

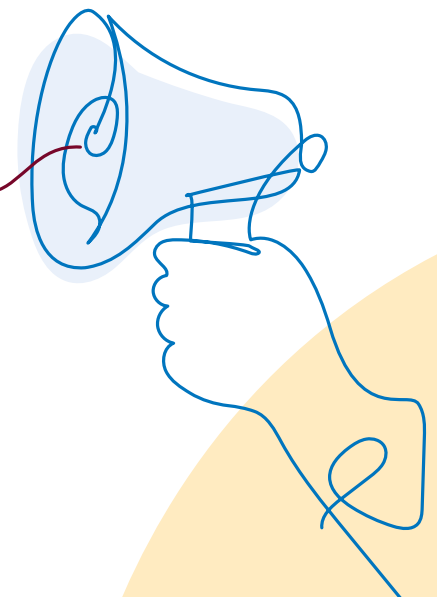
Goal 1

Women, girls and marginalised groups benefit from universal health coverage and equal access to health services, including sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Goal 2

Women, girls and marginalised groups can realise their sexual and reproductive health and rights.

*My body
my choice*



We conduct the following measures together with our partner countries:

- We are committed to reforming discriminatory laws that have an impact on the health of women, girls and marginalised groups.
- We support gender-equitable healthcare systems and initiate reforms to healthcare financing.
- We expand gender-equitable, inclusive and climate-resilient access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure and help break down taboos and stigmas surrounding menstruation.
- We promote awareness-raising campaigns and needs-based information as well as access to contraceptive methods, menstrual products and period-friendly toilets and washing facilities in order to improve **menstrual health and hygiene**.
- We promote comprehensive sexuality education and also dialogue formats with families, communities, local civil society and religious actors on the right to bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- We promote gender-sensitive research, for example on barriers to accessing health services, gender-specific differences in diseases and digital solutions.

We assess the following:

- The percentage of the BMZ's newly committed project funding that promotes gender equality in the area of health and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)
- The number of people who have been supported in exercising their sexual and reproductive health and rights (disaggregation: women, children/adolescents) (*standard indicator*)
- **Gender-transformative approaches** include, for example, comprehensive sexuality education and dialogue formats with families, communities, and religious actors on the right to bodily autonomy, and sexual and reproductive health and rights. Boys and men are included, thereby changing gender-specific expectations that previously often saw women as responsible for contraception or discouraged men from taking advantage of preventive medical check-ups.

Healthcare in Cameroon

The BMZ is supporting Cameroon in removing barriers to sexual and reproductive rights and health for LGBTIQ+ persons, among others. For example, we analyse the situation of disadvantaged groups in the health sector and use the findings to raise awareness among employees of health authorities and facilities and among healthcare professionals of the challenges and needs of LGBTIQ+ persons in the sector.

Economic and social empowerment, participation and access to decent work



The knowledge, creativity and economic potential of women is not being used to the full.

Financial independence often improves the status of women both in society and within their family, offering them a certain degree of protection against exploitation and violation of their rights.

Women are discriminated against in many countries and in the global economic system – in terms of access to education and the labour market, property and inheritance rights, career choices and access to credit. Poor working conditions, a lack of social protection, the unequal distribution of **care work**, no access to the internet, gender-based violence in the workplace, corruption and patriarchal role models limit the degree to which they can realise their economic and social rights.

We work towards achievement of the following goals:

Goal 1

All people have access to high-quality education, regardless of their gender or other discrimination characteristics.

Goal 2

Inequalities in social protection systems and in the area of care work are eliminated.

Goal 3

Women and marginalised groups have equal access to decent work and career choices. Their economic situation has improved.

Facts and figures

- At 47 per cent, the global labour force participation rate for women is significantly lower than for men (72 per cent).²⁰
- Women carry out around 75 per cent of unpaid care and housework.²¹ Over a lifetime, that is seven years more than men.²²
- In 115 countries, women face legal constraints to entrepreneurship that men do not.²³
- In low-income countries, almost 46 per cent of boys and only a third of girls with disabilities finish primary school.²⁴
- Worldwide, 259 million fewer women than men have access to the internet.²⁵

Jobs and the local economy in Iraq

Through a project in Iraq, we want to provide support for the revitalisation of the local economy and increase employment opportunities for internally displaced persons, returnees and socially deprived local residents. Grants from the Enterprise Development Fund (EDF), especially to women-led small and medium-sized enterprises, help create jobs. The focus is on measures to improve employment and income opportunities. Business development infrastructure measures also make it easier for companies to establish or expand their operations.

We conduct the following measures together with our partner countries:

- We promote gender-transformative education that counteracts discriminatory social norms.
- We support accessibility, access to high-quality, free education and to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in schools as well as broad-based sex education.
- We promote (technical and vocational) education and training in innovative digital and sustainable sectors, thereby improving employment opportunities and supporting business start-ups for women.
- We work towards the recognition, reduction and redistribution of unpaid care work and are committed to fostering decent working conditions in paid care work.
- We work on addressing the gender pay gap and are committed to closing this gap in order to promote fair participation in economic life.
- We promote social protection systems that facilitate equal access by women and persons with disabilities, among others, taking into account their special needs, for example through maternity benefits, childcare and long-term care services or social welfare programmes.
- We promote decent work in the formal and informal sectors that incorporates the core labour standards of the International Labour Organization (ILO).
- We advocate for the gender-equitable design of global value chains and economic partnership and free trade agreements.

We assess the following:

- The percentage of the BMZ's newly committed project funding that promotes gender equality in the area of economic and social empowerment, participation and access to decent work.
- The number of jobs created or secured (disaggregation: decent jobs, women, young people) (*standard indicator*)
- **Gender-transformative approaches** include, for example, pupils critically examining gender-specific expectations, roles and discrimination in a protected space, thereby creating a learning environment for children and young people of all genders and sexual orientations. Gender-transformative education also covers inclusive access, for example by making schools and the associated sanitary facilities accessible and providing free school meals.
- We support reforms that reduce disadvantages in the economy, for example in the areas of economic and trade policy framework conditions, opportunities for organising trade unions or labour rights for persons with disabilities.
- We are committed to the financial inclusion of women and promote entrepreneurs who wish to establish or expand a business, for example by supporting the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi).

Just Transition

In many regions of the world, women and Indigenous Peoples are knowledge carriers for conserving biodiversity and water resources and protecting the climate. Climate change and biodiversity loss also have a particularly strong impact on sections of the population that are already disadvantaged, such as women, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, the socioeconomically disadvantaged or young and elderly people.

Fostering participation by and empowering women and marginalised groups as agents of change is crucial for socioecological transformation and therefore for a **just transition to a socially and climate-friendly economy**.

We work towards achievement of the following goals:

Goal 1

Women, children, young people and Indigenous Peoples are recognised as key agents of change for climate change mitigation and adaptation and for the protection of natural resources and biodiversity and are equally involved in all decisions and measures. Their knowledge is valued, but also protected.

Goal 2

Climate change mitigation and adaptation measures and protection against the consequences of climate change, the loss of biodiversity and environmental pollution benefit everyone equally.

Goal 3

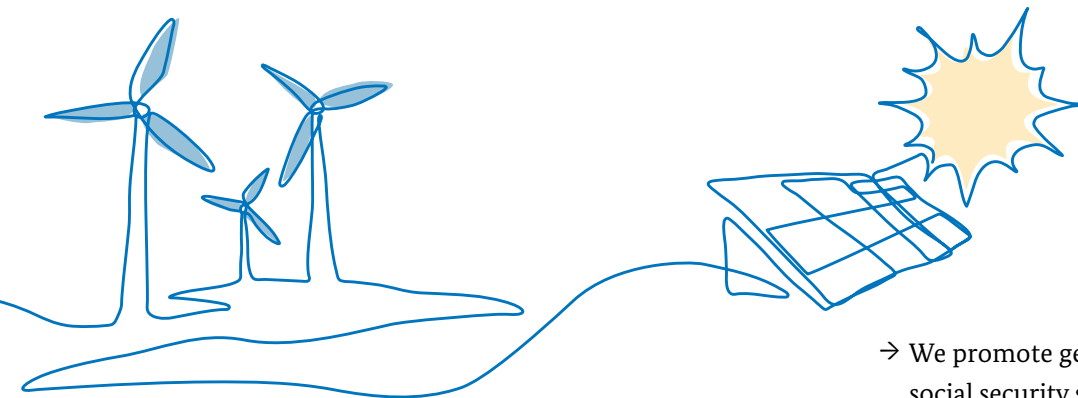
Women and marginalised groups, such as persons with disabilities, have an equal say in shaping an inclusive, climate and environmentally friendly infrastructure and the provision of public services.

Facts and figures

- In 2021, climate-related events were estimated to have prevented at least four million girls in low- and lower-middle-income countries from completing their education.²⁶
- Attacks on climate, environmental protection and land rights activists are on the rise. More than a third of all fatal attacks target Indigenous Peoples.²⁷
- Only 20 per cent of the heads of delegation at the 2022 UN Climate Change Conference were women.²⁸
- Persons with disabilities sustain disproportionately higher rates of morbidity and mortality in an emergency.²⁹

Social security in Indonesia

Since 2011, the BMZ has been supporting the Indonesian Ministry of National Development Planning in expanding the national social protection system. There is a high risk of poverty in Indonesia, partly due to extreme weather events and natural disasters and the associated property damage and loss of income. With 242 million members – 88 per cent of the population – Indonesia now has the world's largest contribution-based health insurance schemes. The BMZ's support focuses in particular on population groups in vulnerable situations and promotes their financial inclusion as well as access to the labour market for persons with disabilities, for example.



We conduct the following measures together with our partner countries:

- We strengthen networks of knowledge-bearers and of environmental and human rights activists so that they can contribute their local, Indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices for climate resilience, environmental and biodiversity protection.
- We are committed to national climate adaptation strategies that are human rights-based, inclusive and gender-equitable (e.g. in National Adaptation Plans, Nationally Determined Contributions).
- We promote gender-equitable approaches to financial protection against climate risks, as part of the Global Shield against Climate Risks, for example.
- We improve gender-equitable, inclusive and climate-resilient access to water, sanitation and hygiene, for example through improved menstrual health and hygiene in schools and health facilities.
- We promote gender-equitable and adaptable social security systems that protect women in particular against climate risks and facilitate integration into a labour market that has changed due to the transition to a green economy.
- We strengthen the equal participation of persons with disabilities in disaster risk management and in national climate adaptation strategies, for example through inclusive and accessible warning systems and evacuation measures.
- We support gender-equitable mobility strategies and the climate-resilient adjustment of infrastructure to the needs of women and other disadvantaged groups.
- We promote the equal participation of women and Indigenous Peoples in urban development and in the water and energy sector.
- We support technical vocational education and training and the employment of women in sectors that are relevant to socioecological transformation, such as the energy and water sector and the circular economy.

We assess the following:

- The percentage of the BMZ's newly committed project funding that supports adaptation to climate change and the reduction of greenhouse gases or makes a contribution to the goals of the Convention on Biological Diversity and other efforts to protect the environment and conserve natural resources while promoting gender equality
- The number of people that are directly supported in coping with the impacts of climate change (disaggregation: women) (*standard indicator*)
- **Gender-transformative approaches** include, for example, involving women, persons with disabilities and Indigenous Peoples in local and national climate policy strategies and committees on an equal and institutionalised basis. Through targeted participation, their knowledge and experience are recognised, taken into account and protected, their power to shape society is increased and climate policy is shaped in a gender-equitable way.

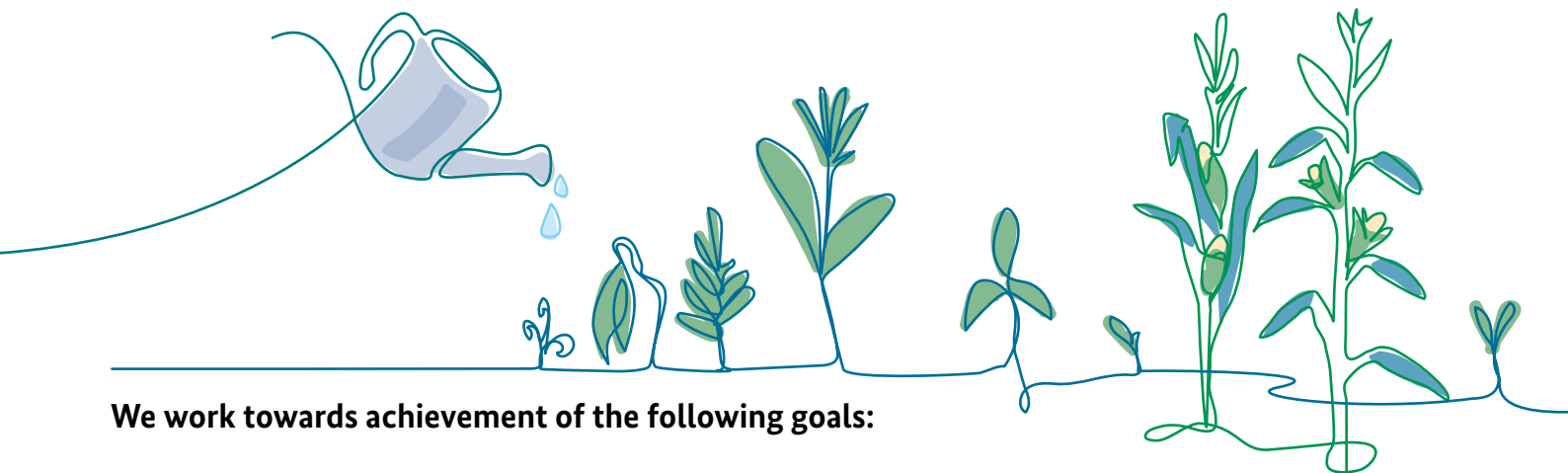
Food and nutrition security, agriculture and rural development

Women and Indigenous Peoples are important knowledge-bearers in managing natural resources, adapting to the impacts of climate change and protecting agricultural and food systems. Women smallholders play a crucial role in global food and nutrition security and the protection of natural resources.

These groups do not have the same access to land and water rights, inputs, financing and networks as most men, however. Access to technologies, market information, mechanisation and credit in rural areas is particularly important for women smallholders. They are also more frequently affected by food insecurity and malnutrition and are not equally involved in decisions in the agricultural and food sector.

Facts and figures

- In 2021, 126 million more women than men were affected by food insecurity. This means that the gender gap in this area has more than doubled since 2019.³⁰
- The number of people affected by food insecurity could be reduced by 45 million if the gender gap in farm productivity and the wage gap in agrifood systems were closed.³¹
- Three quarters of Indigenous Peoples (a little over 73 per cent) live in rural areas and rely to a large degree on agricultural systems to meet their livelihood needs.³²



We work towards achievement of the following goals:

Goal 1

The universal human right to sufficient, safe and nutritious food, with special attention to the specific nutritional needs of women, children and adolescents, is realised.

Goal 2

Women and marginalised groups have the same rights of use and equal access to the resources of land, water and capital.

Goal 3

Women and marginalised groups are actively involved in decision-making at all levels in the area of food and nutrition security, agriculture and rural development.

We conduct the following measures together with our partner countries:

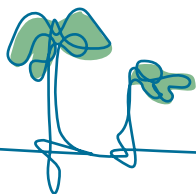
- We improve women's access to agricultural inputs, credit, vocational training, market information, (digital) technologies and mechanisation in rural areas.
- We support equal rights to own and inherit land and property – both in terms of legislation and its actual application.
- We support the development of local expert networks, (agricultural) cooperatives and other organisational structures and contribute to the equal representation of women.
- We promote the transparency of land rights and land management, for example through the use of open data and equal access to information when claiming and registering land rights.
- We promote resilience to the impacts of climate change through social protection systems, especially for smallholders (see Just Transition).
- We advocate grievance mechanisms for land and water use as well as consultation and consent rights for the affected population in line with international standards. This includes implementation of the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (ILO C169) as well as the free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) of Indigenous Peoples.
- We promote decent work, a living wage and a fair income in agriculture and in agricultural supply chains, especially for women.

We assess the following:

- The percentage of the BMZ's newly committed project funding that promotes gender equality in the areas of food and nutrition security, agriculture and rural development
- The number of people who have improved availability or access to food (disaggregation: women and small children) (*standard indicator*)
- **Gender-transformative approaches** include, for example, advice to partner governments on anchoring equal land and water rights for women and marginalised groups in legislation and policy. This enables them to make more self-determined decisions and improve their social and financial situation, helping to shift power dynamics in the long term towards more equality in politics, law and society.

Securing women's land rights

The BMZ promotes the protection of land rights. We advocate for land certificates to be issued to women alone or to the two spouses. In Teso, Uganda, 92 per cent of land certificates have been issued in the name of the entire family. As a result, 75 per cent of the villagers surveyed stated that women and men now make decisions about their land together. The project also works with traditional institutions and involves women as active members in surveying and dispute resolution teams, as well as in decision-making bodies.



IV. Anchoring a feminist approach across the BMZ portfolio, targeted promotion of gender equality

The BMZ's strategy for a feminist development policy works on eliminating the structural causes of inequality and discrimination for all people. Our development cooperation activities aim to do *more* for gender equality, while also bringing about long-term, transformative *change*.

Our feminist development policy is based on a human rights-based approach, in other words on an understanding of women and other disadvantaged groups as actors and rights-holders. Through its feminist development policy, the BMZ focuses to a greater degree on **gender-transformative** approaches that will help to eliminate discriminatory power structures, laws, social norms and gender roles. Many people who are already marginalised in society face additional discriminatory factors.

We want to tackle this overlapping and mutually reinforcing discrimination at different levels (structural, institutional, individual and historical) in order to overcome inequalities (**intersectionality**). Not least, pursuing a feminist development policy means embarking on a learning process that embraces critical reflection on power relations and that firmly establishes a post-colonial and anti-racist approach to development. To implement this feminist approach in our development policy, we seek close coordination with our partner countries and closer cooperation with civil society.

Our goals:

Goal 1

The promotion of gender equality is anchored in BMZ's development cooperation portfolio in all regions, sectors and instruments.

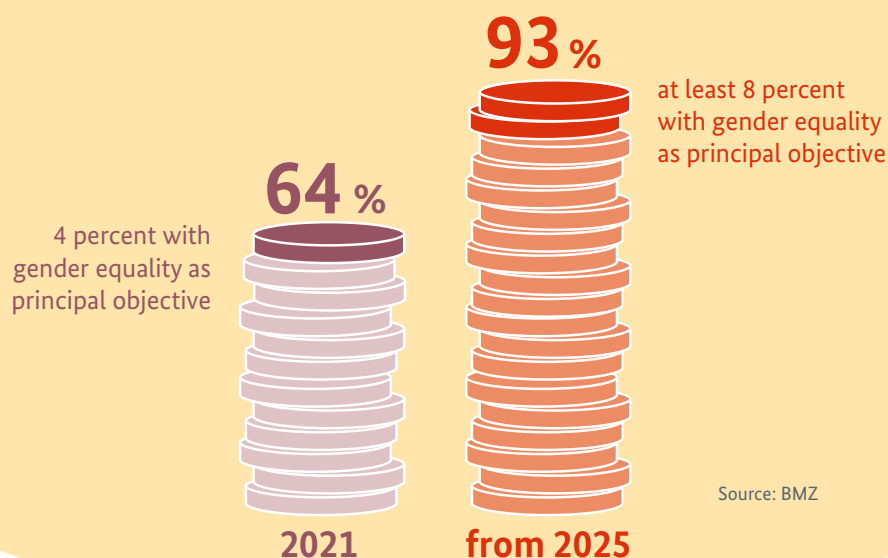
Goal 2

Feminist approaches that are gender-transformative, intersectional, post-colonial and based on critical reflection on power relations while focusing on the promotion of civil society are incorporated into German development cooperation.

Goal 3

The BMZ and the implementing organisations have a better data and evidence base for pursuing effective approaches to feminist development policy.

Fig. 1 | Targets for the BMZ gender equality portfolio: Percentage of the BMZ's newly committed project funding (%)



Facts and figures

Discriminatory social norms, restrictive legislation, patriarchal power structures and gender stereotypes confine the scope for action of women and other disadvantaged groups to specific roles:

- 56 per cent of the world's population believes that children suffer when a mother works for pay.³³
- 41 economies still do not prohibit the dismissal of pregnant women.³⁴
- In 28 countries, women are not legally recognised as heads of household, which means that they can experience disadvantages in family or tax law.³⁵
- Each additional year of schooling can boost a girl's earnings as an adult by an average of up to 20 per cent.³⁶
- Same-sex sexual acts between adults are a criminal offence in 63 UN member states, and in twelve countries the death penalty can even be imposed.³⁷

We are realigning our development cooperation portfolio:

- We aim to increase the proportion of new project funding dedicated to promoting gender equality to a total of 93 per cent by 2025, thereby providing the financial foundations for the implementation of feminist development policy. The proportion of new project funding commitments for measures with the principal objective of gender equality will be doubled to at least 8 per cent by 2025.³⁸
- We set out requirements for taking feminist approaches into account in BMZ-funded measures in our strategy for the quality criterion of *human rights, gender equality and disability inclusion* and provide further useful work aids for employees.
- We continue to develop gender-transformative approaches and projects and programmes based on findings from evaluations, academic and scientific research and reports from implementing organisations and civil society.

- We specifically promote measures to improve the situation of people who find themselves in particularly vulnerable circumstances due to multiple discrimination (intersectionality). These include women and girls with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ persons, ethnic minorities, Indigenous Peoples and local communities as well as women and girls who live in extreme poverty, are affected by violent conflict or are displaced.
- We protect and improve the rights of women, girls and people of diverse sexual orientation or who identify as non-**binary**. To this end, we increasingly work with women’s and human rights defenders and LGBTIQ+ organisations.
- We increase our commitment to the inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities in our partner countries and review this using OECD’s new inclusion marker.
- We strengthen the data basis for a feminist development policy and prevent the reproduction of stereotypes through data collection methods. We therefore increasingly collect and use data that disaggregate the realities of the lives of different groups of people, taking into account feminist approaches such as intersectionality. To this end, we support the UNDP’s LGBTI Inclusion Index, for example.
- We conduct awareness-raising dialogue and training measures to involve men and boys, male decision-makers and local, traditional and religious leaders as agents of change.
- We strengthen **South-South and triangular cooperation** in order to identify and support regional and country-specific approaches to social, economic and political challenges in a highly partnership-based manner.

We assess the following:

- The percentage of the BMZ’s newly committed project funding for measures whose principal objective is to support gender equality (GE2) (Target: 2025: 8 per cent)
- The percentage of the BMZ’s newly committed project funding for measures in which gender equality is a principal or significant objective (GE2 or GE1) (Target: 2025: 93 per cent)
- The percentage of newly committed project funding that contributes to the inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities
- Examples of BMZ-funded new projects (GE1, GE2) that work with gender-transformative approaches
- The percentage of triangular cooperation measures (with the relevant “DEK” marker) in the BMZ’s newly committed project funding

V. Building international alliances

Sustainable solutions and a just transition require international alliances. The BMZ bases its cooperation with regional and multilateral organisations and cooperation partners on universal human rights and the principles of respect and reciprocity. International and multilateral cooperation leverages partnerships for working towards greater gender equality, equal rights and opportunities for all people. This includes sharing experience with our partners and reflecting on the lessons learned.

Movements and policies that oppose gender equality, LGBTIQ+ rights and sexual and reproductive health and rights are on the rise throughout the globe. A feminist development policy therefore requires strong allies to resolutely push back against these trends.



We work towards achievement of the following goals:

Goal 1

Organisations in the multilateral system that are committed to the objectives of feminist development policy have their mandate and capacities strengthened.

Goal 2

The objectives of feminist development policy are incorporated into multilateral forums, the European Union and policy dialogue with partner countries, taking into account the country-specific contexts.

Goal 3

Together with like-minded countries and organisations, alliances are established for the coherent implementation of the objectives and principles of a feminist development policy.

Goal 4

Feminist civil society, especially from the Global South, is able to participate more effectively in international and multilateral cooperation.

We are expanding our international alliances:

- We work closely with UN Women to strengthen its mandate and role for gender equality within the UN system.
- We work multilaterally for sexual and reproductive health and rights and to end gender based violence and harmful practices, for example through the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and in cooperation with the Global Financing Facility for Women, Children and Adolescents (GFF) and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF).
- We maintain a high level of contributions to UN Women, the UNFPA, the UNDP, UNICEF, the multilateral education funds Global Partnership for Education and Education Cannot Wait, We-Fi, the GFF and the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women.
- We are committed to the rights of persons with disabilities and implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, for example through the UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD).
- We are committed to ensuring that the EU, through Team Europe Initiatives and Global Gateway, fully achieves the objectives set out in the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe). We are also implementing the objectives set out in the EU Gender Action Plan III, including in EU trade agreements.
- We are involved in multistakeholder partnerships for greater gender equality, for example with Generation Equality.
- We advocate for feminist positions as well as progressive and inclusive language: in the EU, the UN, the OECD, the G7 and G20 as well as other international forums and organisations.
- Together with like-minded partners and in agile alliances with other partners, we resolutely oppose the anti-gender equality movement and advocate for LGBTIQ+ rights and the realisation of sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- We are committed to strengthening the care work agenda, for example through the Global Alliance for Care.

We assess the following:

- The BMZ’s contributions to UN Women, the UNFPA, the UNDP, UNICEF, the multilateral education fund Global Partnership for Education and Education Cannot Wait, We-Fi, the GFF and the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women
- The percentage of summary records of government negotiations on development cooperation each year that take into account feminist development policy objectives
- The number of declarations and strategy documents from the EU, the World Bank, the UN, OECD-DAC, the UN Climate Change Conferences, the UN Commission on the Status of Women, G7 and G20 summits in which the BMZ has contributed to anchoring the goals of feminist development policy
- The number of alliances that are aligned with feminist objectives in which the BMZ and civil society actors from the Global South have been involved

- We are committed to promoting feminist approaches and standards: in strategies, initiatives and networks of the EU and UN organisations, in the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC), in multilateral climate funds, in the multilateral education fund Global Partnership for Education and Education Cannot Wait and in the audits of multilateral organisations by the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN).
- We are committed to ensuring that multilateral funds are gender-equitable (e.g. through gender markers in UN Multi-Partner Trust Funds) and that decision-making bodies have equal representation (e.g. in climate financing).
- In strategic processes, we advocate for the goals of feminist development policy in the World Bank and other multilateral development banks, for example by building capacities at country level for **mainstreaming** and monitoring and for GE2-comparable projects in partner countries particularly interested in reform.
- In the German government as well as in the G7, G20 and OECD-DAC, we advocate for an increase in bilateral and multilateral official development assistance (ODA) that contributes to gender equality.
- We support commitments to gender equality in the G7 and G20. One of the ways we track implementation is through the G7 Dashboard on Gender Gaps (see the following text box Gender equality in the G7).
- We are committed to ensuring that countries of the Global South are more involved in the multilateral system, for example through fit-for-purpose institutional regulations, joint declarations and initiatives, the joint adoption of the chairs of major international conferences and by ensuring that we embrace ideas and initiatives coming from our partner countries.

Gender equality in the G7

Germany's G7 Presidency in 2022 placed a focus on gender equality. The G7 communiqués incorporated progressive language as well as measures on LGBTIQ+ inclusion and sexual and reproductive health and rights. One of the focal points in 2022 was the area of care work. G7 members emphasised the need to support women in all their diversity in crisis and conflict contexts and, for the first time, committed to gender-transformative education. The G7 civil society engagement groups were involved throughout the entire process. The results of this multilateral process have had a lasting influence on the international policy of the G7 members and are monitored in the *G7 Dashboard on Gender Gaps*, for example.

- We incorporate our feminist approaches into the political dialogue with ministers and top officials and also with working level in our partner countries, for example in government negotiations, in workshops on portfolio development and in day-to-day dialogue between our economic cooperation officers in the representations abroad. We always take the country-specific context into account.
- We promote the inclusive participation of feminist civil society, women's networks, **women's rights movements**, LGBTIQ+ organisations and human rights defenders in the Global South in international strategic and political decision-making processes as well as the incorporation of their voice in the multilateral system.
- We are committed to the use of funds from the World Bank and regional development banks to strengthen cooperation with civil society and its participation in decision-making processes.

VI. Leading by example – an institution fit to deliver

A further key element of feminist development policy is continuous reflection on and adjustment of our own structures, processes and working methods. We want to lead by example and, as an institution, initiate a process of change and learning. We want to set a credible example of feminist approaches and encourage employees in the ministry itself and in the implementing organisations to apply these in their daily work.

This includes promoting **diversity**, equal opportunities and participation in development cooperation institutions. We also create spaces for dialogue and reflection on power inequalities and colonial continuities, which also influence our development cooperation activities. We raise the awareness of our employees to racist thinking. Our aim is to overcome structural inequalities and strengthen the basis for partnership-based cooperation between the Global North and Global South.

We work towards achievement of the following goals:

Goal 1

The BMZ's employees are familiar with the core elements³⁹ of a feminist development policy and can apply them in their work.

Goal 2

Diversity and equal opportunities for all of the BMZ's employees are strengthened through targeted measures and a zero tolerance policy towards all forms of discrimination is continued.

Goal 3

Effective grievance mechanisms help safeguard transparency and accountability in the implementation of German development cooperation and protect cooperation partners, children and young people from violence in all its forms.

Goal 4

Diverse civil society perspectives and local knowledge systems in the Global South are included in strategic and conceptualisation processes where possible and appropriate. Local, feminist and civil society actors receive more financial support.

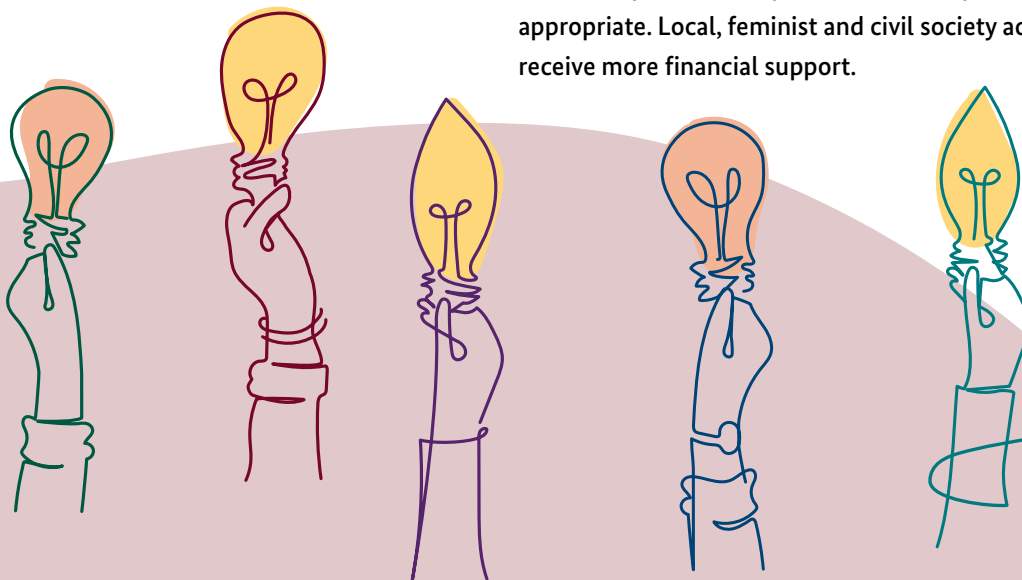
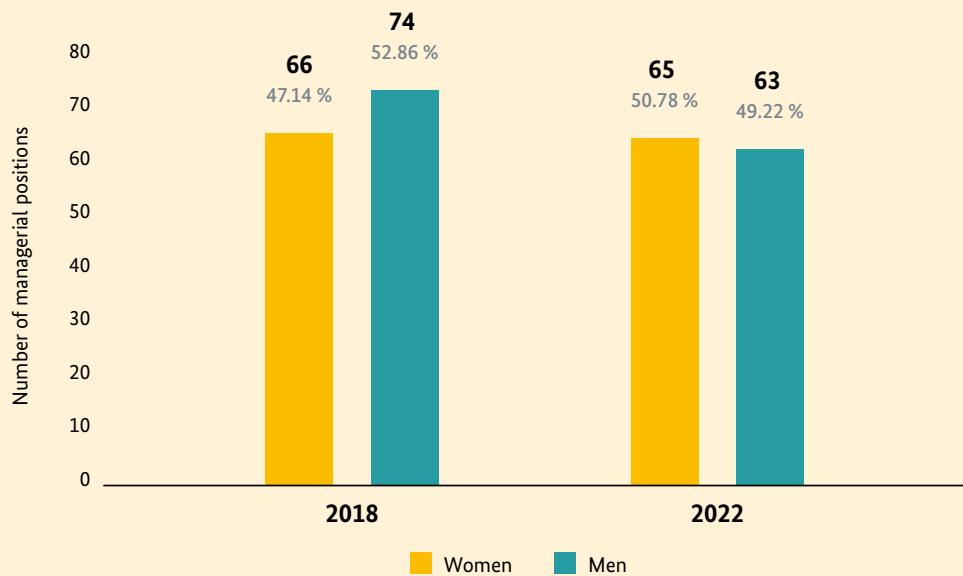


Fig. 2 | Managerial positions by gender



Source: BMZ, Sixth Gender Equality Plan 2023–2026; as at 30 June of each year

We continue to review and further develop the BMZ's internal structures:

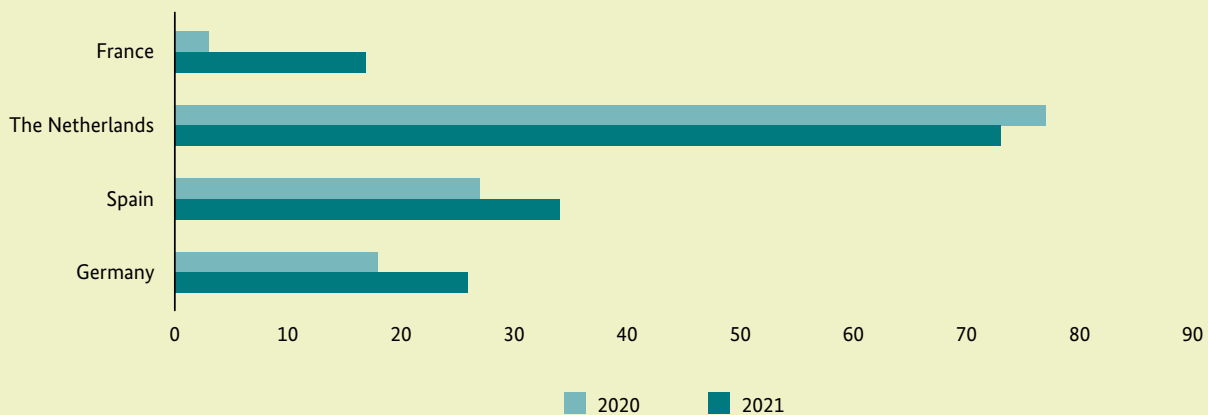
- We expand our range of training courses to improve our employees' skills for implementing core elements of a feminist development policy.
- We examine the role of colonial continuities as part of a participatory and self-critical process. We look at how we can overcome existing power dynamics in our development cooperation measures. In doing so, we seek close dialogue with members of civil society from the Global South.

- We foster a culture of appreciation for diversity within the BMZ and in our cooperation with partners.⁴⁰ We strengthen diversity in recruitment, selection and staff development processes, for example through training and education for HR staff.
- We continue to ensure gender parity at all management levels at the BMZ and implement specific measures from our internal gender equality plan, for example to strengthen the BMZ as a family-friendly and inclusive employer, as well as measures to prevent and deal with (sexual) harassment and transgressive behaviour in the workplace. (See Fig. 2).

We are reviewing the BMZ’s working methods and processes:

- We are further developing the human rights complaints systems of German development cooperation together with the implementing organisations and civil society, including protection against sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH).⁴¹
- We are preparing a BMZ child protection policy and minimum standards for child protection in the implementing organisations.
- We are strengthening civil society perspectives in strategic processes and are ensuring that these processes are inclusive and accessible.
- We are taking civil society perspectives into account in policy dialogue and strengthening local dialogue with civil society in our partner countries.
- We are increasing funding for local (feminist) civil society, grassroots organisations and (human rights) activists.
- We are committed to ensuring that the knowledge and experience of local employees and cooperation partners of the implementing organisations of German development cooperation are incorporated to an even greater extent. To this end, the BMZ will ascertain how existing barriers can be removed, e.g. through language-specific requirements.
- We regularly engage in a whole-of-government dialogue on human rights, gender equality and inclusion as well as feminist foreign and development policy together with the German Federal Foreign Office (AA).

Fig. 3 | Amount of funding provided to support women’s rights organisations and movements (EUR million)



Source: OECD DAC CRS database, 13/02/23. Exchange rate used for the conversion: 1 US\$= 0.875506 EUR (2020).⁴²

Cooperation with civil society

The BMZ cooperates with the non-governmental organisation Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF International) to empower civil society organisations to effectively advocate for gender responsive climate action and increase the representation of women in key decision-making bodies. In Georgia, Colombia and Uganda, WECF International is improving the data basis through comprehensive gender analyses and monitoring activities and is enabling civil society organisations to effectively advocate for gender-equitable climate policy through targeted training and mentoring programmes. It helps to ensure that women are more strongly represented in key decision-making bodies.

We assess the following:

- The percentage of BMZ employees who have received training on the core elements of feminist development policy
- The appointment of contact persons for feminist development policy in the BMZ's Directorate-Generals
- The number of measures and initiatives in the BMZ that strengthen diversity in its own structures and serve to prevent discrimination
- The percentage of women at junior and senior levels of the civil service and in management positions at the BMZ
- Implementation of a systematic process within the BMZ with the aim of identifying and overcoming colonial continuities in our own work
- Implementation of a review and further development of the existing complaints mechanisms of German development cooperation on the basis of the UN's Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and with the participation of civil society
- The number of projects that support feminist, women-led and women's rights organisations and institutions

Endnotes

- 1 Feminist development policy recognises the diversity of societies and advocates an inclusive, non-binary understanding of gender. In this document, the term “women and marginalised groups” refers to people who are discriminated against on the basis of their gender, language, age, disability, ethnic or social origin, religion, socioeconomic situation, gender identity or sexual orientation, or for other reasons. This also includes the diverse identities and realities of societies in all their diversity.
- 2 These include the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ), the KfW, the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR) and Germany’s National Metrology Institute (PTB).
- 3 BMZ (2023): Position Paper. Less Inequality. More Opportunities for Sustainable Development.
- 4 Council on Foreign Relations (2021): Women’s Participation in Peace Processes.
- 5 UNSG (2021): Conflicted-Related Sexual Violence. Report of the United Nations Secretary-General.
- 6 World Bank (2023): Women, Business and the Law 2023, p.2.
- 7 IPU (2023): Global and regional averages of women in national parliaments (October 2023).
- 8 Standard indicators are clearly formulated and defined quantitative benchmarks that can be applied in a large number of projects based on a predetermined data collection method. They document results across a wide range of projects and allow the values to be aggregated globally. As part of the BMZ 2030 reform process, the BMZ has introduced 43 standard indicators on which GIZ and KfW report. The Gender Action Plan uses suitable standard indicators that have not undergone any adjustment in order to ensure that information can be provided on the results achieved in the thematic priorities.
- 9 Gender-transformative approaches are evaluated using descriptors.
- 10 UN Women (2022): Facts and figures: Ending violence against women.
- 11 World Bank (2019): Brief on Violence against Women and Girls with Disabilities, p.3.
- 12 UNODC (2022): Gender-related killings of women and girls (femicide/feminicide), p.5.
- 13 OHCHR (2018): Report of the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, p.6.
- 14 UNICEF (2023): Female genital mutilation (FGM).
- 15 WHO (2023): Trends in maternal mortality 2000 to 2020: estimates by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and UNDESA/Population Division, p.30.
- 16 Sully et al. (2020): Adding It Up: Investing in Sexual and Reproductive Health 2019, p.4.
- 17 WHO (2023): Tracking universal health coverage. 2021 global monitoring report, p.16.
- 18 UNDESA DISD (2023): Indigenous Peoples. Health.
- 19 WHO (2023): Improving LGBTIQ+ health and well-being with consideration for SOGIESC.
- 20 ILO (2022): The gender gap in employment: What’s holding women back?.
- 21 Oxfam International (2023): Not all gaps are created equal: the true value of care work.
- 22 Dalberg (2019): It’s about time: the case for valuing women and girls’ unpaid care work, p.2.
- 23 We-Fi (2022): The Case for Investing in Women Entrepreneurs, p. 5.
- 24 WHO (2011): World Report on Disability, p. 207.
- 25 ITU (2022): The gender digital divide.
- 26 Malala Fund (2021): A greener, fairer future. Why leaders need to invest in climate and girls’ education, p.11.
- 27 Global Witness (2023): Decade of defiance, p.11.
- 28 WEDO (2023): Who Decides: Women’s Participation in the UN Climate Change Convention, p.7.
- 29 OHCHR (2023): The impact of climate change on the rights of persons with disabilities. OHCHR and climate change.
- 30 UNICEF (2023): Undernourished and Overlooked. A Global Nutrition Crisis in Adolescent Girls and Women.
- 31 FAO (2023): The Status of Women in Agrifood Systems. Overview, p. 162.
- 32 ILO (2019): Implementing the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention No. 169. Towards an inclusive, sustainable and just future, p.14.
- 33 OECD (2023): SIGI 2023 Global Report: Gender Equality in Times of Crisis.
- 34 World Bank (2023): Women, Business and the Law 2023, p.30.
- 35 Ibid, p.24.
- 36 UN Women (2022): Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals. The Gender Snapshot 2022, p.4.
- 37 ILGA (2023): ILGA World Database: Criminalisation of consensual same-sex sexual acts.
- 38 Although award of the gender equality (GE) policy marker of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) does not provide information on integration of gender-transformative approaches, it does require that project-related gender analyses be conducted, which examine the potential for gender-transformative approaches and methods, among other things.
- 39 The realisation of human rights and of the human rights-based approach form the basis of our feminist development policy. The core elements of a feminist development policy include stepping up implementation of gender-transformative approaches and intersectional perspectives, a post-colonial, anti-racist understanding of development policy and cooperation in alliances at multilateral level and with civil society organisations, in particular women’s rights, LGBTIQ+ and other human rights organisations.
- 40 We understand diversity to mean recognising and valuing all people, regardless of certain characteristics such as ethnic origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, religious affiliation or world view and physical or mental abilities.
- 41 This is based on the corresponding OECD-DAC recommendations from 2019: DAC Recommendation on Ending Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance.
- 42 The amount of funding (in EUR million) provided to women’s rights organisations and movements in selected EU member states with a feminist foreign policy.

Glossary

2030 Agenda	The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted at the UN Summit in New York on 25 September 2015. With the Agenda, the international community recognises that complex global challenges can only be resolved through collaboration and that all states must make their contribution to this process. With the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which form part of the Agenda, the international community has set itself targets for achieving decent lives for all the world's people while preserving natural resources for the long term. The 2030 Agenda calls on all countries to act in an environmentally compatible, socially just and economically efficient manner.
Anti-racism	An anti-racist position means actively standing against all forms of racism and opposing racist structures, behaviour and attitudes in all their forms (see Glossary entry: Racism).
Binarism	In a general sense, binarism refers to a duality: a binary system classifies two components as a pair of opposites. The gender binary system which prevails worldwide differentiates between men and women. Trans or intersex persons are regarded as a deviation from the norm. With the gender binary system, a power relationship is constructed between the sexes within society and specific roles and capabilities are associated with being a man or being a woman (see Glossary entry: Gender roles and stereotypes). Feminist development policy is based on an inclusive, non-binary understanding of gender.
Care work	Care work may be paid or unpaid. It refers to the provision of care and support to people, including children and other persons, as well as housework and voluntary community work in a private context (e.g. families) or in the public care sector (e.g. health professionals). Data from 2020 show that as a global average, around 75 per cent of unpaid care work is performed by women.
Development	Development generally refers to stepwise change that signifies a (supposedly objective) improvement. In the development policy context, it refers to economic and social development in countries of the Global South. Examples are the promotion of economic growth, and sustainable development in the management of resources. The term was introduced in the second half of the 20th century during the colonial states' independence processes and is criticised for establishing the Global North's "level of development" as the norm, thus implying its own superiority and the backwardness of the "other". This power imbalance continues today in the assumption that the Global North is "more developed" than the Global South and that social and economic norms from the Global North should be applied as the benchmark (of development progress). In this context, differences are generally construed as backwardness on the part of partner countries.
Discrimination	Discrimination means unequal treatment or disadvantage experienced by individuals or groups on the basis of diverse characteristics such as origin, ethnicity, age, disabilities, gender identity, sexual orientation or religion/worldview. Multiple discrimination occurs when a person experiences discrimination on the basis of several characteristics. It is confined to the individual level and often does not consider forms of structural, institutional and historical discrimination.
Diversity	A synonym for "variety", this term now stands for respectful treatment of all people in all their diversity. It encompasses many different characteristics: ethnic or social origin, skin colour, gender identity, and diversity of religion or worldview.
Do no harm	The "do no harm" principle aims to ensure that potential adverse impacts of development cooperation are identified, avoided and mitigated at an early stage. In line with this principle, programmes implemented in crisis settings must be conflict-sensitive in design. A similar approach is important in relation to gender equality. If a new project or programme is planned, it must be ensured that it does not perpetuate or reinforce existing gender-specific inequalities, disadvantages or discrimination.
Feminism	Feminist trends and movements have always been, and still are, diverse and dynamic and have pursued various approaches and objectives. One thing is clear, however: feminism is by no means an "invention" of the West, nor does it merely offer a white, Eurocentric perspective. The feminist theories and movements which have evolved across the world over the last 200 years and more have taken diverse forms, depending on their historical and social context. This diversity of feminist movements is reflected in their different definitions of feminism. In one context, ethnicity has been foregrounded to a greater extent alongside gender (e. g. Black feminism); in another, the emphasis is on religion or class (e. g. socialist feminism). One form of feminism puts sexual and reproductive health and rights front and centre, while others focus to a greater extent on advocacy for women's equal participation in economic or political life. The common feature of all forms of feminism, however, is their opposition to discrimination and oppression and their commitment to gender-equitable power relations.

Feminist civil society	Civil society refers to all forms of citizen engagement within a country, e.g. in clubs, associations, diverse initiatives and social movements. Located at the interface between the state, economic and private sectors, it encompasses all activities that are not profit-oriented and are independent of party-political interests. The term “feminist civil society” refers to the part of civil society that works on issues such as peace, justice, anti-discrimination, gender equality, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), LGBTIQ+ rights and antiracism and advocates for equal rights for everyone.
Gender	Gender draws attention to the social implications of gender identity and to the gendered relationships that are influenced by culture and society. The term describes how attributions, behaviours, expectations, attitudes and norms are associated with a specific gender identity. Gender is therefore distinct from sex. It is constructed by society and is therefore context-dependent and capable of change (see Glossary entries: Sex; Gender roles and stereotypes).
Gender equality	Gender equality is a key pillar of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental. Gender equality – beyond (theoretical) equal treatment in law – must be understood as a political process. It aims to ensure that people’s diverse interests, needs and priorities are taken into account so that equal treatment is realised in practice. This means that everyone is able to assert their rights, perform their duties and access opportunities on an equal basis. It is about eliminating deep-rooted forms of gender-specific discrimination and enabling political, economic and social participation by all genders based on equal rights.
Gender roles and stereotypes	Gender roles encompass society’s general expectations relating to the behaviour of specific genders and are culturally mediated. For example, women are often considered to be kind and caring by nature, whereas men are assertive and decisive. Non-compliance with these expectations or demands can often lead to exclusion and discrimination, up to and including hate and death threats. As these tend to be clichéd notions of what it means to be male or female, the term “gender stereotypes” is used.
Gender-transformative	Gender-transformative approaches create social awareness of gender inequalities and aim to actively and sustainably change the underlying causes. Such causes include discriminatory laws, unequal social norms and practices, discriminatory attitudes, and gender roles and stereotypes. A gender transformative approach must break down and address discriminatory gender stereotypes and norms at an individual and interpersonal level as well as at a societal and systemic level. The integration of gender-transformative approaches is pivotal to the implementation of a feminist development policy.
Human rights-based approach	A human rights-based approach in politics foregrounds the entitlements enshrined in international law which people can claim from the states in which they live. It promotes human rights principles such as participation, empowerment and non-discrimination. In the context of development cooperation, individuals and groups are assisted to claim their rights and live self-determined lives. Target groups are not aid or welfare recipients but rights-holders. The governments of their countries are duty-bearers. The promotion of human rights in all areas of cooperation is one of the most important preconditions for sustainable development and poverty reduction.
Inequality	Inequality takes a multitude of forms and generally refers to differences in access to opportunities, power and resources. Inequality exists not only within societies but also between countries and between the Global North and the Global South. Inequalities should not be regarded as a given, however; they were, and are, produced and reproduced by power systems such as patriarchy and racism. They ensure that across the world, people with different identity characteristics have highly unequal life chances, access to resources and opportunities for social, political and economic participation.
Intersectionality	Intersectionality describes how different characteristics that give rise to discrimination against individuals are combined and become mutually reinforcing. This means that forms of discrimination on the grounds of gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social or national origin, disabilities, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, or belonging to or being associated with a particular religion, for example, cannot be viewed as separate from each other or as merely cumulative; instead, new modes of discrimination emerge at the intersections between them. For example, a Black woman experiences discrimination not only as a woman due to society’s patriarchal structures, but also as a Black person due to its racist structures. The interaction of the power systems of patriarchy and racism produces a new form of discrimination: discrimination against Black women.
Just transition	The just transition to a socially sustainable and climate-friendly economy combines environmental, social and democratic aspects and safeguards freedom of choice, self-determination and the right to participation and involvement. Fostering the participation of women and marginalised groups as agents of change and empowering them in this context is crucial for a just social-ecological transformation.
LGBTIQ+	The abbreviation “LGBTIQ+” stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer persons. The plus sign (+) at the end recognises that there are other gender identities and sexual orientations that are not mentioned specifically in the abbreviation. LGBTIQ+ persons continue to experience violence and discrimination everywhere in the world.

Mainstreaming	Mainstreaming means that a specific topic must be considered in all decisions and processes. In development policy, a mainstreaming approach is pursued in the area of gender equality, for example. Gender mainstreaming is thus the strategic approach for promoting gender equality. This means that in political and social projects and decisions, the diverse life situations and interests of women, men and people with other gender identities must be considered.
Marginalisation	Marginalisation describes the process whereby individuals or groups are pushed to the edges of society. It is based on the notion that there is a “centre of society” and that people may be closer to it or further away. People may typically experience social, cultural, economic or geographical marginalisation. It often takes place at several levels simultaneously – for example, in the case of a single mother who lives in a peripheral urban area with poor amenities. The mere assumption that an individual belongs to a certain group increases the risk of them facing unequal access to rights, health, education, employment, other goods and services, and protection against violence. Because people may experience multiple forms of discrimination simultaneously, marginalised groups should not be viewed as separate from each other. The concept does not define a precisely delineated framework, but is helpful in highlighting which “groups” are most affected, depending on the context.
Menstrual health and hygiene (MHH)	Menstrual health and hygiene includes menstruation hygiene management and other systemic factors that link menstruation to health, wellbeing, gender equality, education, equal opportunities, empowerment and rights. These systemic factors include accurate and timely knowledge-sharing, the availability of safe and affordable period products, well-informed and competent professionals, access to health services, sanitation and washing facilities, positive social norms, and safe and hygienic disposal.
Patriarchy	The term “patriarchy” describes a system or social order which is structured around general male dominance over women and constructs a power relationship between the genders. In a patriarchal society, all the key values, norms and behavioural patterns are determined by men and aligned with their needs and interests.
Post-colonial and anti-racist development policy	Colonial continuities and racist thinking are still present in development policy and cooperation to this day. To take one example: the Global North’s economic, political, social and cultural norms and values still serve as the benchmark against which countries of the Global South are measured. The relationship between the Global South and the Global North is still highly unequal and, in particular, is characterised by economic inequality and ensuing relationships of dependency between “donors” and “recipients”. This asymmetrical relationship is based on institutionalised, discriminatory and racist structures which reinforce the power gap instead of eliminating it. The BMZ’s feminist development policy aspires to pursue a post-colonial and anti racist approach. This (learning) process, which involves critical reflection on issues of power, starts with the recognition that colonial continuities and racist thinking are still present in German development cooperation today. The aim is to eliminate these continuities and ways of thinking from development cooperation and to establish an equal partnership between the Global North and the Global South. A post-colonial development policy involves continuous reflection on our own role and position in the power structure and critically analyses our own understanding of what “good development” means. The BMZ does not pursue a concept of development which is predicated on a universally applicable, improved target state. Wherever this strategy seeks to advance the understanding of development, development policy and development cooperation, it does so on the basis of critical reflection on the underlying concepts (see Glossary entry: Development). Critical reflection on issues of power and the recognition of our own role and German colonial history serve as a basis for an open and honest dialogue about the past and about the future of relations. It is expressed, among other things, through acknowledgement of and apology for the atrocities of colonialism, greater alignment with our partners, more consideration of the country context, closer cooperation with local civil society, and the strengthening of the voices of the Global South in international and multilateral formats.
Racism	Racism is discrimination and prejudice against persons on the basis of origin, ethnicity, skin colour, religion/worldview, culture, name, language and other characteristics. Racism is closely linked to European colonial history and is founded on the fiction that, based on these characteristics, people belong to a particular race and these races can be ordered hierarchically. Even now, racist attributes are used for the systematic oppression of people all over the world. It often leads to mental abuse, physical violence and, in extreme cases, mass killings or genocide.
Sex	Sex refers to biological attributes, i.e. physical, sex-specific characteristics such as chromosomes, hormones and internal and external genitalia. People whose sex is ambiguous are often assigned to one of the binary categories (male/female). In medicine and biology, the binary model is now contested and sex is recognised as a spectrum (see Glossary entry: Gender).

Sexual and gender-based violence	Gender-based violence (GBV) refers to harmful acts of violence that are directed at an individual based on their gender. GBV is a widespread everyday occurrence across all sectors of society. It is a serious human rights violation and a barrier to development. Women and girls in all their diversity are disproportionately (but not exclusively) affected. The term indicates that violence is rooted in the unequal power relations between the genders, in harmful gender norms and in the resulting experiences of structural discrimination and violence. GBV takes many forms, ranging from sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) to digital violence, harmful practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), child, early or forced marriage, conflict related sexual violence, and social or structural violence. SGBV occurs in many contexts and means sexual acts that are primarily about power and oppression rather than sexual satisfaction and are imposed or forced on someone against their will or without their consent. Sexual violence covers a broad spectrum and includes sexual harassment, rape and sexual abuse.
Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)	The term “sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)” refers to unrestricted physical, mental and social wellbeing in relation to all aspects of sexuality and reproduction. It aims to safeguard sexual and reproductive health and individual self-determination. This includes every person’s right to decide freely on matters relating to parenthood, the number and spacing of births, and sexuality; it also includes safeguarding non-discriminatory access to information, health services and resources.
Sexual orientation	Sexual orientation describes a person’s identity in relation to the gender(s) to which they are attracted emotionally, physically and/or sexually (e.g. heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, pansexual, asexual).
South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation	<p>“South-South cooperation” refers, for example, to political, economic, social, cultural and technical cooperation between countries of the Global South.</p> <p>“Triangular cooperation” means a development project that is jointly planned, financed and implemented by the following three partners:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a beneficiary developing country, which has requested support to tackle a specific development challenge 2. a pivotal partner, which has relevant domestic experience of addressing the issue and shares its financial resources and knowledge; and 3. a facilitating partner, which may help connect the other partners, and supports the partnership financially and/or with technical expertise. <p>Both instruments are important for implementing the 2030 Agenda (Sustainable Development Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals). Investment is required in horizontal partnerships that differ from the more vertical North South cooperation/development cooperation.</p>
Survivor-centred approach	<p>A survivor-centred approach focuses on the rights and needs of survivors of sexual violence. It is to be regarded more as a guiding principle, although there is no international consensus on what constitutes a clearly differentiated approach. The basic principles of safety, confidentiality, respect and non discrimination are put front and centre, particularly with regard to access to medical, psychosocial, socioeconomic and legal services. Holistic and cross sectoral support services are provided. A survivor-centred approach also strives to overcome structural discrimination by attempting to counteract stigmatisation and strengthen the active participation of survivors where this is compatible with the fundamental principles.</p> <p>In particular, UN Security Council Resolution 2467, which was tabled by Germany in 2019, calls on member states to implement a survivor-centred approach. With its Third Action Plan for the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (2021 to 2024), the German government has made an explicit commitment to implementing this approach.</p>
Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)	See “2030 Agenda”
Women’s (rights) movement	The women’s rights movement, or women’s movement, is a social movement which advocates for women’s equality in all sectors of society, politics and the economy. It encompasses women’s efforts to achieve emancipation, freedom and equality, as well as women’s advocacy for their rights.

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